



elev8

life on another level

Student Workbook

YEAR 3

Life and Action
Blessed are the Merciful

Bible Readings

Matthew 18:21-35

Luke 6:27-36

Romans 3



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this week you will be able to:

- Learnt about Corrie ten Boom and the way God helped her to show mercy.
- Been challenged to think about why/why not mercy should be shown to others.
- Learnt some of Jesus' teaching on mercy.

Notes from Bible Reading

Scripture A word or phrase that stood out to me:

Observation What is happening in this Bible reading?

Application Something that I learned about who I am or how I should live:

Prayer What I would like to say to God, ask of God, or what I think God is saying to me:

Key Question What value is there in showing mercy?

Engage

Go around the group and share one thing for each heading that has happened since you last met:

- Plus – What has been good or enjoyable?
- Minus – What has been difficult or painful?
- Interesting – What has been unusual or thought provoking?

Discussion starter question:

Is there value in showing mercy to others?
Why / Why not?

Some interesting facts:

- Mercy: compassion or forgiveness shown to someone who you have the opportunity to punish; Showing someone compassion, understanding, or giving them help they may not deserve.
- Corrie ten Boom, whose story you will read about soon, was a Dutch lady whose family helped Jews during World War II. They were found out, and Corrie and her sister were sent to a concentration camp called 'Ravensbruck'. Corrie's sister died while there, but miraculously Corrie was released. With God's help, she displayed amazing mercy to those who treated her so cruelly - she forgave them.

Explore – Locate

- *What stood out to you in the Bible readings this week?*
- *What did you find meaningful or significant?*
- *Is there anything that you didn't understand or found confusing?*
- *Any questions or comments you may have?*

Read together: Matthew 18:21-35

Corrie ten Boom had just finished sharing her message in a German church when a "balding, heavy-set man in a grey overcoat" approached her. She remembered him all at once. He had been one of the cruellest guards at Ravensbruck. He came up to her and said, "A fine message, Fraulein! How good it is to know that, as you say, all our sins are at the bottom of the sea!"

The story goes on like this, in Corrie's own words: "I remembered him and the leather crop swinging from his belt. I was face-to-face with one of my captors and my blood seemed to freeze.

'You mentioned Ravensbruck in your talk,' he was saying. 'I was a guard there.' No, he did not remember me. 'But since that time,' he went on, 'I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. Fraulein' - again the hand came out - 'will you forgive me?'

And I stood there - I whose sins had again and again to be forgiven - and could not forgive. Betsie had died in that place - could he erase her slow terrible death simply for the asking?

It could not have been many seconds that he stood there - hand held out - but to me it seemed hours as I wrestled with the most difficult thing I ever had to do. For I had to do it - I knew that. The message that God forgives has a prior condition: that we forgive those who have injured us. 'If you do not forgive men their trespasses,' Jesus says, 'neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.'

I knew it not only as a commandment of God, but as a daily experience. Since the end of the war I had had a home in Holland for victims of Nazi brutality. Those who were able to forgive their former enemies were able also to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives... Those who nursed their bitterness remained invalids. It was as simple and as horrible as that.

And I stood there with the coldness clutching my heart. But forgiveness is not an emotion - I knew that too. Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart. 'Jesus, help me!' I prayed silently. 'I can lift my hand. I can do that much. You supply the feeling.'

And so woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me. And as I did, and incredible thing took place. The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into our

(continued...)

Explore – Locate (*...continued*)

joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes.

'I forgive you brother!' I cried. 'With all my heart.'

For a long moment we grasped each other's hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God's love so intensely as I did then. But even so, I realised it was not my love. I had tried, and did not have the power. It was the power of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Romans 5:5, '...because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who, he has given us.'

Resource: *Tramp for the Lord*. By Corrie ten Boom. Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1974.

Explore – Express

One person in your group is elected 'judge'.

Imagine each other person in the group has committed the same crime (which you may come up with as a group).

Then, each person has the opportunity to convince the judge for up to 1 minute as to why they should be shown mercy (Be as dramatic as you like!).

The judge can give mercy to one person only, and must justify their decision.

Explore – Integrate

- What do you think of Corrie ten Boom's story?
- Has anyone ever forgiven you or shown you mercy when you know you did not deserve it?
- Have you ever forgiven or shown mercy to someone else when they did not deserve it? If so, how did you feel about it?
- Is God merciful? Why do you/do you not think so?
- Why is it important to God that we show mercy?

Extend

Discuss with your group the challenges you are tackling. Use the time to ask for any help you might need, or to work together on any shared projects that you have.

Questions that may be helpful include:

- What challenges are you working on at the moment?
- Do you need any support or assistance?
- Are there any challenges that you have completed that we need to recognise and celebrate?
- Are there any new challenges that you want to work on?

Encourage

Tell another student in your group something you value or appreciate about them.

Share one thing you would like to pray for and pray for one another.

*Show us your ways, O Lord,
Teach us your paths;
Guide us in your truth and teach us;
For you are God our Saviour,
and our hope is in you all day long.
Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love,
Remember not the sins of my youth & my rebellious ways;
According to your love remember me,
For you are good, O Lord.*

Amen.

(Adapted from Psalm 25)