

# Men of the Bible

## Lesson 1: “THE MERCIFUL FATHER”

**OBJECTIVE:** To build relationships with difficult people in your immediate environments with Christ-like love and mercy

**INTRODUCTION:** Dealing with Difficult People

### **The Issue of Forgiveness:**

1. When it comes to forgiveness, do you struggle with forgiving people?
2. This year, have you had to forgive someone for a particular matter?
3. Would you forgive someone close to you if they took you for your money?

As we study this lesson, I want you to envision someone in your mind, with whom you do not have an “ideal relationship.” As we study this lesson, I want you to constantly think about them and how the relationship can be improved.

### **Scriptural Lesson:**

Read Luke 15: 21-32

### **I. Value People’s Worth, vs. 21-22**

In our society, we place value on houses, cars, jewelry, stocks, gold, etc., but in the Kingdom of God, God values human life (Genesis 1:27-28). Regardless of people, make a conscience decision to see them as persons made in the image of God.

- A. Vs. 21 - The Prodigal Son felt himself unworthy to be Father’s son. The son had been reckless and wasteful of the Father’s money. He felt unworthy because of his behavior.
- B. Vs. 22 - The Father celebrated his son – Despite the son’s behavior

**APPLICATION:** In our society we spend a tremendous amount of time tearing people down and smearing their personality.

**APPLICATION:** We all are guilty of being wasteful and feeling the shame and the embarrassment.

People want to feel significant and important. Name one thing you will do to make the people in your immediate circle feel important.

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### **II. People Deserve Mercy, vs. 23-24**

#### **Scripture Reference:** Psalm 79:8-9

It is important to know that people deserve love, despite what they have done. Are you less likely to show love to someone who has done a wrong to you?

#### **A. The Father was forgiving of his son**

#### **QUESTION: What does it mean to forgive a person?**

1. Love people unconditionally: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ask God to supply you with wisdom: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Maintain a healthy perspective of yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Celebrate People's Transformation, vs. 24**

1. Son was dead and came to life
2. Was lost and has been found

**QUESTION: What was the son's transformation?**

**APPLICATION:** When you celebrate people:

1. You cannot give up on people, must be hopeful about lives
2. Help people with what transformation looks like
3. Help people to understand what it means to be Christ-like

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 12:1-2 - We cannot just want transformation; we have to **be** transformation.

**APPLICATION:** Father's Demonstration of Mercy

1. He responded quickly to the son
2. Gave his son the best – put the best robe on him
3. He restored honor to his son – put a ring on hand and sandals
4. He feed him – cooked a fatted calf and they ate

**III. People Deserve a Second Chance, vs. 25 -32**

God majors in second chances. When was the last time God gave you a second chance?

- A. Help Jealous People Understand God's Mercy, vs. 26-27
- B. The Son Did Not Understand the Father's Grace

**APPLICATION:** The Forgiver Majors in Grace & Mercy

**APPLICATION:** Transformation means, wanting more for other people

1. The older brother should have wanted more for his brother
2. You don't want to leave people in the same frame of mind

**CONCLUSION:**

When dealing with people make sure you are not harboring a grudge. Make sure you are not angry, but make sure you are in control of your emotions.

I will show love and compassion to people in the following ways:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_