

# MOBILIZING MERCY

A Study on Putting Jesus' Call to Mercy in Action

## INTRODUCTION

There is a divide among serious Christians about what the Christian life should look like. Each camp loves the Lord Jesus and wants to be faithful to Him. But they have different ideas about the focus of the Christian life.

On one end of the spectrum are pietists who are primarily concerned with personal piety and holiness. They are passionate about discipleship and evangelism.

On the other end of the spectrum are activists who are more oriented toward addressing social problems. They believe Christians aren't just called to personal holiness, but their faith should make the world a better place.

So, in one camp are pietists focused primarily on private sins and personal transformation. And in the other camp are activists focused on public sins and social transformation.

And each group looks at the other with suspicion. The pietists think the activists are becoming too liberal and preaching a social gospel. The activists think the pietists are too inwardly focused and failing to be salt and light in the world.

So here is an important question: Is there common ground for these two camps? I believe there is, and it is found in the Bible's call for mercy.

Mercy is an important part of personal transformation and discipleship. After all, when Jesus was describing the Christian life in the beatitudes, He states: "Blessed are the merciful." To be an obedient disciple of Jesus, we must be merciful.

And mercy leads to social transformation. When mercy is expressed in Jesus' name, it inevitably makes a positive impact in the world around us.

In this study, we will explore what it means to live out Jesus' call to be merciful. And in the process, we might find God will use us to bring transformation to the world around us.

Greg Norwine  
Director | GlobalFingerprints

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### MISSIONAL KIDS

Do you wish your kids (or grandkids) were more compassionate and empathetic?



# Lesson 1

## THE PRIORITY OF MERCY

SUMMARY: According to Jesus, mercy is a priority in the Christian life.

### INTRODUCTION

Where does showing mercy fall on Jesus' list of priorities? We get an answer to that question in a surprising place. In Matthew 23, Jesus confronts the Pharisees and Scribes for their hypocrisy. They claim to be serving God, yet they vehemently oppose and attempt to undermine the very Son of God. In Mathew 23, Jesus takes these blind spiritual leaders to task. He pronounces seven woes that expose their spiritual bankruptcy.

One of those woes specifically addresses our topic. The Pharisees and Scribes had a form of spirituality, but their spiritual priorities were all wrong. Jesus sets the record straight, and in the process helps us to understand the importance of mercy in the Christian life.

### STUDY

#### Read Matthew 23:23-24

*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. 24 You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!*

#### BACKGROUND NOTE

In the Old Testament law, God's people were required to tithe from their crops. Everybody agreed on that. It was clear in the law. But what about your own personal garden? What about the spices you grew for your own cooking? Did you have to tithe that too? The Pharisees and Scribes were so zealous about the law they even tithed from their personal gardens. They tithed their mint and dill and cumin. They gave 10% of their personal spices to the Lord.

Tithing mint, dill and cumin was an attempt to scrupulously obey the law. And surprisingly, Jesus actually affirms this practice in verse 23. Today, we might call this attempt to be obedient in the little things (like obeying the speed limit and claiming everything on your taxes) "personal integrity."

*What are two or three areas of personal integrity that Christians might be prone to neglect in our day?*

*Is there an area of personal integrity you need to firm up a bit?*

According to Jesus, attention to the little things in our obedience to God is a good thing. But there must be a sense of proportion.

*What do you think Jesus means by saying the religious leaders were straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel?*

*What does Jesus say are the weightier matters of the law? Try to define each in your own words.*

**BACKGROUND NOTE**

What exactly is mercy? There is confusion about this term. In his book *Sermon on the Mount*, eminent New Testament scholar D. A. Carson has to say about the word *mercy* in the New Testament.

*What is mercy? How does it differ from grace? The two terms are frequently synonymous; but where there is a distinction between the two, it appears that grace is a loving response when love is undeserved, and mercy is a loving response prompted by the misery and helplessness of the one on whom the love is to be showered. Grace answers to the undeserving; mercy answers to the miserable.*  
(Carson, p. 27)

We are not specifically told in this passage, why these character qualities are weightier than others. So, we are left to speculate.

*Why do you think these character qualities are singled out as particularly weighty?*

Before we concern ourselves with expressing mercy to others, we need to understand how much we have experienced mercy ourselves. We learned from our Background Note that mercy is God’s loving response to people who are helpless and in a miserable situation.

