

# DEEPER

## Daily Bible Study

Podcast | Study Notes | Teacher Helps

Based on the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide

### To Love Mercy

2019, Quarter 3, Lesson 12

#### Sabbath (September 14): To Love Mercy

Although the words *love* and *mercy* appear many times in the Bible, only once do they appear together, when the prophet Micah challenged God's people, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). Let's begin this week's study by looking more closely at this well-known passage.

#### Discussion Questions:

- Read Micah 6:8. This verse identifies three requirements of the Lord upon every Christian—to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. Each one points to an important role that God's people are called to play in the great controversy:
  - To "do justly" means to "decide a case" by doing what is "proper" or "fitting," and it refers especially to a court of law. Satan has claimed that God's law cannot be kept, and God's answer to that charge is demonstrated as He enables people to "do justly" and live in obedience to His law (Romans 1:5).
  - To "love mercy" indicates a character that reflects God's character (Exodus 20:6). While God wants us to "do justly," it is even more important to Him that we do what is right because we *want* to, and because we *love* God.
  - To "walk humbly with God" reveals that it is possible to live in faith and obedience to God even in a world of sin. Noah walked with God (Genesis 6:9), and lived a life completely different from the corrupt and violent culture surrounding him (Genesis 6:5,12,14). Doing what is right when no one else is demonstrates the power of God to save and transform sinners into His image.

#### Sunday (September 15): Kingdom Priorities

It is so important to have the right priorities in life, for the results will determine what those priorities really were. And many of us have neglected to see the Bible as the authority for our lives; therefore, we don't have the right priorities. In today's lesson we'll look at what Jesus' kingdom sets as priorities and why our experience here and salvation depend on them.

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### Discussion Questions:

- Read Matthew 6:25. Is it saying here that we shouldn't plan anything at all or provide for our needs? Should we be careless about these things? Might we be spending more time concerned with less important things and neglecting that which is really important (such as character development, our relationship with God, ministering to those around us, etc)? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Matthew 6:26. How can we rely on God while at the same time not be presumptuous and neglect our duty? When we think that God will not provide for our needs, are we saying that He cares more about dumb animals than about us (even though He sent His Son to die to provide what we needed, i.e. salvation)? (By doubting the love of God, we also doubt His power to save us.)
- Read Matthew 6:30. Why does God take the time to care for such seemingly little things as grass, flowers, and birds? Why do we doubt God's faithfulness in taking care of us? Could our lack of trust come from a lack of love for God? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Matthew 6:32. Would our reliance on God for our needs somehow be a line of demarcation between us and the world? (Absolutely. Relying on Christ is the only way to be saved.) Can the Lord forget about our needs? (Never, as his word promises. See Isaiah 49:15.)
- Read Matthew 6:33. In neglecting the kingdom of God, are we missing out on blessings that could be freely given us from God? Are we seeking God daily? Do we seek Him first? Are we giving Him utmost importance and letting Him work His will in our lives, or are we grabbing the reigns of worry and control and trying to make things happen our own way? (Answers will vary.)

### **Monday (September 16): Compassion Fatigue**

In today's lesson we will look at Christ's life to learn the principles He used to remain compassionate, involved, and a blessing in other people's lives. These same principles can help us avoid "compassion fatigue" and the discouragement that can easily come to those who are seeking to help others.

### Discussion Questions:

- Read Mark 1:35. What enabled Jesus to remain compassionate toward other people? (He maintained His connection with the Father in heaven. We cannot show compassion to others without first receiving God's love into our hearts.)
- Read Luke 10:18. What does this verse reveal about Christ's world-view that enabled Him to see people compassionately? (He understood the great controversy and always remembered that the people He ministered to were so often under the influence and power of Satan.)
- Read John 4:35. What does this verse reveal about Christ's urgency to help, heal, and save people? (He realized that many of them were ready to accept Him and the truth, even in an unlikely place like Samaria.)

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- Read John 2:24,25. What did Jesus realize about people that enabled Him to maintain healthy expectations about them and their acceptance of Him? (He realized that not everyone would accept Him or appreciate His work for them.)

### Tuesday (September 17): Generosity

Generosity is a principle of heaven, a way of life in the kingdom of love. This is one way we can live today to reflect what glory will be like in the future. This principle is given as a privilege and a duty of God's people, and we should strive to make ourselves and our families known for the spirit of love in giving of ourselves and sharing all that we have received from the Lord.

#### Discussion Questions

- Read Lev. 25:35–37. How can we apply this principle now? (These are the principles of practical love toward your neighbor.) Are we to take in poor strangers to live with us? (This is indeed a possibility.) Should we freely give out money to the poor? (Answers will vary.) Would that be a correct use of the means God has entrusted to us? Are there perhaps other ways of applying this in our times? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Psalm 119:36. How does the Lord do this work? (By our asking the Lord to put in our hearts the right desire.) Do we have a part to play in cooperation with God? (We are to yield to the impression of the Holy Spirit.)
- Read 2 Cor. 8:12–15. Is the spirit in which we give also important? (Yes, as it is possible that the Lord gives us means, not to use selfishly, but to bless those that are less fortunate.)
- Read 1 John 3:16–18. What are ways that we can “lay down our life” for our brethren today? (Answers will vary.) In this way (laying down our life, figuratively) might we be showing that we are sons of God? (Yes, for when we deny help to those around us in need, we are showing we have no connection with God. His love is not in us). Shouldn't we as children of God have an inner desire to show compassion? (Answers will vary.)

