



Teach Me **Your Way**, Lord

Beholding the God of Mercy

2 Corinthians 3:18 makes a bold promise:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

When we humbly and prayerfully behold God in His Word, we are changed—we become like what we behold! This is God’s gracious solution to our need for growth in Christlikeness. We are sinful people, who fall short of His glory. We do not accurately reflect His image. **God is love.** *We are selfish.* **God is holy.** *We are impure.* **God is truth.** *We lie.* **God is merciful.** *We are bitter and unforgiving.* But as we look into God’s Word and see Who He is—His holiness, goodness, mercy, and love—and hear what He says, we gradually grow to reflect His likeness in our own lives. His work is to make us like Jesus Christ. Our work is to be in His Word, the tool He has chosen to use to accomplish this work in our lives.

The following two-part study will lead you to behold the **God of mercy**. We are not naturally merciful people, especially towards those who hurt us. God has something to say to us about this. He tells us how we should treat those who have sinned against us. Prayerfully (and slowly) work through the selected passage in part 1. Pages 2-8 provide a guide for digging deeper into this passage. If you need more guidance, please refer to *Keys to Your Own God & I Time*¹, especially pages 5-8. Meditate on God’s Word, memorize it, and humbly apply it to your life. Ask God to enable you to more accurately represent His merciful nature, especially toward those whom you have a hard time loving and forgiving. You don’t have to hurry—consider taking a few weeks to work through each part of this study.

God does more than just *command* us to be merciful, He also *shows* us how to do it. This leads to the second part of the study: beholding our **merciful Savior**. Jesus Christ serves as our example. In this portion of the study, you will look closely at the life of Christ and see how He lived out His own command to His disciples to “be...merciful, as your Father also is merciful” (Lk. 6:36). Because believers are united to Christ’s righteous life, they are enabled to obey this command, following in the footsteps of their Lord and Master.

Where would any of us be without God’s mercy? This is why Jesus came—to open the way for us to experience the amazing mercy of God. May the Lord use this study to challenge, convict, encourage, and transform your own heart to become more like Him. Turning from *our way* to *God’s way* requires humility and repentance. God promises to give us His gracious strength when we humble ourselves before Him. With the psalmist we can pray, *teach me Your way, Lord*. God will hear and answer this humble prayer.

¹ You can find *Keys to Your Own God & I Time* on the LifeLine for Teens website.

Part 1: Beholding your *Merciful God*

Instructions:

Follow the instructions below as you work through the first part of this study. Many of these steps—like preparing your heart and memorizing the passage—should happen *every day* as you sit down to study through this portion of Scripture. But working through the observation, interpretation, and application steps can take place over the course of several days, or even weeks. You don't have to rush your time in God's Word. Change happens through the slow soaking-in of God's Word. Over time, not overnight. If you need help at any point along the way, please ask a trusted, spiritual adult to assist you. Bible study isn't too hard, but it does require the sacrifice of time and the help of God's Spirit. Remember, God wants you to understand His Word! Be sure to ask Him to enable you to grow in His likeness as you behold His mercy!

Step 1: Prepare your Heart

Prayer helps prepare our hearts to receive and respond to God's Word. Before beginning your study each day, humbly ask the Lord to open your eyes to His truth and to give you spiritual understanding. Borrow Moses' prayer: "*I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.*" (Exodus 33:18)

Step 2: Memorize

- Take time each day to review both the attribute definition and corresponding verse, committing them to memory.

Step 3: Meditate

- Spend a few minutes each day reading Luke 6. Reading the whole chapter will help you understand the context of verses 35-36. Write down anything you learn from reading through the chapter. Try to look for something new each day. (**Observation**)
- Journal your answers to the meditation questions that are provided. (**Interpretation**)
- Add additional verses that you already know or discover on your own about this aspect of God's character.

Step 4: Apply

- Record specific actions steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in His Word. (**Application**)

Step 5: Share

- Take time to respond to God in prayer and praise.
- Share what you are learning with other believers.

Definition of Mercy:

God is slow to anger, not giving us the punishment that we deserve.

Scripture passage:

Luke 6:35-36

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Observation: What does God say about Himself?

