

# “Blessed Are the Merciful”

Matthew 5:7 - “Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.”

# Grace and Mercy

- Grace is when we receive more blessings than we have earned
- Mercy is when we do not receive the punishment we deserve
- Only God is all-seeing and all-wise to dispense grace and mercy to humankind
  - Heb. 4:16 - “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
- We are not God and cannot know enough about others to determine who should receive grace and mercy

# Mercy

- Our part is to be merciful, not to make judgments about who deserves mercy.
  - Do you deserve mercy; have you earned grace?
  - Then do not be quick to decide that others should not receive mercy from you.
  - Matt. 5:7 - “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”

# Mercy

- The inverse is implicitly true: “Cursed are the unmerciful, for they shall not obtain mercy.”
  - James 2:13 - “For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.”
  - Psalms 116:1-2 - “I love the LORD, because He has heard My voice and my supplications. 2 Because He has inclined His ear to me, Therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live.”

# We Are Changed By Our Exercise Of Mercy

- “The willingness to forgive is a sign of spiritual and emotional maturity. It is one of the great virtues to which we all should aspire. Imagine a world filled with individuals willing both to apologize and to accept an apology. Is there any problem that could not be solved among people who possessed the humility and largeness of spirit and mercy to do both when needed?” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Standing for Something: 10 Neglected Virtues That Will Heal Our Hearts and Homes*)
- “I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice.” (Abraham Lincoln)

# We Are Made Mature In The Faith By Our Exercise Of Mercy

- To begin to grow, we must accept becoming: poor in spirit, able to mourn, and meek at heart
- To accelerate growth, we must hunger and thirst after righteousness, pursue peace and purity, and endure persecution
- To arrive at maturity, we must extend mercy to others. It is at that point, the person of faith reflects the image of God in his own life
- A mature faith does not merely provide for the spiritual health of the one who is faithful, but it radiates outward to inspire faith in others

# Mercy Is The Necessary Balance To Righteousness

- God is righteous, but if He were only righteousness, He would be hard, demanding, and impossible for man to approach
- Mercy tempers righteousness with compassion and understanding
- But righteousness is based in truth, and mercy never contradicts the truth; **it relieves the demands of justice**
- Mercy is the voice of law saying “thou shalt not,” tempered by the voice of Calvary saying “Father, forgive them.”

# Mercy In The Scriptures

- Mercy is part of the nature of God
  - Deut. 7:9 - “Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments”
  - 1Chron. 16:34 - “Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” (repeated 4 times in the Psalms)
  - Joel 2:13 - “So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.”



# Mercy In The Scriptures

- Mercy enables God to be sensitive to man's distress
  - Psalm 4:1 - "Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer."
  - Psalm 6:2 - "Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled."
  - Psalm 9:13 - "Have mercy on me, O LORD! Consider my trouble from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death"

# Mercy In The Scriptures

- Mercy defers punishment for our sins
  - Psalm 25:7 - “Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.”
  - Psalm 41:4 - “I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.”
  - Psalm 51:1 - “Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.”

# Mercy In The Scriptures

- Mercy defers punishment for our sins
  - Luke 18:13 - “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner!”
  - Titus 3:4-6 - “But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior”

# Mercy In The Scriptures

- Mercy is the answer to man's hopelessness
  - Psalm 56:1 - "Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up; Fighting all day he oppresses me."
  - Psalm 86:3 - "Be merciful to me, O Lord, For I cry to You all day long."
  - Heb. 4:16 - "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

# Examples Of Mercy In The Scriptures

- Gen. 19:16 - "And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city."
- Gen. 39:21 - "But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison."
- Matt. 9:27 - "When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, Son of David, have mercy on us!"

# Examples Of Mercy In The Scriptures

- Matt. 15:22 - "And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."
- Matt. 17:15 - "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water."
- Luke 10:36-37 - "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves? 37 And he said, He who showed mercy on him. Then Jesus said to him, Go and do likewise."

# God Wants Us To Practice Mercy

- Mercy has an effect the following:
  - The level of compassion and pity you feel for others
  - Your ability to respond to the needs and cries for help of others
  - The harshness with which you judge the apparent motives and actions of others
  - Your ability to show kindness and gentleness to others
  - Your reduced desire for punishment or revenge on the sins of others against you
  - Your ability to stand for the truth and promote righteousness without discouraging or destroying people in the process
  - Mercy demands a level of faith that not everyone is willing to develop or able to practice

# God Wants Us To Practice Mercy

- Has God been merciful to you?
- Do you realize the great sacrifice given for you?
- Do you realize the awful wrath of God that you have avoided because of His mercy?
- Can you see that without mercy, there would be no way for you to stand before God?
- How can someone who loves the mercy given him be unwilling to extend mercy to others?
- Matt. 18:21-34