

Week Beginning: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019

Worship Series: #5 in series



living sharing growing

### Theme Verse

Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Luke 6:36

### Remember This Week

When the mercy and compassion of Jesus, is lived out through our lives, we see the gospel transforming lives, communities and the world like never before. Grudges are transformed by grace, fractured relationships are restored through forgiveness and hard hearts are broken open by love. And the Lord adds daily in the Book of Life, the names of those being saved.



**May his name endure forever;**

**may it continue as long as the sun.**

**Then all nations will be blessed through him,  
and they will call him blessed.**

**Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel,**

**who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever;  
may the whole earth be filled with his glory Amen and Amen.**

**Psalm 72:17-19**

Lord God, heavenly Father, in a world, where it is so easy to retreat and go into a defensive holding pattern when under attack, you call us to advance forward and be bearers of your love, grace and mercy. Fill us with your Spirit of courage that we may live so boldly, that more and more may experience your life transforming grace and enter into your kingdom where they can live fully forever. In the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, we pray. Amen.



1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *In sport, are you more at home playing offence or defence? Why?*
4. *Have you ever had any enemies? How did you know they were enemies and are they still enemies?*
5. *When you hear in our vision statement - advancing the Kingdom locally and globally - what image does it draw to your mind and how are you advancing the Kingdom in your life?*

It's heard in changerooms, on courts and grounds of all major sports - "The best defence is a good offense." If you score more points, tries and goals than your opposition, then you will win. Jesus takes that saying to a whole new level when it comes to advancing the cause of the Gospel. For Jesus it isn't about winning or losing, but about mercy, grace and living in imitation of the Father who gives life and joy and shows compassion even to those who don't deserve it. In a world that is all too ready to win at any cost, Jesus shows a way forward that gives life, breathes hope, multiplies joy and advances his kingdom locally and globally in a way that is radically countercultural.

Read Luke 6:27-36





6. When you hear this passage which part speaks to you, challenges you, seem most difficult for you, make no sense?
7. How is this part of Jesus' sermon consistent with what he has just said in 6:24-26? How do you think the disciples reacted? How do you react? Why?
8. How are these words from Jesus an offensive strategy rather than a defensive one
9. In what ways is doing good to those who do good to us, loving those who love us, essentially self-centered?

This whole section in Luke 6, is not addressed to the general public, but specifically to the disciples. Jesus is not giving us a list of things that we have to do and tick off, but rather describing an attitude that he wants to see present in his children - who he wants us to be. The impact of the Gospel, when it is lived out amongst those who are not deserving of it and those who treat us badly, is a simple witness to the power of God's love, which alone can transform lives. At times that is tough, but as Jesus reminds us, we too are recipients of a mercy that we did not deserve. That alone can prompt and spur us on to showing mercy that is not self-serving; a mercy he show when he spread his arms wide upon the cross to offer God's loving embrace to each and all of us.

10. What is God's desire even for our enemies?
11. In light of what we know God desires for all people (1 Timothy 2:4) what does it mean in Romans 12:20, when it says "you will heap burning coals on his head"?
12. How do you react and respond when someone does something nice for you that you don't deserve?
13. Someone once said that when we eat a meal together, we turn enemies into friends. How have you experienced that in your own life?

14. As a result of this study, what is one concrete step you can take to be more aware of situations in which you can be merciful each day?



### TAKE UP THE LIFE CHALLENGE THIS LENT

**Who is God calling you to LIVE, SHARE and GROW his love with this year?**

Grab your card today. Keep it in your wallet, on your fridge, in your car and think about how God may be using you to bring a L.I.F.E. that never ends.



*This Sunday we relaunched our LIFE challenge for Lent. It's about advancing God's Kingdom locally by building relationships with people you meet or come into contact with each day. Who is that one person that you would love to spend eternity with Jesus? How is God asking you to show mercy to them?*



- \* Praise God that the Good News of the Gospel continues to advance in this world no matter how many try to stop it. Thank Jesus for choosing you to bear his love to the world. Ask the Holy Spirit for courage to be counter cultural and go on the offence with love.
- \* Pray that in this upcoming season of Lent, we may grow deeper in our love for God and more committed to walking his way of discipleship.
- \* Pray for your LifeGroup that his love may be seen through you and pray for your LIFE challenge person by name.
- \* Pray for all those involved in Cross-cultural ministry across the LCA that his love may advance forward impacting all nations with his life-transforming grace.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

*Name, may God's Kingdom come through your life. Amen.*

