

Chapter Ten: When the Gospel Comes Home, and Epilogue

This session will conclude your group's discussion of the book! We're grateful for your leadership and hope that this study has been powerful for you personally as well as for your group. While the primary focus will be on embracing God's mercy and being people of mercy in our relationships, at the conclusion we're inviting each person to consider where they are in response to the overall message of the gospel. So, as a leader, it's important to us for you to communicate that each of us is on a journey in making the gospel more central to our lives, and yet taking time to identify where we are is vital! It's the first step in wading further into the life-giving stream of the gospel.

Getting Connected

This section is obviously designed to help people reflect personally on the highs and lows of relationships in their life. Keep things moving here. You might want to do something overt to keep things on track when you ask them to comment (like timing people for 60 seconds each for their comments).

Highlights and Insights

What's important here is for people to grasp the chapter's definition of mercy, and the "mercy deficit" concept – that we can only extend mercy to others to the degree that we're open to receiving it from God. Help people to think practically in these questions, encouraging vulnerability by your own openness to admit struggle.

Biblical Focus

The questions here are designed to lead people into thinking about the difference mercy makes within the context of biblical community. If people are having a difficult time thinking about "mercy in the church" or "a lack of mercy in the church", you might substitute the words "our small group" or "relationships with other Christians". If you feel that your group is struggling with a basic understanding of mercy and the gospel, you might lead them in discussing the quotation and questions in the blue shaded box.

The Heart of the Matter

We'd suggest beginning the discussion of these questions with the invitation to make the discussion very personal and specific. You might even give people 5 minutes or so in the midst of the group to quiet their hearts, and respond to these questions prayerfully and reflectively. Then, after 5 minutes, invite people to share. Don't rush through this section.

In Conclusion...

Since not all people may read the Epilogue in the book, you might encourage them to do so before group, if you're in communication with them. The purpose of this section is to invite people to look back over the message of the entire book and answer two questions: 1) Where do you see yourself right now; 2) How is the Holy Spirit leading you to embrace the gospel more fully? Be sure to make the group prayer time specific to what is shared here.