**Read Ephesians 2:1-3**

*Describe the miserable and helpless condition you were in before putting your faith in Christ.*

**Read Ephesians 2:4-9** which describes how God showed you mercy.

*Write a brief psalm of thanksgiving to God for the way He showed His mercy to you.*

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## APPLICATION

Demonstrating mercy begins at home and church and ripples outward. The Bible gives us clear priorities for who we should express mercy toward.

The first level is our own family. 1 Timothy 5:8 tells us that disregarding the needs of our own family members makes us worse than an unbeliever. So, our responsibilities begin there.

### 1 Timothy 5:8

*But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Galatians 6:10 then broadens our scope for addressing the needy. It encourages us to help all people but with priority given to fellow Christians.

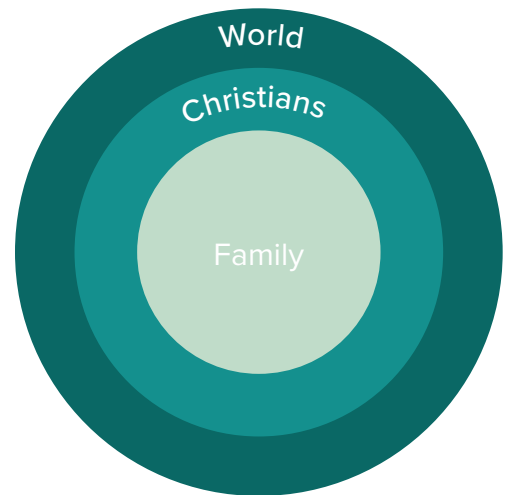
### Galatians 6:10

*So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

You will see in our next lessons that Matthew 5:16 and Luke 10:25-29 broaden the scope even more as

they encourage us to do acts of kindness out of love for neighbor and to bring Glory to God.

*Is there anyone in your family who is helpless or in misery and needs mercy? How can you demonstrate loving concern to them?*



## FIELD RESEARCH

*Is there anyone in your church who is helpless or in a miserable situation? How can you demonstrate loving concern to them this month?*

How does your church care for church members who have significant physical and emotional needs such as those out of work or who have lost a spouse? If you don't know for sure, do some research to find out. What role could you play?

## VOICES THROUGH HISTORY

Jonathan Edwards is considered by many to be America's greatest theologian. In a sermon entitled Christian Charity he made this statement:

*"Indeed, it is generally acknowledged to be a duty, to be kind to the needy; but by many it seems not to be looked upon as a duty of great importance. However, it is mentioned in Scripture as one of the greater and more essential duties of religion."  
(Edwards)*

# Lesson 2

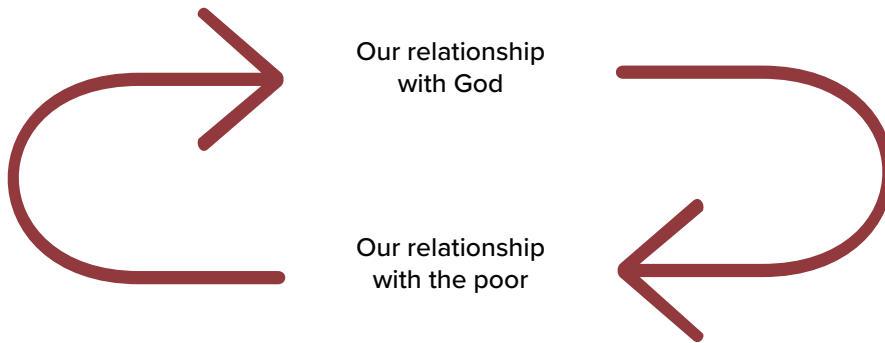
## BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

SUMMARY: How we treat the poor both reflects and impacts our relationship with God.

### INTRODUCTION

If we're honest, most of us don't think it will make much difference in our own life if we help the poor or not. We know it's a good thing to do. But it's not going to significantly impact our life one way or the other.

According to the scriptures, nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible portrays a very dynamic relationship between how we treat the poor and our relationship with God. The dynamic works two ways. Our relationship with God has a significant impact on the way we respond to those in need. And the way we respond to those in need has a significant impact on our relationship with God. You might think of it something like this:



Matthew 5:7 makes this connection very clear. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." In other words, Christians who show mercy to those in need will receive a special dose of God's mercy directed back toward them.

