**TITLE: THE MIRACLE OF MERCY**

**SESSION FOUR: MERCY IS PATIENT WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE**

**KEY VERSE: Mercy triumphs over judgement.**

 **James 2:13 (NIV)**

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 **Hurt people hurt people. You must look past their behavior and see their pain.**

 When a fool is annoyed, he quickly lets it be known. Smart people will ignore an insult.

 **Proverbs 12:16 (GNT)**

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**Your emotional and spiritual maturity is largely measured by how you treat people who mistreat you.**

**When you give up control of your emotions, you lose control of your tongue.**

Watch your words and hold your tongues; you’ll save yourself a lot of grief.

 **Proverbs 21:23** **(THE MESSAGE)**

It is better to be patient than powerful; it is better to have self-control than to conquer a city.

 **Proverbs 16:32 (NLT)**

**Learn to pray, “God, give me a tender heart and a tough hide.”**

A man’s wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.

 **Proverbs 19:11 (NIV)**

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 Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love.

 **Ephesians 4:2 (TLB)**

The man who makes no allowances for others will find none made for him.

 **James 2:13 (PHILLIPS)**

“Blessed are the merciful for they will be shown mercy.”

 **Matthew 5:7 (NIV)**

You must make allowance for each other’s faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.

 **Colossians 3:13 (NLT)**

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Disregarding another person’s faults preserves love; [gossiping] about them separates close friends.

 **Proverbs 17:9 (NLT)**

Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.

 **Proverbs 26:20 (NIV)**

**Gossip just adds fuel to the fire. It perpetuates the pain.**

 Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable---if anything is excellent or praiseworthy---think about such things . . . And the God of peace will be with you.

 **Philippians 4:8-9 (NIV)**

**If you want peace in your life, then let go of the offenses, refuse to gossip about it, and focus on the goodness of God.**

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 **Just as charcoal and wood keep a fire going, a quarrelsome person keeps and argument going.**

 **Proverbs 26:21 (NCV)**

**Sometimes the most merciful thing you can do is walk away from an argument.**

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Mercy triumphs over judgement.

 **James 2:13** **(NIV)**

Do not repay . . . insult with insult.

 **1 Peter 3:9 (NIV)**

Clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience . . . Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

 **Colossians 3:12-14 (NLT)**

Ask God to bless those who persecute you---yes, ask him to bless, not to curse.

 **Romans 12:14 (GNT)**

If someone has done you wrong, do not repay him with a wrong. Try to do what everyone considers to be good. Do everything possible on your part to live in peace with everybody.

 **Romans 12:17-18 (GNT)**

Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good.

 **Romans 12:21 (GNT)**

**DISCOVERY QUESTIONS:**

1.) Pastor Rick identified six practices for dealing with difficult people in your life. In which of these practices does God seem to be giving you the greatest “opportunity” to grow right now?

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2.) Today’s memory verse says, “Mercy triumphs over judgement” (James 2:13 NIV). Why is mercy so important to God?

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3.) The Bible says, “Clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience . . . Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony” (Colossians 3:12-14 NLT). What does it mean to “clothe yourself” with those things, and how can you do it?

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4.) The Bible says, “Ask God to bless those who persecute you---yes, ask him to bless, not to curse” (Romans 12:14 GNT). How will you respond if God answers that prayer by blessing your enemy?

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