5. SHOWING MERCY
Matthew 5:7 (NLT): God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

I. WHY BE MERCIFUL TO OTHERS?
1. God has shown me mercy
Ephesians 2:4-5 (NLT): But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!)
Matthew 18:33 (NLT): Shouldn’t you have mercy on others, just as I had mercy on you?

2. God commands me to be merciful
Micah 6:8 (NLT): No, O people, the LORD has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.
Hosea 6:6 (NIV): For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

3. I’ll need mercy in the future
James 2:13 (NCV): So you must show mercy to others, or God will not show mercy to you when he judges you. But the person who shows mercy can stand without fear at the judgment.

4. Showing mercy brings happiness
Proverbs 14:21 (TEV): If you want to be happy, be kind to those in need; it is a sin to despise anyone!
Proverbs 11:17 (GW): A merciful person helps himself, but a cruel person hurts himself.

II. HOW TO BE MERCIFUL?
1. Be patient with people’s quirks
Ephesians 4:2 (LB): Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love.
James 2:13a (Phillips): The man who makes no allowances for others will find none made for him.
James 3:17 (NLT): The wisdom that comes from heaven is pure, peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. Wisdom is full of mercy...

2. Help anyone hurting around me
Proverbs 3:27 (TEV): Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it.
Romans 12:8: [When you do] acts of mercy, show mercy with cheerfulness.
Romans 12:8 (Message): …if you work with the disadvantaged, don’t let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

3. Give people a second chance
Ephesians 4:31-32 (CEV): Stop being bitter and angry and mad at others. Don’t yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude. Instead, be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.

4. Do good to those who hurt me
Luke 6:35-36 (NIV): But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

5. Be kind to those who offend me
1 Timothy 1:13,16: (Paul) Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief... But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.
Jude 1:22-23 (GW/NLT): Show mercy to those who have doubts. Save others by snatching them from the fire. Show mercy to them, while being careful that you aren’t contaminated by their sins.

6. Build bridges of love to the unpopular
Matthew 9:10-13 (NLT): Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with such scum?” When Jesus heard this, he said, “Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.” Then he added, “Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: ‘I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.’ For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.”

7. Value relationships over rules
Romans 13:10b: …love is the fulfilment of the law.
Matthew 12:1-4, 7-8 (NLT):
Life Group Discussion Guide

KINGDOM ATTITUDE

5. SHOWING MERCY

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Matthew 5:7 (NLT): God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Icebreaker: Ask people in your group to share an embarrassing or funny moment when they “nodded off” during a meeting. How did others respond? Did they show a lot of patience and mercy?

One of the keys to a blessed life is found in the beatitude in Matthew 5:7. It provides Jesus’ answer to the question, “Why be merciful to others?” Other reasons for being merciful include: 1. God has shown me mercy, 2. God commands me to be merciful, 3. I’ll need mercy in the future, and 4. Showing mercy brings happiness. That raises the question, “How do I be merciful?” Some ways to be merciful include: 1. Be patient with people’s needs, 2. Help anyone hurting around me, 3. Give people a second chance, 4. Do good to those who hurt me, 5. Be kind to those who offend me, 6. Build bridges of love to the unpopular, and 7. Value relationships over rules. Which of these seven facets of mercy could I show today? How?

Matthew 18:33 (NLT): Shouldn’t you have mercy on others, just as I had mercy on you?

1. What does Matthew 18:33 above say about having mercy? How often are we to show mercy?

2. Have you experienced another showing you mercy? How did it make you feel?

Hosea 6:6 (NLT): I want you to be merciful; I don’t want your sacrifices.

James 2:13 (NCV): So you must show mercy to others, or God will not show mercy to you… But the person who shows mercy can stand without fear at the judgment.

3. Read both verses above. Why does God command us to be merciful? How important to God is it that we be merciful? Is this important to you? Discuss what challenges you have being merciful.

35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Read Luke 6:35-36 above and think of people who have hurt you or your loved ones. What can you do to show mercy to them? Do you find it easy or hard? Brainstorm ways in which you can make that first step towards showing mercy easier, so you can help yourself, as it states in Proverbs 11:17, “a merciful person helps himself.”

4. Look up Matthew 9:10-13 and have someone read it out loud. Reflect on your past and current relationships with individuals who you considered unpopular “scum” (as it says in the New Living Translation!). If you had the chance to do it again, share how you might implement “premeditated mercy” as a better alternative to how you interacted with that person. How might the results have been different? Think of a current person who fits the mould of unpopular; design a simple strategy of premeditated mercy you could implement and share that plan with the group.

5. Refer back to Hosea 6:6 above. Jesus references this verse twice signifying its importance in his ministry here on earth. Asking the Holy Spirit to guide you, think of a ministry that is needed in your community to build bridges of mercy and love for an “unpopular” group. Who would it reach out to? What service would it provide? How could that ministry of mercy lead others to know Christ? What could you role be in making this ministry happen?

Diving Deeper (optional)

Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-38. How does Jesus answer the question, “Who is our neighbour?” This week, how can we build bridges for our ministry of mercy (for example, one of the “seven facets of mercy” noted in the introduction at the top of the page?) What people come to mind that we can go out of our way to show mercy to?