Of course, as we saw in the last lesson, the reverse is true as well. We have received mercy from God. He saved us from our miserable and helpless condition. So, we are merciful to others because we have received God's mercy toward us.

In our study today, we will see more examples of this reciprocal dynamic at work.

### STUDY

#### A. Our treatment of the poor brings God's reward or discipline

In each of the passages below, underline the positive response we will receive from God for helping the poor.

##### Proverbs 19:17

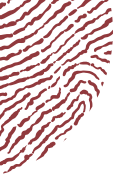
*Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.*

##### Proverbs 22:9

*The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.*

##### Proverbs 28:27

*Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.*



**Luke 12:33**

*Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys.*

*What is your reaction to the rewards you underlined?*

*Which of the rewards above is most meaningful to you? Why?*

In each of the passages below, underline the negative responses we will receive from God for ignoring or mistreating the poor.

**Proverbs 21:13**

*Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.*

**Proverbs 22:16**

*Whoever oppresses the poor to increase his own wealth, or gives to the rich, will only come to poverty.*

**Proverbs 22:22-23**

*Do not rob the poor, because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate,<sup>23</sup> for the LORD will plead their cause and rob of life those who rob them.*

**BACKGROUND NOTE: THE DISCIPLINE OF GOD**

To understand the scriptures about God's negative response for ignoring or mistreating the poor, we need to understand what the Bible says about God's discipline. We do not earn our salvation or standing with God. It is based on God's grace and received through faith. Romans 5:2 makes this abundantly clear:

**ROMANS 5:2**

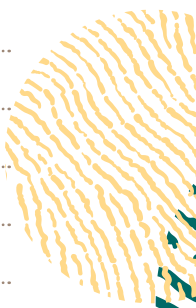
*Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

We do not lose our standing in God's grace when we disobey God or displease Him. However, in His love, God may discipline us when we disobey Him to bring us back into line and back to Himself. That is likely what is being described in some of the verses above.

*What is your reaction to the scriptures that warn us about not helping the needy?*

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## **B. Our treatment of the poor reveals the authenticity of our relationship with God**

There is another dynamic between helping the poor and our relationship with God. How we respond to the poor is an indicator of the authenticity of our relationship with God. Matthew 25 powerfully and soberly portrays this relationship.

### **Read Matthew 25:31-46**

Matthew 25:31-46 is a difficult passage and scholars disagree about how to understand it. One leading interpretation is that how Christians respond to fellow Christians in need (those in need are called “brothers” in verse 40, indicating they are Believers) reveals the nature of our own heart. Those who are calloused toward fellow believers in need demonstrate they do not have a heart transformed by God.

**Read 1 John 3:14-16** which makes a similar point.

*According to both Matthew 25:31-46 and 1 John 3:14-16, what does it say about our hearts if we don't show mercy to fellow Christians in need?*

*What do you think your attitude and actions toward Christians in need says about your heart?*

## **C. Our treatment of the poor is taken personally by God**

There is another intriguing and surprising dynamic that comes out in Matthew 25:31-46. Jesus so identifies with Christian believers that to disregard them when they are in need is to disregard Him. This makes sense in light of the fact Jesus lives in Christians through the Holy Spirit. There is a very real sense in which disregarding a Christian is actually disregarding Christ who lives in them.

This concept comes out clearly in Acts 9 when the Apostle Paul is sharing his testimony. Paul reveals in Acts 9:5 that Jesus accused him of “persecuting me (Jesus).” Of course, Paul had been persecuting Christians rather than Jesus directly. But again, Jesus so associates Himself with Believers that He considered Paul's persecution of Christians as persecution of Himself.

Other Old Testament verses seem to make a similar connection. Under each verse summarize what it is saying.

### **Proverbs 14:31**

*Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.*

### **Proverbs 19:17**

*Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.*

*Write out in your own words why you think Jesus considers our treatment of Christians in need as treatment of Himself?*

*How does this change your view of helping others and particularly Christians in need?*





### D. Our treatment of the poor brings honor to God

In the last lesson, we were introduced to God's priority for who we show mercy. We saw mercy begins at home and ripples outward. Matthew 5:16, and other passages we will see later in our studies, broadens the scope of our good works to all people.

