



SRMBC SEPTEMBER 2018 BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE

Lesson Title	Date	Scripture/Movie
Week 1 – Imagine a Loving Father	9/5/2018	Matthew 3
Week 2 – Imagine Forgiveness	9/12/2018	Luke 15
Week 3 – Imagine Redemption	9/19/2018	Luke 4
Week 4 – Imagine Going Home	9/26/2018	John 14
SRMBC Family Movie Night?	9/28/2108	"I Can Only Imagine"

ABOUT MERCY ME



MercyMe is an inspirational Christian band with a rich musical repertoire. They're the lighter side of Christian music—contemporary Christian music that is designed to be a praise and worship experience.

Among their best hits:

- **"I Can Only Imagine"** is a glorious view of what Heaven will look like when we finally get to see Jesus face-to-face.
- **"Bring the Rain"** speaks passionately about learning to stand with Jesus in spite of circumstance—of getting through the hard times by leaning on God.
- **"Word of God Speak"** calls to God to speak down his message to the world—this song won a number of awards, even being named Christian Song of the Decade by Billboard magazine in 2009.
- **"Greater"** shouts out that it doesn't matter what all the voices of the world tell you as long as you know who you are in Christ and what He says about you—because He is greater than all the powers of the world.

ABOUT BART M. MILLARD OF MERCY ME



- Bart Marshall Millard (born December 1, 1972) is an American singer and songwriter who is best known as the leader of the band MercyMe. Bart wrote the lyrics of "I Can Only Imagine" in just ten minutes.
- The song was inspired by the loss of his father, who was abusive before being diagnosed with cancer and transformed by faith in Jesus Christ.
- Millard is from Greenville, Texas. He and his wife Shannon have five children: Sam, Gracie, Charlie, Sophie and Miles.

ABOUT "I CAN ONLY IMAGINE" - THE MOVIE



In the film, I Can Only Imagine, the life story of MercyMe lead singer Bart Millard is told for the first time.

Bart grew up with an abusive father and a distant mother, and in early adulthood, came face to face with his own deep need for acceptance.

His lack of love from his earthly father challenged his faith and hope in his heavenly Father.



SRMBC FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

I Can Only Imagine:
Week 1: Imagine A Loving Father
Matthew 3

Group Discussion

What Were You Taught About God Growing Up? Was Your Family Religious When You Were Young?

What I Was Taught About God

- Everywhere at the same time
- God is good
- God don't play (and you better not play with Him)
- God loves everybody
- If you are good and live a good life you will go to heaven when you die
- He understands when sin "a little bit"

My Family's Religious Experience

- We only went to church on Easter
- We did say "Grace" before family meals
- We were told as kids to never play around the church or sit on the church steps
- On Sunday morning – my dad would always play "the Spirituals" (Gospel Music)
- Although we had a Bible in the home – we very rarely read it

MATTHEW 3:13-17 (NKJV)

(John Baptizes Jesus)

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"

15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What Was Your Father Like?



Archie Bunker "All in the Family"



Jim Anderson "Father Knows Best"



Curtis Payne "House of Payne"



James Evans "Good Times"



"Dre" Johnson "Black-ish"



Tim Taylor "Home Improvement"

1. Describe Your Relationship With Your Earthly Father. What Was He Like Growing Up?

My Relationship With My Father

- He was close to me – but not overly emotional
- I always wanted to be like him – (hard worker – family man)
- We would watch sports and some movies together
- I never really got to know him as much as I would have liked

What my Dad was like

He was a hard, faithful worker

He taught us how to work – making us do chores

He really loved my Mommy

He would often curse when he was mad (but would not allow us too)

He smoked and drank way too much – (dying of Lung Cancer at 48)

2. Bart says, “most of my life was living in fear. When [his anger] is so sporadic, you don’t know what’s going to set him off.” Is there a connection between this and trying to earn God’s love and salvation?

Some people have a misconception of God because of our relationships with our earthly father. Our fathers loved us – but they are/were not perfect. Since all of us are sinners none of us can love as perfectly as God does:

- His wrath is real – but so is His Love. (Rom 5:8; Eph. 2:4)
- When we have an unbalanced fear – we try to do works to appease Him. (Rom. 1:17; Eph. 2:10)
- Our sin is so great that there is no way we could ever earn His love (Rom 3:23; 6:23)
- God loves for us is so great – that He freely gives it unconditionally (Jer. 31:3; John 3:16-17)

3. According To Matthew 3, How Does God The Father Think And Feel About His Son, Jesus Christ?

16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

- God shows His **Acceptance** of His Son - the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.
- God shows His (public) **Affirmation** of His Son - a voice came from heaven.
- God shows His (personal) **Affection** for His Son - This is My beloved Son.
- God shows His **Approval** of His Son - whom I am well pleased.

Since we are the sons and daughters of God through faith in Jesus Christ – We can be sure that God loves us just as He sees and loves His Son.

4. How Does This Passage Reflect The Truths That “God Is Love”?

7 Beloved, let us **love** one another, for **love** is from God, and whoever **loves** has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not **love** does not know God, because **God is love** (1 John 4:7 – 8).

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 So we have come to know and to believe the **love** that God has for us. **God is love**, and whoever abides in **love** abides in God, and God abides in him (1 John 4:15 – 16).

- It shows us how God truly feels toward His own Son.
- It shows us what His love really looks like.
- It shows how God’s love flows from who He is.
- It shows His Love for Jesus – even before He did everything He was called to do.

5. Matthew 3 Describes God’s Fatherly Presence In Two Ways: God Is Present/God Makes His Presence Felt. Which Of These Realities Resonates With You Most? Which Do You Find Hard To Believe?

God Is Present

- God is presence is with me everywhere and in any situation. (Psalm 139:7 -12)
- God is present and always ready to hear my prayers. (Psalm 50:15)
- God’s presence is my protection (Psalm 23)
- God’s is present in His Word and is available to me (II Tim. 3:16 – 17).

God Makes His Presence Felt

- God’s presence is felt through His peace that He gives. (John 14:7)
- God makes His presence felt by answering my prayers (Matt. 7:7 – 8).
- God makes His presence felt though His calm in trouble (Isa. 26:3)
- God’s Spirit reminds me of His Word and His promises (John 14:26)

6. Describe A Time When You've Longed For A Heavenly Father?

- I remember while I was in the Army in the 1st Desert Storm. We were preparing to on a dangerous Combat Mission in Iraq. I needed somebody bigger than me and all of us to see us through.
- When my own father passed away in 1991 (48 years old). We all needed our Heavenly Father.



7. How Have You Seen God's Fatherly Presence In Your Own Story Of Faith?

- I have seen His presence when He called out to me and showed me how sinful I am yet also showed his great Love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- When I made the biggest mess of my life and of my ministry He restored me.
- I was sick and could've been/should have dead and gone (blood clots in my leg and lungs He healed me

8. Bart Says He Was "Desperate" To Experience The Good News About Jesus After Such A Difficult Childhood. Would You Describe Yourself As Desperate To Know God?

- There are times in my life when I am not as desperate (comfortable, overconfident, failure...)
- Especially now – when seeking to serve and minister to this church – I am desperate to know Him.
- As I reflect on the Love of God through Jesus and His Sacrifice for me - I want to know Him – Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God.



QUESTIONS

?

*Father, thank You for this message of Your
Fatherly Presence.*

*We pray now that Your Holy Spirit would
remind us of these great truths throughout
the week. May we experience You as our true
Heavenly Father.*

*We pray that this study would open our eyes
to who You truly are, Lord. We love You and
trust You.*

Amen.