



“And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world...” (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance
of this week’s lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®
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IS MERCY DESERVED?

California Representative Ted Lieu and New Jersey Senator Bob Menendez played audio recordings of crying immigrant children in Congress last week. Their purpose was to persuade President Trump to change the federal policy that separated children from parents who are trying to enter the country outside of legal immigration channels. The call for mercy for the children was followed by the President’s act of rescinding the separation policy. However, demonstrations continued around the country as the current zero-tolerance policy for adults crossing the border illegally remains in effect.

MERCY IS NOT DESERVED!

The argument over how to deal with illegal immigration will continue indefinitely. When the question is whether we deserve mercy from God because of our sins, the answer is “No!” Yet, Jesus’ parable of the unforgiving servant reminds us that God has given us undeserved mercy in abundance. Considering that, we must not withhold mercy to others. How that plays out in the complicated scenarios of real life is where we often disagree.

1. How can mercy be extended to immigrant children in American immigration policy? Should we offer forgiveness to their parents who place them in this situation? Why or why not?
2. What are some other circumstances in which you struggle with whether to forgive someone?
3. Tell of a situation in which forgiveness had a positive effect on someone’s relationship with another person. How has God’s grace to you affected the way you deal with difficult people and situations?

—Charles R. Boatman

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