#### Read Matthew 5:16

*Why do you think our good works bring glory to our Father in heaven?*

*Describe a time you have seen this happen.*

## APPLICATION

*Explain what principles in this lesson particularly impacted you and why?*

*How did this lesson challenge your thinking?*

*What will you do differently in light of what you learned in this lesson?*

## FIELD RESEARCH

Find a map of your community. Indicate on the map areas of poverty you are aware of. As a group, plan a field trip to view one of these areas (provided it is safe) and pray for the people living there. Ask God to show you if there is a way for you to show good works in this area that will bring glory to Him.

## VOICES THROUGH HISTORY

J.C. Ryle was an Anglican Bishop in the 1800s known for his love for Jesus and the scriptures. He made a tremendous impact on his generation. His book, *Holiness*, is considered a devotional classic. He also wrote devotional commentaries on each of the gospels which include the quote below.

Friend, have you forgotten your debt to Christ? Think what the blessed Savior did for you. Surely there is nothing too great to do for Him. Much forgiven — you ought to love much. Have you forgotten the example of Christ? He was ever going about doing good. His earthly career was one long life of kind and charitable actions. With what face will you meet Him, if you never try to imitate Him? Have you forgotten the solemn account you have to render in the judgment of the last day? It is not open sin that was charged on those on the left hand, in the parable of the sheep and goats. It was simply omission of duty, and lack of active love to others. They were condemned because they had done nothing at all.

(Ryle)



# Lesson 3

## THE TWO SIDES OF MERCY

SUMMARY: In His mercy, Jesus meets both physical and spiritual needs.

### INTRODUCTION

Imagine sipping a cup of hot chocolate in the lounge of a ski resort. As you gaze out the window, you notice a skier at the bottom of the ski hill with his back to the mountain. He is obviously having a problem. He can't seem to get his ski bindings to clip correctly onto his boot. He is quite frustrated and animated.

As you lift your gaze higher, you are horrified to discover an avalanche of snow is barreling towards him. This skier knows he has a problem. But he has no idea how big of problem he really has.

That's a picture of every human being on earth. We all have real physical and emotional problems that cause us pain and frustration. We are typically aware of these problems. But lying in the background is a much greater problem with much more dangerous implications. Our sin has alienated us from a holy God and unless we rectify that we will spend eternity away from Him.

Fortunately, the scope of God's mercy is exceedingly broad. In His great mercy, He addresses both our physical and spiritual needs. That's a good pattern for us to follow as we minister to others. However, if we're not vigilant, the high visibility and urgency of physical needs can blind us to the greater spiritual needs of people in this world.

### STUDY

Read Matthew 9:1-8;23

*What do you suppose the paralytic and his friends thought was his greatest need? Why?*

*What do you suppose the crowd saw as the paralytic's greatest need?*

*In His mercy, what did Jesus extend to the paralytic in verse 2?*

*According to verse 2, what was it that Jesus saw in the paralytic and his friends that led Him to offer forgiveness?*

*What do you think the paralytic and his friends might have been feeling after Jesus forgave the paralytic rather than healing him? Why?*

*Why did Jesus heal the man according to verse 6?*

Jesus expressed His mercy to the paralytic both spiritually, through forgiveness, and physically, through healing.

*How might the paralytic's life story been different if Jesus would have simply healed him and not addressed his spiritual need?*

Imagine meeting this former paralytic from Matthew 9 in heaven.

*From his heavenly vantage point, which do you think he would now consider more important, the healing or the forgiveness? Why?*

In this story, we are told that Jesus met the paralytic's physical need to demonstrate His authority to meet much deeper spiritual needs. That is an important reason that Jesus heals - to demonstrate His identify and authority. But that is only one of Jesus' motives for healing.

*What moved Jesus to demonstrate His mercy in Matthew 14:14, Matthew 20:34 and Mark 1:41?*

**BACKGROUND NOTE**

Charles Spurgeon, famous English preacher in the 1800s, wrote a book about the compassion of Jesus. Here's what he says about this word that is translated "had compassion," "in pity" and "moved with pity" in the preceding verses:

He was moved with compassion." Matthew 9:36. This is said of Christ Jesus several times in the New Testament. The original word is a very remarkable one. It is not found in classic Greek. It is not found in the Septuagint. The fact is, it was a word coined by the evangelists themselves. They did not find one in the whole Greek language that suited their purpose, and therefore, they had to make one. It is expressive of the deepest emotion; a striving of the heart a yearning of the innermost nature with pity.  
(Spurgeon)

This is a familiar pattern in the gospels. Jesus is moved by compassion to demonstrate acts of mercy.

