

God Shows His Mercy and Compassion to You!

Memory Verse: Psalm 86:15 *“But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”*

Main Teaching: God shows His mercy and compassion to you

Word Up: God is merciful

Supplies:

- Word Up Booklet – Word Up (Resource Pack)
- Mercy, Grace and Compassion Color Sheet and crayons or markers– Small Group (Resource Pack)
- Recording for “Christ Redeemed Us” and “Jesus is the Good News” - Worship (Sing About the King 3 CD)
- Optional Song Visuals for “Christ Redeemed Us” and “Jesus is the Good News” (cefpress.com)
- Balloon, masking tape and pin – Object Lesson
- Memory Verse Visual – Memory Verse (Resource Pack)
- Small container with things to fill it – toys, beans, rice etc. – Memory Verse
- Fishy Fish Cards with key words – Memory Verse (Resource Pack)
- Joni Eareckson Tada Missionary Story – Missionary Story (Resource Pack)
- Copy of Thinking of you card for each small group – Small Group / Wonder Time (Resource Pack)
- Memory Verse Token Psalm 86:15 for each child – Dismissal (Resource Pack)

Schedule at a Glance (75 min club):

- 15 min – Small Group color sheet
- 10 min – Worship
- 10 min – Balloon Object Lesson
- 15 min – Memory Verse
- 5 min – Missions Story
- 10 min – Know Your Leaders Game
- 10 min – Small Group Wonder Time

INTRODUCTION

The small minor prophet book of Jonah tucked near the end of the Old Testament is a shining jewel showcasing the mercy and compassion of God to a people who were against Him and to a reluctant, prejudiced prophet. Nineveh was known for its vile behavior and sinful ways. Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian empire, was well-known for its atrocities against Israel and other nations. To say the Ninevites were despised by the Jews would be an understatement. Enter Jonah and God’s command to go tell Nineveh they would be destroyed. Johan’s reaction is much like our own when considering our enemies – he decided Nineveh was not worthy of God’s mercy but of His judgement. The events that follow are spectacular (there is a giant fish involved after all)! But the most spectacular fact of this story is the extent of God’s mercy and compassion, even to those who we might see as undeserving. The Ninevites were outcasts, but as the book of Jonah shows, they were not outcasts in God’s eyes. Through this lesson, children will learn all are welcome through God’s mercy and compassion.



SMALL GROUP

Mercy, Grace and Compassion Color Sheet

Give kids the mercy, grace and compassion color sheet. As they are coloring, talk about mercy, grace and compassion.

Mercy is not getting a punishment you deserve. When someone forgives you instead of punishing you, that is mercy. Because of your sins, God should punish you and you should be separated from Him forever. But God offers you mercy if you believe in Him. He wants to forgive your sins. If you believe in Him, He will forgive you for every wrong thing you did in your past and every wrong thing you will do in the future. Can you think of a time you were shown mercy? How did that feel?

Grace is a free gift that God gives you, even though you don't deserve it. God loves you so much, that He gives you blessings or good things. Can you name some blessings God has given you? The best thing God gives you is the free gift of salvation. You can be saved, or rescued from the punishment of sin by believing in Jesus.

Compassion is feeling concern for the suffering of others. When you are concerned for your friend that gets hurt on the playground, you are showing your friend compassion. God shows us compassion. He always cares about how we are doing and knows when we are sad or mad or frustrated. He is concerned for us and always wants what is best for us. We can talk to Him any time and tell Him how we are feeling. Have you had a time when you showed compassion or when you needed compassion?

WORSHIP

"Jesus is the Good News"

"Christ Redeemed Us"

CLUB RULES

Review your looks like/sounds like chart to make sure kids know how they are expected to behave during club.



WORD UP!

"God is merciful!"

