

What is God Like?

01 / Merciful

You might remember exploring last January this foundational question:

Who is God?

Exodus 3:13-14 helped us answer that really important question:

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: ' _____ has sent me to you.'"

God has always been. He is everywhere and knows everything. God can do anything. But what is he **LIKE**?

Exodus 34:6 is the most quoted verse in all of the Old Testament. It gives us one of the clearest descriptions of what the Lord God Almighty is like:

The LORD passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God _____ and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..."

In this session, let's focus on that first attribute of God: God is **merciful**. It's a word often translated

_____ or _____
(Gen 43:30; Neh 9:27-28; Isa 49:15-16; Psa 103:13; Isa 55:7; Psa 51:1).

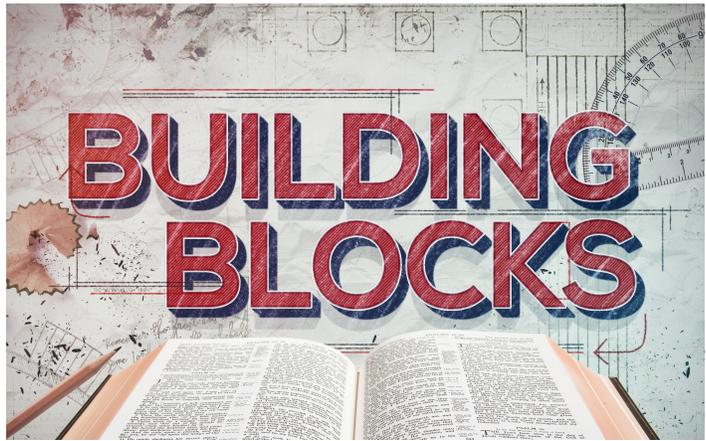
With Jesus, the Son of God, we're given a clear image of **MERCIFUL** in the flesh (Matt 9:36; Mark 1:40-41; 1 Pet 2:24). But Jesus has done more than serve as a good example for us. He's called us to follow in his footsteps:

"Be merciful, even as your _____ is merciful." (Luke 6:36)

Or, as the apostle Paul put it in Ephesians 4:32:

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in _____ forgave you.

What is God like? God is **merciful**.



For Class & Family Discussion:

- ▶ Why is it important that we not only have a sense of what God can do, but what he is like?
- ▶ In your own words, when someone "shows mercy..." what does that look like?
- ▶ Let's revisit Isaiah 49:15-16 and listen carefully. What does God want us to understand about himself?
- ▶ Let's also revisit Psalm 103:13. In practical terms, what does it mean to "show compassion"?
- ▶ Can you think of any episodes from Biblical history when God was merciful and compassionate?
- ▶ In contrast, Jesus described difficult days when "the love of many will grow cold" (Matt 24:12). What does it look like when that happens?
- ▶ Let's read the words of Jesus in Luke 6:27-36. He calls us to "be merciful" in verse 36. Why? What might that look like in your life this week?