

Blessed are the Merciful

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Matthew 5:7

So far, we have seen:

- **Are we spiritually bankrupt?** (Matthew 5:3) – regardless of your family’s economic class, ethnicity, country of origin, or accumulation of material goods, until we see ourselves spiritually bankrupt without recourse, we will never see the Kingdom.
- **Are we mournful, saddened, and broken over our sin** (Matthew 5:4) – until a person is broken over their moral condition before God and His holiness, they will always seek “comfort” from the things of this world.
- **Are we humble in our daily walk with Christ?** (meekness) (Matthew 5:5) – The worldly philosophy summed up in a few words is, “he who has the most toys wins.” It emphasizes power, strength, might, and any other power to gain the upper and “win.” However, Jesus says the humble shall “inherit the earth.”
- **Do we hunger and thirst for sanctification (righteousness)?** (Matthew 5:6) –
- **Are we merciful?** Matthew 5:7

I. The Call for Mercy

- A. As our pursuit of righteousness matures, our anger and indignation can foment.
 1. **Psalm 119:53**, *Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked, who forsake your law.*
- B. Instead of anger, God has called us to pursue redemption with the fallen world
 1. **James 1:20**, *For the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.*
 2. **James 2:13**, *For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

II. What is Mercy?

- A. The Definition: Merciful – “*eleēmōnes*” used Matthew 5:7 & Hebrews 2:17. Very common in the New Testament. Related to sympathy and compassion. In Hebrew, mercy is “*chesed*” Translated often as, “lovingkindness.” Carries with it an action.
 1. Show mercy on; Care for the afflicted; Give help to the wretched; Rescue the miserable
- B. The Links
 1. Mercy linked to “Forgiveness”
 - a) **Titus 3:5**, *He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*
 - b) Forgiveness is the fruit of mercy.
 2. Mercy linked to “Love”
 - a) **Ephesians 2:4**, *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,*
 - b) Love is broad, and mercy is more focused. Mercy is a physician for the sick, and love is a friend to everyone.
 3. Mercy linked to “Grace”
 - a) Grace comes first and renders us no longer guilty; mercy comes second and delivers us from the punishment.
 - b) **2 Timothy 1:2**, *To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - c) **2 John 3**, *Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father’s Son, in truth and love.*
- C. The Pictures
 1. The Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18:21-35
 2. Joseph (Genesis 37 &ff)
 3. Jesus
 - a) Zechariah prophesied in **Luke 1:78** that Jesus would come, “*because of the tender mercy of our God.*”

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- b) **Hebrews 2:17**, *Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*

III. The Need for Mercy

- A. Luke 18:9-14, Our great need is mercy!
1. The Pharisee (Luke 18:11-12) (**Matthew 6:5**, *"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward."*)
 - a) I am not like other men: extortioners (greedy), unjust (immoral), adulterers (sexually sinful), or even as this tax collector (using their power to harm).
 - b) I fast twice a week; give tithes of all that I get. (produce my own righteousness)
 2. The Tax Collector (Luke 18:13)
 - a) Stood far off
 - b) Would not lift his eyes (position of a beggar; **Ezra 9:6**, *"O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens."*)
 - c) Beat his breast (expression of deep sorrow or anger; mournful, typical of mourning for the dead)
 - d) He cried out for mercy in recognition of his sin and its associated debt.
- B. Numbers 23:10, *"Let me die the death of the upright, and let my end be like his!"*
1. Balaam wanted the "end" of his physical life to be as the end of life for an upright man.
 2. As a Puritan said, *"Balaam wanted to die like the righteous, he just didn't want to live like them."*
- C. It is God Who meets the need of mercy in our lives.
1. **Ephesians 2:4**, *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,*
 2. **Psalm 103:11**, *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love [mercy] toward those who fear him;*

IV. The Substance of Mercy

- A. Important note: *When you became a Christian, you didn't move into the category from the undeserving to the deserving. We are still undeserving.*
- B. Being merciful requires us to relinquish our selfishness.
- C. Being merciful requires us to recognize our spiritual bankruptcy
- D. Being merciful requires us to readily forgive others (**Matthew 6:14** *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,*
- E. Being merciful requires us not to respond in retaliation, vengeance, or hold a grudge.
1. No slander
 2. No gossip
 3. No flaunting someone's sin, weakness, or failure.
- F. Augustine on mercy, *"Whoever loves another's name to blast, this table's not for him, let him fast."*

V. Showing Mercy

- A. **Exodus 34:6**, *The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, (Of all the qualities the Lord could highlight at this moment, He chose mercy.)*
- B. **Luke 6:36**, *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*
1. Remember who you were.
 - a) **Ephesians 2:12**, *Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*
 2. By giving the gospel
 3. Meeting people's needs
 4. Praying for them.
 5. By pardoning

VI. The Hinge of Righteousness (hunger and thirst)

- A. The Poor in spirit acknowledge their need for mercy (1&5)
- B. Those that mourn over their sin desire to wash their hearts clean and become pure in heart (2&6)
- C. The meek make peace because their own agenda has been set aside and is not the issue (3&7)
- D. Those that hunger and thirst for righteousness will be persecuted (4&8)

VII. Mediating Mercy

- A. Once we receive mercy, we must then extend it to others. This is the hard part.
 - 1. **Luke 19:5 (ESV) — 5** And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”
 - 2. **Matthew 9:36 (ESV) — 36** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.