

LOVE MERCY (Part 1) Matthew 15:21-28

As you gather to hear and apply God's Word, start by sharing how you were influenced by the previous study since your group last met. Use the following questions for review.

D Debrief & Interpret

- How did you apply the previous Scripture study?
- What did you learn about God as you applied the Word? What did you learn about yourself?

H Hear the Word

At its core, mercy is showing compassion for everyone, especially for those who are suffering. Sadly, access to quality healthcare can be based on who is perceived as the most deserving or who has the means to get the best care. Desiring mercy for every patient in our care is a quality that comes from God, though it may not always be easy to carry out.

Read Matthew 15:21-28:

²¹ Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. ²² A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly." ²³ Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." ²⁴ He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." ²⁵ The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. ²⁶ He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." ²⁷ "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." ²⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Discuss:

1. What is the woman asking for when she asks Jesus for mercy? What are the barriers she is facing?
2. How do the responses of Jesus and the disciples differ? Why do you think Jesus responds the way he does?
3. If someone pestered and nagged you, would you be more inclined to show compassion or to continue to push them away? What positives do you see from persistence?
4. What can you do to try to understand a patient's circumstances when that person is different from you?
5. Is it ever appropriate to not show mercy? If so, when?
6. From this passage, how do mercy and justice/advocacy go hand in hand?

R Respond Actively

In healthcare, you may see people prioritizing care based on whether someone "deserves" it. For example, you may hear that an alcoholic patient doesn't deserve a liver transplant, or someone doesn't deserve a certain level of care because of their low income, ethnicity, or prognosis. How might you respond? As you care for patients this week, take time to see things from their perspective. Reflect on whether this changes the way you care for them.