When someone does something wrong, they deserve to be punished for it. Sometimes punishments for kids might be losing something you like for a time, not getting to do something fun that you want to do, or having to do extra chores around the house. As you get older, the punishments can be bigger like losing a job, having to pay money, or even going to jail. We don't like to get punished, but when bad things happen, we want them to be made right. Justice means that the wrong thing that happened gets its right punishment. But sometimes mercy happens too—mercy is not getting the punishment, even though it is deserved. The most merciful one of all is God. We deserve to be punished for our sins but, in His mercy, God made a way for us to be forgiven. Say with me, **"God is merciful!"** (Say with children.)

OBJECT LESSON**The Law of Mercy**

I have a balloon here. It is going to represent you. This pin is going to represent sin, or the wrong things that you do. If this balloon comes in contact with the sin pin, what is going to happen? Yes! It is going to pop. There is a really big consequence for when the balloon comes in contact with sin pin. There is a really big consequence when we come in contact with sin too. Sometimes those consequences happen here on earth. If you play video games instead of doing your homework, your consequence might be getting a bad grade, or having to stay in from recess to finish your homework. Or if you steal something your consequence might be going to jail and having to pay a fine. But there is an even bigger consequence for sin. That consequence is being separated from God.

But God loves you so much, that He wants to have a relationship with you. He made a way so that you don't have to pay the eternal consequence of being separated from Him because of your sin. He doesn't give us what we deserve, He gives us the choice to believe in Jesus. This masking tape is going to represent Jesus. (Put two pieces of masking tape on the bottom of the balloon – opposite from where you blow it up - in a cross shape.) Jesus is God the Son. He came down to earth to take the punishment for your sin. Instead of you being punished for your sin, God offers us mercy. Jesus gave His perfect blood to pay the price for your sin. So instead of being separated from God forever, which should be your punishment, you can have your sins forgiven and can live with Jesus forever. (Stick the pin in the balloon through the 2 layers of tape. It shouldn't pop.) We can have a relationship with Jesus that starts right now, and last forever. That is mercy!

**MEMORY VERSE**

"But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."
(Psalm 86:15)

INTRODUCTION

(Bring in a small container and items to fill it with; e.g., small toys, stuffed animals, candy, beans, etc. Show children the empty container.) I'd like to fill this container with (name items) and I need your help. Can you tell me when it's full? (Start adding items to the container, or have children come up and add items. Every few items ask, "Is it full?" When it is full, stop putting items in.) This container is now full! But what would happen if we kept filling it? Let's find out! (Continue to fill until items are falling out.) This container is full to overflowing. Another word we could use is abounding or plenty. There is more than enough! Our verse today tells us some things God has plenty of which will never run out.

PRESENTATION

(Read Psalm 86:15 from Bible then from visual with children.) This verse is found in God's Word, the Bible, in the book of Psalms. That's the same book where we found last week's verse. Can someone come up and see if you can open my Bible to the middle and find the book of Psalms? (Do with children.) Now let's find chapter 86, verse 15. (Have child find verse, giving assistance as needed.) Let's say just the address in three fun ways – a daddy voice, mommy voice and a baby voice. The first part of the Bible, the Old Testament, has 39 smaller books including the book of Psalms. The New Testament comes after it and has 27 smaller books in it. Altogether the Bible has 66 books. Even though there are so many books, all of them agree! They all tell the one big story of God working to save people from sin. Our verse today tells us why God wants to save people from sin—it's because He has plenty of mercy, grace, love, and faithfulness!

EXPLANATION

But you, O Lord, are a God merciful—God, who created all things, is full of mercy. To be merciful means to show kindness to someone instead of giving them the punishment they deserve. God is merciful to all people. He sees we are born lost in sin and made a way for us to be saved by sending Jesus to take the punishment we deserved for our sin. That is God showing us mercy!

and gracious—God is also full of grace! He shows us love and favor even though we don't deserve it.

slow to anger—God is patient. He does not get angry easily but gives people chances again and again to come to Him and believe in Him.

and abounding—Abounding means “full of.” Remember the container was full of (name of items) until it was overflowing? God's mercy, grace, and patience overflow toward us!

in steadfast love and faithfulness—God's love and faithfulness are steadfast. They are unchanging and they go on forever. He will never leave us and will always be with us. Because God is faithful, you can know that He will do what He says He will do.