Context/Observations:

Read Luke 6:1-49 and record what you learn. Who is talking in verses 35-36? Who is being talked to? What do you learn about the audience from the rest of the chapter? Do you see any repeated words or phrases? How are verses 35-36 connected to what comes before and after it in the chapter? Write down any observations that jump out at you as you read through the passage.

Key words:

Find out more about the meanings of key words. The language in which Luke originally wrote his gospel is specific and clear. You can learn a lot by looking up the definitions of Bible words in the original language. Use a Strong's Concordance (the numbers listed below are taken from Strong's Concordance) or an online Bible program (like blueletterbible.org) to look up definitions. (The number listed after each key word is the Strong's Concordance number.) Don't worry about finding something profound for every word; just try to discover the essential meaning of the main words in the passage.

but = 4133 _____

love = 25 (verb) _____

enemies = 2190 _____

do good = 15 (verb) _____

lend = 1155 (verb) _____

hoping...again = 560 (verb) _____

nothing = 3367 _____

reward = 3408 _____

shall be = 2071 (verb) _____

great = 4183 _____

shall be = 2071 (same as previous)
the children = 5207 _____

Highest = 5310 _____

for = 3754 _____

kind = 5543 _____

unthankful = 884 _____

evil = 4190 _____

be = 1096 (verb) _____

merciful = 3629 _____

as = 2531 _____

Father = 3962 _____

merciful = 3629 (same as previous)

Summarize the “Big Idea” of Luke 6:35-36 in your own words:

Use the information you gathered in the observation section to summarize the big idea of these verses. This will take some time and thought, but it’s worth the effort!

Interpretation: What does it mean?

The goal of studying the Bible is understanding what God has communicated about Himself so that we can know Him and glorify Him (Col. 1:9-10). Remember, the Bible is all about a Person! Review your notes from the observation section of your study as you seek to find answers to the following meditation questions. Journal your thoughts in the space provided.

- What specific truths do I learn about **God the Father, Jesus,** or the **Holy Spirit** from this passage?

- What does this passage teach me about man/myself?

- Are there any promises to claim (stated or implied)? If so, list them below:

- Are there any commands to obey (stated or implied)? If so, list them below:

- Use the space below to capture any other important truths the Lord taught you through your study:

Additional Verses about God’s Mercy:

Application: What should I do?

Prayerfully consider the specific action steps you need to take in response to what God has shown you in His Word. *What does it mean to live in the reality of God’s mercy? Do you need to repent of rivaling God and seeking to steal His glory in any area of life? How can you become more effective in fulfilling your purpose to glorify Him?* Use the prompts below to help you personalize what you are learning. Think about your relationship with God and your relationships with other people. Ask God to enable you to have a **whole-hearted response** to His Word (a “whole heart” includes your mind, desires, and will).

Think Bible!

- Consider what you **believe**: All sin begins with a lie. During this study, what specific lies about God’s mercy did you discover in your thinking?

- How has meditating on God’s mercy impacted or changed your **beliefs**?

Value Bible!

- Consider what you **want**: How has meditating on God’s mercy revealed misplaced **desires** or **affections**?

- Going forward, what steps can you take to better ground your heart and mind in this truth about God? How will you intentionally nurture a growing affection for what God loves and values?

Live Bible!

“You don’t really believe something until you believe it enough to act on it.” Obedience is expressed in and with your body as you yield your will to God. Considering your recent choices, how can you better respond to God’s mercy with trust, worship, and humble submission?

- Consider your **actions**: What step(s) of obedience do you need to take to demonstrate a yielded **will** to God?

- In what practical ways does God want you to demonstrate the reality of His mercy to those with whom you interact (family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.)?

Share

Share what you are learning with God through prayer. Although He already knows, it is good to take time to respond to Him—praising Him for Who He is (He is *always* the Lord of mercy!) and asking for His enabling to grow in the areas where the Spirit has convicted you. Write out a simple prayer to God in the space below:

Finally, share what you are learning with other believers. Rejoice together in the truth about God! Encourage one another towards Christlikeness. Humbly open yourself up for accountability.