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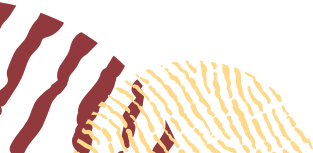
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## APPLICATION

There will always be a tension between addressing the physical and spiritual needs of people. Which of these diagrams do you think best illustrates the Bible's perspective on meeting physical and spiritual needs? Explain why you chose the one you did.

Number 1



Number 2



Number 3



*How has this lesson challenged your view of the relationship between meeting physical and spiritual needs?*

*What adjustments do you think you need to make? Why?*

*Share an example of a ministry that you think strikes a good balance between meeting physical and spiritual needs.*

## FIELD RESEARCH

Our last field research projects were focused primarily on physical needs. This one will focus on spiritual needs. The Joshua Project ([joshuaproject.net](http://joshuaproject.net)) tracks the progress being made toward the Great Commission, and great progress has been made. Go to their website and bring back an insight about the spiritual needs of the world for the group. Or look at the website together as group.



Scan for the  
The Joshua  
Project

## VOICES IN HISTORY

The Lausanne Movement has been bringing together leaders with a heart to reach the world for Christ, such as Billy Graham and John Stott, to share ideas and sharpen one another. The Movement also gathers church and ministry leaders around the world to discuss major issues and publish papers with their conclusions. These papers have been highly influential. In 1973, leaders affiliated with the Lausanne Movement met to discuss the relationship between social action (referred to as social activity in the article) and evangelism. Below is an excerpt from that paper. The entire paper can be found at: <https://lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-21>



Scan for the  
Lausanne  
Paper

“First, social activity is a *consequence* of evangelism. That is, evangelism is the means by which God brings people to new birth, and their new life manifests itself in the service of others. Paul wrote that “faith works through love” (Gal. 5:6), James that “I will show you my faith by my works” (James 2:18), and John that God’s love within us will overflow in serving our needy brothers and sisters (1 John 3:16-18)...

*Continued on the next page*



Secondly, social activity can be a *bridge* to evangelism. It can break down prejudice and suspicion, open closed doors, and gain a hearing for the Gospel. Jesus himself sometimes performed works of mercy before proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom. In more recent times, we were reminded, the construction of dams by the Basel missionaries in Northern Ghana opened a way for the gospel, and much missionary medical, agricultural, nutritional and educational work has had a similar effect...

Thirdly, social activity not only follows evangelism as its consequence and aim, and precedes it as its bridge, but also accompanies it as its *partner*. They are like the two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird. This partnership is clearly seen in the public ministry of Jesus, who not only preached the gospel but fed the hungry and healed the sick. In his ministry, *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakonia* (service) went hand in hand. His words explained his works, and his works dramatized his words. Both were expressions of his compassion for people, and both should be of ours. Both also issue from the lordship of Jesus, for he sends us out into the world both to preach and to serve...

Seldom if ever should we have to choose between satisfying physical hunger and spiritual hunger, or between healing bodies and saving souls, since an authentic love for our neighbor will lead us to serve him or her as a whole person. Nevertheless, if we must choose, then we have to say that the supreme and ultimate need of all humankind is the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and that therefore a person's eternal, spiritual salvation is of greater importance than his or her temporal and material well-being (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18)."

Lausanne Occasional Paper 21: Evangelism and Social Responsibility: An Evangelical Commitment, A Joint Publication of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the World Evangelical Fellowship, 1982

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# Lesson 4

## GO AND DO LIKEWISE

SUMMARY: Jesus challenges us to love our neighbor as ourselves through sacrificial acts of mercy.

### INTRODUCTION

Nearly two thousand years ago, Jesus told a story that has reverberated down through the centuries and brought unimaginable good to the world. It is a simple story of less than 200 words that today we call the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Those who have taken its message to heart, have brought great comfort to those in need.

Google “Good Samaritan” and you will receive over 35 million hits. Google “Good Samaritan Hospital” and you will receive over 15 million hits. Google “Good Samaritan Ministries” and you will receive over four million hits.

