

BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL

MATTHEW 5:7

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⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Introduction:

Again notice the progression. One will not be the Christian they should be until they become poor in spirit - seeing ourselves as God sees us.

After one sees themselves as God sees them it will result in mourning. Those that mourn will be comforted.

After one sees themselves as God sees them and is comforted by God, they will be meek, and will hunger and thirst for righteousness.

While one hungers and thirsts for righteousness they can hardly not be merciful.

We live in a world where it is easy to become cold-hearted, insensitive, and unsympathetic. We are constantly being bombarded with news of some tragedy that has happened somewhere in the world.

Hardly a day goes by that we don't hear of, and see the results of, some violent act that has occurred. Scenes of dead bodies lying in the streets, police and paramedics hurrying about, friends and loved ones grieving uncontrollably have become all too familiar.

In order to cope with all of the pain and suffering that goes on around us, we have learned to control our emotions and we don't allow ourselves to dwell too long upon the negative. In the process however, we have also managed to become skeptical and merciless.

Someone has stated it like this, "Mercy is a response to misery; mercy understands the hurt, feels the hurt, and moves out to cure the hurt."

Showing mercy is not easy, especially when someone is not deserving of the mercy they need.

Showing mercy is not easy, when the people who need mercy are not pretty or likeable.

Showing mercy is not easy, when the person who needs mercy has hurt or offended you.

There is, what I would call, a cycle of mercy.

This cycle of mercy begins with,

1. THE ACCEPTANCE OF MERCY

A. You will not be able to show mercy until you experience mercy.

B. You must experience mercy in order to be right with God.

C. That is the result of becoming poor in spirit.

1. A person who is poor in spirit has come to the end of himself, realizing that he has nothing good to offer to God. He is actually throwing himself upon the mercy of God.

2. A person who is poor in spirit recognizes that he is a sinner in need of forgiveness. Isaiah 64:6

Isaiah 64:6

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

3. A person who is poor in spirit realizes that he or she as a miserable lost sinner is in need of mercy.

4. And mercy is exactly what God has shown on mankind.

Psalm 85:10

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

- This verse was fulfilled on the cross of Calvary where Jesus died for your sins.
- The truth is that someone has to pay for your sins in order to satisfy God's perfect sense of righteousness.
- Someone had to pay!
- Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of God, suffered and died on the cross in your place. That's God's mercy at work. He took your punishment.
- Righteousness and peace "kissed each other" as God's righteousness was satisfied by the payment of His Son and peace with God was secured for all those who want it.
- God has already shown you mercy.

2. THE ATTITUDE OF MERCY

- A bad attitude is what keeps us from showing mercy.
- There are some mindsets that will hinder us from being merciful.
- Pride will keep us from being merciful.
- A critical spirit will keep us from being merciful.
- Selfishness will keep us from being merciful.
- Unforgiveness will keep us from being merciful.

Ephes. 4:32

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

- Because God has forgiven me, I need, with God's help, to forgive others.
- A merciful attitude is an attitude of compassion, because we have experienced God's compassion.
- It is compassion for the person who does not have enough to eat.

- It is compassion for the person who is suffering illness.
- It is compassion for the person down on his luck.
- It is compassion for the person who is hurting.
- It is compassion for the person who is going to hell, because he or she has not trusted Jesus as Savior.
- It is compassion for the person who has hurt you. Matthew 5:44

Matthew 5:44

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

- If God didn't have a heart of compassion, of mercy, towards you, where would you be?
- Ask Him for a heart of compassion, of mercy.

3. THE ACTION OF MERCY

Luke 10:33-34

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, [34] And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

Notice three practical steps we can take toward being merciful.

A. He Saw (saw him)

1. With the hustle and bustle of today's society, we tend to get wrapped up in our own little worlds. We all have our own plans, our own dreams, and our own goals.

As we come in contact with people, we tend to categorize them in one of two ways.

They are either beneficial to our plans, dreams, and goals, or they aren't.

Those that are, we are willing to spend time with, and those that aren't we ignore because they are useless to our cause.

2. In order to cultivate a more merciful spirit we must learn to see people as individually important to God.

Regardless of how we stereotype them, they were "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14) just as we were, and God has a plan and purpose for their lives just as He does for ours.

3. The Samaritan saw the man, most likely a Jew, as someone who needed help. For all intents and purposes the man was the Samaritan's enemy, but that made no difference.

At this particular point in time he was simply another human being in need of assistance.

4. Learning to see others as God sees them is the first step in becoming more merciful.

B. He Had Compassion

1. As we've already seen, much of what we are exposed to every day makes it difficult for us to be moved with compassion. But the ability to "weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15) is of

utmost importance if we are to be merciful.

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Hebrews 13:3

Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

3. Obviously we can't all experience everything that others experience, but instead of standing at a distance and passing judgment, we can make an honest effort in trying, mentally at least, to put ourselves in their shoes for awhile.

C. He Went and Took Care of Him

1. Seeing as God sees, feeling as God feels, and then responding by doing something is what being merciful is all about.

2. The bottom line is learning to love like Christ loved. Loving this way is not without its risks however. "To love at all is to be vulnerable.

Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken.

If you want to make sure of keeping your heart intact, you must give your heart to no one. Not even to an animal.

Wrap it carefully with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket - safe, dark, motionless, airless - it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, and irredeemable. (C. S. Lewis)

3. While the danger is great in loving, it is even greater in not loving. The danger in not loving is the inability to show mercy which will result in a life not pleasing to God.

Close:

Mercy begets mercy according to the words of our Lord in His sermon. "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." This is true:

- Presently

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

The child of God is constantly in need of mercy and forgiveness. By showing both mercy and forgiveness toward others on a daily basis, we will receive the same from our Heavenly Father.

- Eternally

James 2:13

For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

If those who show no mercy receive no mercy, then those who do show mercy will most assuredly receive the same.