

Being Merciful

Sunday, October 25, 2020
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Straight Paths Bible Church

Mat 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Psalm 18:25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;

- I. The merciful are those who are so affected by the sufferings of others that they are moved to help them.
 - A. Compassion comes before mercy.
 - B. But compassion is sympathy (a feeling) with the suffering while mercy is action to alleviate the suffering.
 - C. Jesus said, “Blessed are the merciful,” not “blessed are the compassionate.”
 - D. Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only.
- II. Mercy that is exercised at the expense of truth, justice, and law is not true mercy at all.
 - A. Many seem to think of mercy as tolerance of transgression and wickedness.
 - B. Many consider a merciful person one who pretends not to see, or one who is easy-going and acts as if it doesn't matter if truth and law are broken.
 - C. God is described in the Bible as merciful, and this definition doesn't fit Him at all.

Psa 130:7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Luke 6:36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Psa 85:10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

- D. There is no contradiction between mercy and truth, or mercy and justice.
 - 1. They are not opposed to one another, but work in harmony.

- III. Mercy and grace are somewhat related.

Titus 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. Also 1 Tim and 2 Tim start with the same

- A. Someone said, Grace is especially associated with men in their sins, and mercy is especially associated with men in their misery.
 - 1. Grace looks at sin, while mercy looks at the misery and suffering caused by sin.
 - 2. Grace is NOT unmerited favor — grace is the divine influence upon the heart that causes a man to depart from sin and live a holy life, conforming more and more to the Son of God.

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

- 3. We are saved by grace – not by mercy.

4. Mercy, on the other hand, COULD be called unmerited favor.
 - a) It is favor shown when judgment, punishment, and misery are what are really deserved.
 - b) Something done to relieve suffering that justice says is well-deserved.
 - B. Mercy includes a sense of pity, plus a desire to relieve the suffering.
 1. Without twisting the truth or shifting the blame where it doesn't belong.
 - C. You know if you are merciful or not when you have in your power someone who has transgressed against you, and you can now exercise justice or mercy.
 1. How you feel towards him tells if you are really merciful or not.
 2. If your desire for justice blinds you to any mercy then you are not like the Savior at all.
 - D. God's mercy was displayed when He sent his Son to deliver sinners from their sin and punishment.
 1. He saw man's pitiful state as a result of his sin, and had mercy on him.
 2. He did not sympathize with his sin but with his present and future misery because of his sin.
 3. God showed mercy by forming a means to deal with sin, which is the cause of all death and misery in the universe.
 4. He did it through grace.
 5. And that is how mercy and grace are related.
- IV. We do not exercise mercy in order to obtain mercy.
- A. It is not a threat from God that if we don't exercise mercy on someone we will receive no mercy from Him.
 - B. Blessed are the merciful. – that is their character and disposition, not simply a work that they do on purpose.
 - C. If we have obtained mercy we will show mercy.
 1. Just as we forgive because we are forgiven.
 2. Just as we do good works BECAUSE we are saved — NOT in order to be saved.
- V. Mercy sometimes shows up disguised in garments of affliction.

Phyllis Wheatley – On Being Brought from Africa to America

'Twas mercy brought me from my pagan land,
 Taught my benighted soul to understand
 That there's a God, that there's a Savior too:
 Once I redemption neither sought nor knew.
 Some view our sable race with scornful eye.
 Their color is a diabolic dye.
 Remember, Christians, Negroes, black as Cain,
 May be refined, and join the angelic train.

- A. Before we receive mercy from God we have to be broken by afflictions and heartache.
- B. The mercies we have received are cherished much more when we look back on them, because it is only then that we understand that they were the very mercies of God to us.