What is it about this story that has raised the level of mercy and compassion throughout the world? That’s what we’ll explore in this lesson.

### STUDY

#### Background Note

In Luke 10:25-29, an expert in the law approaches Jesus with a common spiritual question of the day: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” It sounds like a reasonable question, but we discover in verse 25 the expert in the law has questionable motives – he is trying to test Jesus.

Jesus leads the expert to answer his own question. If someone will simply love God with all their heart, mind and soul and love their neighbor as himself, they’ll be just fine.

Of course, both Jesus and the expert know he won’t be able to fulfill that obligation. So, the expert in the law tries to limit the scope of those who qualify as his neighbor. After all, if my neighbor is those who are a lot like me, maybe it is actually possible to love them well.

That’s when Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan. His goal is not so much to define who counts as our neighbor as what it means to be a good neighbor.

#### Read Luke 10:30-37

*How would you describe the condition of the man after being attacked?*

*Two religious leaders walk right by the man. There has been much speculation as to why. Do you think you would have stopped? Why or why not?*

*What are situations today where you cross paths with people in great need? What would it look like to stop and help?*



*To be fair, there are also times when it is not loving or wise to stop and help someone asking for help. What might those situations be?*

**BACKGROUND NOTE**

Samaritans were Jewish people who had intermarried with Gentiles (non-Jewish people). They were considered impure and compromised by the Jewish people. It's quite interesting Jesus makes a Samaritan the hero of the story. You can imagine the internal conflict that might have raised in the expert in the law.

*What do you think Jesus was trying to accomplish by adding that detail to the story?*

*According to verse 33, why did the Samaritan stop to help? How would you rate yourself on that quality from one to ten with ten, being the highest? What can you do to raise your score?*

Obviously, it cost the Good Samaritan money to help the injured man.

*What other "costs" did he incur in helping him?*

*Which of those costs, money or otherwise, are most difficult for you to "pay" when helping someone else? Why?*

Jesus asks the expert in the law which of the three men was a neighbor to the man who had been attacked. He correctly identifies the Samaritan as the true neighbor. He recognizes the Samaritan genuinely showed mercy.

*List two or three ways the actions of the Samaritan were a demonstration of mercy? (You might want to recall the definition of mercy from Lesson One).*

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## APPLICATION

*What does Jesus tell the expert in the law to do in verse 37? What would it mean for you to follow that challenge of Jesus? What can your small group do to follow this challenge from Jesus?*

*Record one or two insights from this week's Field Research (below) on vulnerable children in the world.*

*What is your reaction to your findings?*

*Watch this video about the ministry of GlobalFingerprints and identify at least three ways you see the principles from the lessons in this booklet illustrated in the story of Demomo.*



Scan for Demomo's story.

*What will you do in response to what you have learned through this four-week study?*

## FIELD RESEARCH

It's a sad truth that whenever there is a tragedy in the world, children take the brunt of it. When there is war, children are displaced. When there is disease, children are orphaned or die themselves. When there is abuse, children are often unable to escape. UNICEF is the United Nations social outreach to children. It is a secular organization but a good resource for data on the plight of children around the world.

Go to their data page (<https://data.unicef.org>) and look for a few insights about what children in the world face today.

Many think orphanages are the best solution for children in poverty. Visit the website of Faith to Action to discover the percentage of children in orphanages that actually have at least one living parent. <https://www.faithtoaction.org/start-here/>

*According to the research referenced on the Faith to Action website, what environment is most conducive to children thriving?*



Scan for UNICEF data



Scan to learn about Faith in Action

GlobalFingerprints, the Child Sponsorship Program of the EFCA, provides support for children so parents can keep them with the family. One way to express mercy to someone in need is sponsoring a vulnerable child in a less developed part of the world. See **Appendix A** for information on sponsoring a child in great need through GlobalFingerprints.



