

“Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.”

The word merciful means *to show compassion, pity; forgiveness; kindness*

Mercy is active - it's not just *feeling* compassionate, it's *doing* something compassionate.

1. Can you share a situation when **you were shown** mercy?

What about a situation when **you showed a person mercy**?

Can you think of a particular occasion when did not show mercy?...Did you think that someone had a lesson to learn and you had to be cruel to be kind?

2. Oswald Chambers wrote in *My Utmost for His Highest* 'We have to keep letting go, and slowly, but surely, the great full life of God will invade us, penetrating every part, by battling an issue we may be 'hanging on' to our selfish ways trying to do things in our own strength.' Discuss this in terms of mercy and forgiveness

3. Mercy is treating others the way God treated us. How would you want to be corrected if you were the person who'd caused harm? If we imagine ourselves in the other person's position...God will reveal a course of action that is both fair & merciful. Discuss

4. Mercy is not letting other people get away with murder.... Sometimes, it's merciful to give our children some sharp correction. But unless that correction comes from a loving heart, an attempt to discipline may fail. An unfair punishment can cause our children to become bitter. (see Eph 6:4) Discuss

5. If we ask God for things and want Him to solve our problems Then we can't turn our backs on someone whose problems we can help to solve . Do you agree?

6. Mercy is what happens when someone doesn't get what they deserve... When their debt is forgiven, when the charges are forgotten, and the guilty are let off . Mercy is not free - it comes at a price - the price is paid by the one who has been hurt . Mercy is how we break the cycle of evil & retaliation. Give some examples of how mercy could bring healing in your nation.

7. It can be easy to forgive someone who comes to us in repentance and says: *“Please forgive me. I'm so sorry, I'll never do that again.. I'll make it right.”* But what about when it is someone who's hurt us and continues to hurt us?

8. Taking pleasure in the downfall of someone who has harmed us means that we're becoming like our abuser. Do you agree?

9. Holding onto anger, bitterness & unforgiveness is like drinking poison & expecting our enemy to die - we've all heard the saying *"hurt people hurt people"* Discuss

10. Jesus the Son of God, was nailed to a cross by the people he came to rescue. As He hung naked, suspended by nails...He prayed for His persecutors. In the midst of His pain He said *'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'* (Luke 23: 34). Forgiveness & mercy are not momentary choices - they're disciplines of the heart. **Have you forgiven** the person who has wounded you?