

Awana T&T - Agents of Grace - Lesson 1.1: The Mission of Mercy

Begin with prayer

Theme: God saves us because of His mercy, not because of our good works.

Say the Memory Verse in Unison: Titus 3:4–5 - "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,"

What the Verses Mean - the Gospel within the verses

- **God is kind and loving:** Verse 4 tells us that God our Savior showed His big heart, love, and kindness to people.
- **You cannot earn it:** Verse 5 says God does not save us because of the good works or rules we do. You cannot be good enough to "earn" God's rescue gift of Salvation.
- **It is a free gift:** God saves us because of His **mercy** - **Mercy** is *not* getting the punishment you deserve.
- **A clean new start:** The verse talks about "washing" and "renewal" by the Holy Spirit. This means God cleans our hearts and makes us pure, like taking an old spaghetti stained white shirt and giving us a new pure clean white shirt to wear, and He gives us a brand-new start to live with Him forever.

The Core Message: What is Mercy?

We are learning how to be **Agents of Grace**. To be an agent of grace, we first have to understand what God did for us.

Let's look at **Titus 3:4–5**: "*But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy...*"

Here are 3 simple points

- **The Problem:** We try to do "righteous" (good) things to get to God, but our good deeds can't wash away our sins. We have a sin problem, **what is Romans 3:23 - find it first game!**

- **The Rescue:** God didn't look at how good we were before saving us. He sent Jesus to die on the cross and rise again purely because He loves us. - recite John 3:16-17 in unison
- **The Definition of Mercy: everyone say this together**
 - **Mercy** is *not* getting the punishment you deserve.

Wild Fun Facts About The Biblical Word for "Agent"

Since our new Awana book is called *Agents of Grace*, we will learn what a real biblical "agent" actually is!

- **The Word Origin:** The English word *agent* comes from a Latin word that means "**to set in motion, drive forward, or do.**" A biblical agent isn't a passive bystander; they are the active hands and feet that get things moving!
- **In ancient Jewish culture,** *"A person's agent is regarded as the person himself."* **Representing the King:** In biblical times, if a King sent an "agent" to another country, whatever that agent said or did was treated exactly as if the King himself were standing there saying it.

The Mercy Story of the Prodigal Son is a famous parable told by Jesus to teach us about God's endless mercy, forgiveness, and love no matter what mistakes we make.

- **The Younger Son Leaves:** A father had two sons. The younger son didn't want to wait, so he asked his father for his share of the family money right away. He took the money, left home, and spent it all on wild living and silly things until he had absolutely nothing left.
- **Hitting Rock Bottom:** To survive, the son had to take a job feeding messy pigs. He was so hungry that even the pigs' food started to look tasty! He realized he had made a huge mistake and decided to go back home, beg his father for forgiveness, and ask to work as a servant.
- **The Loving Welcome:** While the son was still far away, his father saw him coming. Instead of being angry, the father felt deep love and **mercy**. He ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and hugged him. **Mercy** is *not* getting the punishment you deserve.

- **The Big Celebration:** The son started to apologize, but the father was too happy to care about the lost money. He dressed his son in the finest clothes and threw a massive party because his boy who was "lost" had finally been found.

The Big Lesson

This parable shows us what **mercy** really means. **Mercy** is *not* getting the punishment you deserve.

Mercy is when someone shows us kindness and forgiveness instead of punishing us when we do something wrong. Just like the father in the story, **God is always ready to forgive us with open arms** whenever we make a mistake and say we are sorry.

A biblical agent—whether a prophet, king, everyday person, or a follower of God—shows mercy by choosing kindness, forgiveness, and relief over punishment or judgment. In the Bible, mercy is not just a feeling; it is an action taken by someone who has the power to punish or ignore a problem, but chooses to help instead.

Application: Living as an Agent of Grace with Mercy

God wants us to take the mercy He gave us and show it to others.

- **At School/Home:** When someone cuts in front of you in line, rolls their eyes at you, or takes your toy, your human instinct wants "justice" (revenge!).
- **The Agent Directive:** An Agent of Grace chooses **mercy** instead. **Mercy** is *not* getting the punishment you deserve. Forgive them, show kindness, and don't hold a grudge.
- **Our Mission:** As **Agents of Grace**, when people look at us, they should see the character of our "Principal" (God). We hold His authority to spread His love and mercy to the world!
- In the Bible, mercy is not just a feeling; it is an action taken by someone who has the power to punish or ignore a problem, but chooses to help instead.

What does Mercy mean?