



The Exchange Discussion Questions  
Mercy and Truth Kiss: The Meaning of Moses' Mistake

1. There are many examples in the media today concerning the failures of public figures - whether it's politicians, business leaders, church leaders, elite athletes or celebrities. When high profile people do things wrong, it does not go unnoticed and often the consequences they face can seem unduly harsh. Even their smallest actions are read into and scrutinized in a way that wouldn't occur if they didn't occupy their very visible positions and people are quick to weigh in with their opinions, to defend or criticize them. Do you think that's fair?
2. Should all people be treated equally, or should leaders be held to a higher standard?
3. Are all failures equal or is it worse depending on whose failures they are, and the context? Consider the effect a leader's behavior may have on the attitudes, actions and morale of the people they lead. How important is it that leaders are shown to be accountable for their own actions?
4. Should we respond differently to the failures of someone who actively seeks out a position of leadership (e.g. politicians or business leaders) as opposed to someone who has been propelled into an influential position due to people's interest in them and their talents (e.g. a celebrity or athlete)? What about someone like Moses, who never wanted to be a leader, and yet God called him to lead Israel?
5. Why do you think God often chooses to demonstrate His power through simple actions that defy logic?
6. Moses didn't obey all of God's instructions exactly, but he did follow aspects of them. Why was this not acceptable to God? Do you think God's response to this could be interpreted as perfectionism? Why or why not?
7. Do you think there is a time when it is appropriate to express anger?
8. Moses had spent 40 years in the desert with these people, listened to their complaints, guided them through good times and hard times - everyone was frustrated. Think of the longest car trip you've ever been on, the constant chorus of 'are we there yet?'. Now imagine you've been travelling for forty years, largely on foot, with thousands of other people, wandering in circles around the desert. If the people would be frustrated, how much more would their leader! Surely Moses would want to bring them to the Promised Land more than anyone. Is it understandable that his frustration and impatience were shown in this outburst, or should he have been modelling patience for the people he was leading?
9. Why do you think God chose to allow water to flow from the rock? Why not keep the water from flowing out of the rock, then everyone would know that Moses had disobeyed. That would give Moses the chance to explain, repent, and properly follow the instructions given.
10. Although Moses did not physically enter Canaan, his salvation was still assured - this mistake did not bar him from being resurrected and present at Jesus' transfiguration. What does this tell us about God's forgiveness?