“The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within. It is the atmosphere of this love surrounding the soul of the believer that makes him a savor of life unto life and enables God to bless his work.” AA 551

- Read 1 Timothy 6:17–19. What does being “highminded” mean? Do we ever trust in our riches above God even if we are not rich per se? What does v. 18 say about the things that God values (this being a giving heart, willing to communicate, etc)? Do we value those things as we should? How can doing these things “lay up a foundation against the time to come”? (Answers will vary.)

### Wednesday (September 18): Peacemaking

The call to peacemaking is not always easy. In fact, it is often extremely difficult to exercise this aspect of Christianity because we live in such a violent and morally darkened world. Still, the Bible reveals the importance of practicing this Christian grace.

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### Discussion Questions:

- Read Matthew 5:9. What kind of peacemaking do you think Jesus had in mind when He pronounced this blessing? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Matthew 5:10-11. For what reasons might Christ have warned about persecution immediately after the blessing of peacemaking is given? (We must not become discouraged if our efforts at peacemaking do not end the way we wish.)
- Read Matthew 5:8. Why might the beatitude about peacemaking follow immediately after the one about the pure in heart seeing God? What does this reveal about the prerequisite for true peacemaking? (True peacemaking is possible only when we have “seen God” and have understood His character, His plan for every person, and His power to redeem every person in every situation.) Why is a “pure heart” necessary for true peacemaking? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Luke 12:51-53. What does this passage reveal about true peacemaking? (Although Jesus came to reconcile God and man, He realized that His message and life would create division and hostility among many people. Still, Jesus continued with the mission God had given Him, confident that God’s purposes would ultimately be fulfilled.) What lessons does this have for us today? (Answers will vary.)

### **Thursday (September 19): A Voice for the Voiceless**

The world today seems to love a good social cause to proclaim. Yet many of the social movements and causes that we see around us or in the media are not the type that heaven approves. However, there is a voice of the voiceless that we must embrace, if we are to be found living in Christ. Today we’ll look at this message from the book of Isaiah. It may surprise us.

### Discussion Questions:

- Read Isaiah 58:1. Why is this message so important --“cry aloud, spare not, ... voice like a trumpet”? Could this message be for us now and not just the ancient Israelites? (Absolutely. This message applies to us based on our similar condition to ancient Israel.)  
  
“To the servant of God at this time is the command addressed: “Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” [Isaiah 58:1]. So far as his opportunities extend, everyone who has received the light of truth is under the same solemn and fearful responsibility as was the prophet of Israel...” GC 459
- Read Isaiah 58:2. It is interesting to point out that they didn’t see that they were in transgression, that they were displeasing God. How easily can that happen to us? (Answers will vary.) What can we do to see our transgression? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Isaiah 58:3-5. When we feel that God is not answering our prayers, could it be because we have not acted upon some light that we’ve received? (Yes, that is precisely why the Lord cannot grant our petitions.) Are we doing outward service without our heart when we work for the Lord? (This can often be the case, and the life will testify our heart is not in the Lord.) Why is the term “fasting” used so often in this section? (Such sacrifices and fasting, were exterior works done out of pride for the sake of showing others their “righteousness”.)

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- Read Isaiah 58:6-7. Is this talking only about a literal application -- loosing physical bands, burdens, etc. -- or could it also have a spiritual meaning? (It is both.) How do we know when it is only literal and when it also has a spiritual application? (We are to supply the physical needs and then the spiritual. It is always both if needed). Why is it that the Lord is so concerned about our selfless service? (Because a person who dies to self has Christ in the heart). Why is this “fast” that He has chosen one of self-sacrifice and compassionate service to the needy around us? (Answers will vary.) How can we stop neglecting this and do the will of the Lord? (Answers will vary.)
- Read Isaiah 58:8. What is standing in the way between us and the gifts God wants to bestow? (Our pride and love of the world.) What promises here do you think have the most significance for us today? (Answers will vary.)

### Friday (September 20): The Most Powerful Truth

In today’s lesson we will consider this powerful statement found in the book *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings*: “Search heaven and earth, and there is no truth revealed more powerful than that which is made manifest in works of mercy to those who need our sympathy and aid. This is the truth as it is in Jesus. When those who profess the name of Christ shall practice the principles of the golden rule, the same power will attend the gospel as in apostolic times” (TMB 317).

#### Discussion Questions:

- Is it possible to have the truth “outside of Jesus”? (Apparently so.) What might that look like? (It could be legalistic and focused on doing all the right things, but without a focus on Christ’s love and power working in and through our lives. It could also become a socially focused religion with lots of activity to help others, but without reference or respect for God’s call to holy living and obedience to His commandments.)
- Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Where will both of these false religious experiences lead us? (Into a life with a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.)
- Read Acts 1:8. How do we receive God’s power to live the truth daily as it is in Jesus? (By receiving the Holy Spirit each day.)
- Read John 8:1-11. How does this story reveal the truth as it is in Jesus? (Christ cared for the physical and social evils that plagued people. He used His interactions with people, and His healing of their sicknesses and other problems, to lead them into a life of faith and obedience to God.)