God is full of mercy, grace, patience, love, and faithfulness! He is all of these things and much more! He abounds in these things.

APPLICATION

Saved: If you have already believed in Jesus as your Savior, you can be happy that God abounds in mercy, grace, patience, love, and faithfulness! Because God shows these things to you, you can show them to others. God can help you show mercy and love to those who are mean to you. That's a hard thing to do, but God can help you as you remember His mercy and love to you.

Unsaved: If you have not believed in Jesus as your Savior, God offers mercy and love to you. He knows you're lost in your sin. Sin is anything you think, say or do that makes God sad or breaks His laws. Because of your sin, you deserve to be punished. But He made the way to show you His mercy and take your sin away. God loves you so much, that He sent Jesus down to earth as a baby. But Jesus was different than all the other kids, He was perfect. He never did anything wrong because He is God the Son. When Jesus grew up, He gave His perfect blood to pay the price for your sins. Jesus died that day, but He didn't stay dead. Three days later He came alive again. He used His God power to come back to life. You receive God's mercy when you believe in Jesus as your Savior, which you can do today! Say with me, “**God is merciful!**” (Say with children.)

INVITATION



What about you? Do you know that you have sinned? Do you know that Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for your sin? Have you made the decision to put your trust in Him? The Bible says in Acts 16:31 “*Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved.*” When you believe in Jesus, trusting that He died on the cross for your sins, you will be saved – rescued from sin's punishment. God will change you on the inside, helping you love Him and obey Him each day. Will you turn from your sin and believe in the Lord Jesus today? Please bow your head and close your eyes. If you called on Jesus for the very first time today, or you want to talk to someone more about doing that, please show me by raising your hand. If you raised your hand, please meet me (*designate location*) and I'll show you more from God's Word how you can be saved.

REPETITION

Fishy Fish”

Prepare paper fish that have some of the key words of the verse on them, such as God, full, gracious, compassion, long suffering, mercy, truth. Have a child pick a fish out of a fishbowl and then come up with a motion to go with the word that is written on the fish. Say the verse and do the motion when you come to that word. Continue until all fish are picked. If desired, you may keep repeating motions while adding a new one for each repetition.

Variation: Have child fish for a fish by attaching a paper clip to each fish and using a “pole” with a magnet at the end.

MISSIONS STORY

**Joni Eareckson Tada
Part 2**



Lying face down at the bottom of the water, Joni wondered, How did I get to the bottom so quickly? Why do my arms seem tied across my chest? Am I caught in a fishnet? My legs won't move!

Joni held her breath—trying desperately to break free. I'm drowning, she thought, and I can't call out for help!

Then she heard her sister Kathy calling her.

Kathy realized something wasn't right and she lifted Joni out of the water. Choking and gagging, Joni gulped in mouthfuls of fresh air.

“Are you okay?!” Kathy asked anxiously.

Joni wasn't sure. She couldn't feel her arms or legs as they dangled in the water.

Kathy and another swimmer quickly got Joni to the shore where a small crowd gathered around her, staring and whispering.

“Someone, call an ambulance,” Kathy shouted at them.

“Kathy, I can't move! Hold me!” Joni cried.

“I am holding you, Joni. Look!” Joni saw that Kathy was holding both of her hands tightly.

“I can't feel my hands.” Kathy leaned over and held Joni close in a hug. But Joni still couldn't feel anything. She was very scared.

Kathy's arm moved to touch Joni's shoulder. Bravely, she asked, “What about this?”

“Yes! Yes, I can feel that!” Joni cried with relief. I'm going to be okay, she thought. I wonder how long the numbness in my arms and legs will last.

“God won't let anything happen to me,” Joni assured Kathy. “I'll be alright.”

By the time an ambulance got Joni and Kathy to the hospital, the sun had set and the sky was dark, but bright lights shown inside. Joni felt sick and scared, and she just wanted to go home.

Joni quietly whispered parts of Psalm 23. "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. Thou art with me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me..."

Soon a man in a white coat appeared. "I'm Dr. Sherrill. And your name is...Joanie?"

