

The God of Mercy

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

Introduction:

- A. In a michtam Psalm of David, he calls Jehovah “My God of Mercy.” (59:10, 17)
 - 1. We have often studied grace and other Divine attributes, but I have not done a close examination of mercy
- B. Matt. 5:7, Jesus said: “Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.”
 - 1. This is a quality that cannot be kept inside for our own use and gain. To possess the quality of mercy, we must give it away to others
 - 2. The immature in faith cannot express this quality, for like an infant or small child, they are focused on themselves or what’s in it for them

I. WHAT IS MERCY?

- A. Mercy and grace are not the same thing, even though often found together
 - 1. Grace is undeserved or unmerited favor
 - a. Grace is God’s provision when a person does not deserve it
 - b. Grace is God’s blessing for those who cannot earn it
 - c. Grace is giving something positive when there is no reason to expect it
 - 2. Mercy is somewhat different
 - a. While it does result in positive blessings from God
 - b. It is the negative perspective of God’s actions toward us
 - c. Mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve
 - d. Mercy is God withholding from us what we have earned
 - 3. Illustration: When noted atheist Robert G. Ingersoll was delivering his lectures against Christ and the Bible, his oratorical ability usually assured him of a large crowd. One night after an inflammatory speech in which he severely attacked man’s faith in the Savior, he dramatically took out his watch and said, “I’ll give God a chance to prove that He exists and is almighty. I challenge Him to strike me dead within 5 minutes!” First there was silence, then people became uneasy. Some left the hall, unable to take the nervous strain of the occasion, and one woman fainted. At the end of the allocated time, the atheist exclaimed derisively, “See! There is no God. I am still very much alive!” After the lecture a young fellow said to a Christian woman, “Well, Ingersoll certainly proved something tonight!” Her reply was memorable. “Yes, he did,” she said. “He demonstrated that even the most defiant sinner cannot exhaust the patience of the Lord in just 5 minutes!”

- B. Mercy is the necessary balance to righteousness

- 1. God is righteous, but if He were only righteousness, He would be hard, demanding, and impossible for man to approach
- 2. People who are nothing but “righteous” are hard, cold, and often so judgmental that there is no room for anything around them except perfection
- 3. Mercy mitigates righteousness with compassion and understanding
- 4. Righteousness is based on truth, and mercy never contradicts the truth; it balances the absolute requirements of justice by acknowledging human conditions and limitations

5. Mercy is the “thou shalt not,” tempered by the voice of Calvary saying “Father, forgive them.”

II. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT MERCY?

- A. Mercy is an essential part of the character and nature of God
 1. Deut. 7:9; 1Chron. 16:34; Joel 2:13
- B. Mercy empowers God to be sensitive to man’s distress
 1. Psalm 4:1, 9:13
 2. Remove mercy, and the only thing that remains is the righteous requirements of Law
 3. Without mercy, grace cannot exist, because grace **MUST** be preceded by mercy, without exception!
- C. Mercy enables God to defer punishment for sin
 1. Psalm 25:7, 51:1; Luke 18:9-14; Titus 3:4-5
 2. Mercy has more power than the righteous requirements of Law, because mercy can overrule Law
- D. Mercy is the answer to man’s hopeless condition
 1. Psalm 56:1-2; Heb. 4:16
- E. Mercy exemplified
 1. Gen. 19:16; Matt. 15:22, 17:15; Luke 10:36-37

III. CHRISTIANS PRACTICE MERCY

- A. Matt. 5:7 - “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”
- B. Mercy regulates the following:
 1. The level of compassion and pity you feel for others
 2. Your ability to respond to the needs or cries for help of others
 3. The harshness with which you judge the actions and motives of others
 4. Your ability to show acts of kindness, gentleness to others
 5. Your willingness to avoid seeking justice or revenge for the sins of others against you
 6. Your ability to stand for the truth and promote righteousness without destroying or discouraging others in the process
- C. Mercy demands a level of faith and maturity that not everyone achieves.

Conclusion:

- A. Do you realize the wrath of God against you is averted by His mercy?
 1. Do you see that without mercy, there would be no way to stand before God with hope in the Judgment?
 2. Matt. 18:33