



The Father Is Just and Merciful

Focus How can God be both just and merciful towards us at all times? God's justice and mercy actually work hand in hand, never conflicting with one another.

Open What was the best thing that happened to you last week?

- Talk**
1. Have you ever felt that God's justice and mercy were contradictory to one another? In what way?
 2. Define "justice," "mercy" and "grace." Give an example of how each would play out in a real situation.
 3. Read Psalm 32:1–2 and Romans 5:8–11.
 - a. God is always just. Why does He not count a believer's sins against them?
 - b. Why are God's mercy and justice NOT in conflict with each other?
 4. How does it impact your relationship with God to understand that He doesn't "do" just things, but that He IS justice? And likewise, He doesn't "act" with mercy—He IS mercy?
 5. If you have received Christ's atoning work on the cross by grace through faith, then God's justice has "sentenced you to heaven." Is this a new perspective for you? How so?

Live

1. Which is more difficult for you to accept and embrace about God—that He is always just or that He is always merciful? Why do you think that is?
2. Has your personality, upbringing or prior experiences influenced you towards one or the other? How?
3. What scripture or idea could you choose to think about that would help you to understand how God's justice and mercy are always working together?

Pray

As a group, take a few minutes to thank God for His justice and mercy and for how He demonstrates both in your lives. If you struggle to embrace either His justice or His mercy, ask Him to help you to understand His nature more fully. Pray for any needs group members are experiencing.