"It's pronounced 'Johnny,' after my father," she told him.

"Okay, Joni," the doctor said. "Let's see what happened to you."

The doctor started poking her arms and legs with a long pin. "Can you feel this?" he asked after each poke.

And each time Joni said, "No, I can't."

When he touched her shoulder with the pin, she said, "Ouch! Yes! I can feel it!"

"Looks like a fracture dislocation," the doctor said, but Joni didn't know what that was.

The nurse gave Joni a shot to help her sleep then they started to cut off all her hair. "No!" she cried. "Please! Not my hair!" but it had to be cut for the surgery she needed. Long strands of her blonde hair fell to the floor. Soon Joni's head was completely shaved, leaving her more afraid than ever.

Joni wondered, "What if I don't wake up? Oh, God, I'm so afraid!". Finally she fell asleep.

When Joni woke up after the surgery, she still couldn't feel her arms and legs. Now she couldn't move at all. She felt the metal tongs holding her head in place. My head and shoulders are the only parts of my body I can feel and now they hurt! She glanced down at her body.

She was in a bed called a Stryker frame, which was a metal frame covered with canvas used as a

bed for special patients in the hospital. She couldn't move in this bed at all and only her head stuck out of the top.

Joni wondered how long she would be here. Soon weeks had gone by, and Joni was still in the frame. She was thankful family and friends would come to visit her. She tried to have a good attitude.

The doctors took several tests to determine how to help Joni. One day, Dr. Sherrill sat down to talk with Joni and her parents. He told her that her last surgery was a success but then he gave her a warning. "Joni, the days ahead will be difficult for you."

Joni wasn't worried. She said confidently, "I know it'll take time, but I'll get better."

Joni's mother asked, "When will Joni be able to go to college with her friends?"

The doctor replied slowly, "I'm not sure you understand. The surgery only put the bones back together in Joni's neck. It didn't change the permanent damage from the injury. Joni will never walk again. She may be able to use her hands again someday but we don't even know if she will be able to do that."

Shocked by his words, Joni lay speechless. She tried to let the words sink in...Never walk again ...May be able to use my hands again ...It can't be ...I will walk again!

After her parents and the doctor left the room, Joni quietly thought about everything. How would you feel if someone told you that you would never be able to walk again?

Could Dr. Sherrill really be right? Did God have a plan for all of this? Could He use Joni even if she could never walk again? You'll have to come back next week to find out.

ACTIVITY

Know Your Leader Pointing Game

Go around the room and introduce all of the volunteers. Say a leader's name, and everyone points to them. If your club is small, you can do this with everyone. Say the names faster and faster to keep the kids engaged.



SMALL GROUP / WONDER TIME

"Thinking about You"

Let's see what our letter today has to say! (Open up envelope with Thinking about You note in it.) It's a postcard that says, "Thinking of you". Have you ever gotten a letter or postcard like that?

This one also says, "God wants you to know He is full of compassion and mercy."

God gave us the Bible so we can know Him and what He is like. The more you know Him, the more you will grow to love Him! The Bible says He is full of compassion and mercy, just like we learned about in our memory verse. (Quote Psalm 86:15 with children.)

Because God is full of compassion and mercy, He often gives people many chances to turn from their sins and come to know Him. Next week we will hear how He did that for the people of Nineveh! But sometimes, people won't turn to God. God is full of compassion and mercy, but He is also just. Just is connected to justice. Justice demands that someone must pay for the wrong thing that has been done. God cannot let sin continue forever. Sometimes that means punishing the people who are doing sinful things and hurting others.

This happened many times in the Old Testament part of the Bible. You might read stories where God says that people or cities should be destroyed. These stories can be hard to understand. It is important to remember that God has compassion and mercy but God also is just.

Think about a time when you were punished for something you did wrong. Were you able to say you were sorry and receive forgiveness? How does it feel when someone forgives you?

DISMISSAL

Hand out memory verse token to each child and encourage them to memorize the verse and bring the token back completed next week. Remind the kids to be quick to forgive others this week and to thank God for showing us mercy.