Scan to learn about GlobalFingerprints

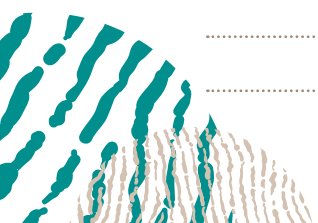
## VOICES THROUGH HISTORY

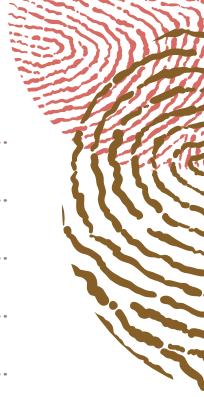
Charles Spurgeon is known as a powerful British preacher in the mid 1800s. But it is not as well known that Spurgeon and the church he pastored also ministered greatly to the poor, particularly orphans and vulnerable children.

A church...which does not exist to do good in the slums, and dens, and kennels of the city, is a church that has no reason to justify its longer existing. A church that does not exist to reclaim heathenism, to fight with evil, to destroy error, to put down falsehood, a church that does not exist to take the side of the poor, to denounce injustice and to hold up righteousness, is a church that has no right to be..."  
(Spurgeon, 1869)

## NOTES

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# Appendix A

## WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

Perhaps this study on mercy has given you a greater desire to show mercy to those in great need. But where do you even begin? And how are you supposed to add one more thing to your already full life? Here are a few suggestions that can help you demonstrate the mercy of Jesus without upending your life.

### **Begin with the gospel.**

That makes helping the poor a joy rather than a burden. As you reflect on how Christ stooped down to help you when you were helpless, undeserving and in great spiritual need, it will spur you on to reach out to others who are in great need as well.

### **Consider beginning with children.**

Children often take the brunt of the evil in this world. When parents die of AIDS, the children are left as orphans. When the sex trade flourishes, children are the victims. We know that our Lord has a soft spot in His heart for children. So, when we care for them, we are expressing the heart of Christ.

### **Consider beginning with one.**

Poverty is a complicated and overwhelming problem. But don't let that immobilize you. Just begin with one child. That's the beauty of child sponsorship. You may not be able to eliminate poverty, but you can see God completely transform the life of one child. And you can also involve your church, small group or Sunday school class so more children can be sponsored.

### **Consider beginning with GlobalFingerprints.**

As the child sponsorship ministry of the EFCA, GlobalFingerprints is committed to meeting both the physical and spiritual needs of children through the local church. When you sponsor a child, for about one dollar per day, you are helping them go to school, get medical help, and receive proper nutrition. But even more importantly, you are making sure they hear about Jesus and receive spiritual nurture in a local church. In fact, we're so convinced that GlobalFingerprints children need to be connected to a local church that, when there isn't one in their community, we help plant one.

Right now, there are many children living on the edge of survival as they wait for a sponsor. Would you consider being that sponsor? It only takes a few minutes to register and choose your child. You can change the life of a child today at [globalfingerprints.org](http://globalfingerprints.org).



Scan to  
Sponsor a  
child



# Appendix B

## MISSIONAL KIDS

Do you wish your kids (or grandkids) were more compassionate and empathetic?

When we surveyed GlobalFingerprints sponsors, 70% of those with a child in elementary school told us they sponsored a child to teach their own children the importance of helping the poor. We thought that was a great reason, so we designed *Missional Kids* to help the children of families who sponsor a child get the most from their experience.

*Missional Kids* includes a children's book and five activity guides that help your child understand the joys, difficulties and culture of the child you sponsor. The guides are themed around values parents told us they want to see developed in their children – empathy, compassion, gratitude and generosity

And according to the survey of families who piloted *Missional Kids*, it's working. Here are the findings.

- 100% of parents reported seeing discernible growth in their child's empathy.
- 100% reported seeing growth in their child's compassion.
- 85% reported seeing growth in their child's gratitude

When asked if their child had grown in their concern and compassion for the poor, 85% of parents said they saw growth and nearly 30% said they saw significant growth.

Another encouraging survey result is 100% of the parents from the pilot program said they would recommend *Missional Kids* to other families.

Here were a few comments from parents:

- “It was helpful to gain a perspective of what life is like for our sponsored children and help our kids feel more connected and empathetic towards others with different experiences from their own.”
- “It's an informative, engaging way to teach children about other countries and missions!!!”
- “I'm so glad my children could learn about another country and have a connection to a child overseas.”

*Missional Kids* is free when you sponsor a child in either Liberia or India. To choose a child you would like to sponsor, go to our website at [globalfingerprints.org](http://globalfingerprints.org).



Watch a brief video with feedback and insights from families who have used *Missional Kids*



Scan to Sponsor a child

