

Ice Breaker

(in groups of 2 or 3 for larger groups)

What's one hobby you've always wanted to pick up but haven't yet?

Talk About it!

Part 1

Micah 6:8 NKJV

He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you. But to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

Discuss:

- How does the call to "love mercy" resonate with you in your current life situation?
- What does it mean to you personally to "love mercy" rather than just show it occasionally?

Part 2

James 2:12-13 NIV

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Discuss:

- What does "mercy triumphs over judgment" mean in practical terms?
- Can you share an experience where you felt you were called to show mercy instead of judgment?
- How did it feel, and what was the outcome?

Part 3

Luke 10:30–37 NLT

30 Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. 31 "By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. 32 A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side. 33 "Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. 34 Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. 35 The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.' 36 "Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. 37 The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."

Discuss:

- A. What stands out to you about the Samaritan's response, and how does it challenge you to respond to people in need around you?
- B. The sermon encourages us to "close the gap between the love we talk about and the way we walk it out." Where in your life is there a gap between talking about love and living it? How can you start closing that gap this week?

Part 4**Luke 10:25–29 NLT**

25 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?" 27 The man answered, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!" 29 The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Discuss:

- A. The religious expert wanted to justify himself by asking, "Who is my neighbor?" Why do you think he wanted to justify himself, and how do we sometimes try to justify our lack of compassion toward others?
- B. What does this reveal about the condition of our hearts?

Part 5**Lamentations 3:22-23 NLT**

The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. 23 Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning.

Discuss:

- A. God's mercies are "new every morning." How can this promise motivate us to show mercy to others, even when it's difficult?
- B. How does this truth impact the way we view our own failures and those of others?

Part 6**1 John 1:7-9 NLT**

But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

Discuss:

- A. How does confessing sin and walking in the light relate to living with mercy and compassion?
- B. How does understanding God's mercy toward us affect the way we extend mercy to others?