

**Providence Reformed Baptist Church - Sunday, January 24, 2021**

**Sermon Series: The Gospel of the Kingdom – Matthew**

**Message 21. The Merciful – Matthew 5:7**

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**Introduction:** Blessed – a recipient of divine favor, grace. Because you have been blessed (shown grace), you will want to do and be able to do now what previously you did not want to do and could not do on your own. The first three of the “Be-attitudes” have demonstrated our helplessness. 1) To be poor in spirit is to recognize our hopelessness and helplessness before God apart from His grace. 2) To mourn for sin leads us in repentance to the comfort promised in the gospel, our only lasting and true hope. And 3) We move from mourning over sin (looking at self) to a position to see how others look at us – what is the outward fruit of our regeneration? It must be a meek and gentle spirit, to live a quiet and peaceable life trusting and submitted to God. It is leaving everything – ourselves, our lives, our rights, our cause, our whole future – in the hands of God. And 4) Seeing our helplessness we come to the remedy, being right with God through the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and then to our righteousness found in walking on submission and obedience to Christ.

Be Merciful – “What a test of each one of us, of our whole standing and of our profession of the Christian faith!” – MLJ, pg. 80

- I. Defining Terms – Matt. 5:7
  - A. Blessed – a recipient of divine favor, grace
    1. You have now the desire and the ability to do what previously you could not do and did not want to do
    2. You have been made right with God and are able to be pleasing to Him
  - B. Merciful – compassion, pity
    1. Grace and Mercy – 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4
      - a. Grace is especially associated with men in their sins.
      - b. Mercy is especially associated with men in their misery.
      - c. Sin is the cause; misery is the consequence/fruit
    2. “A desire to relieve the suffering caused by sin.” – MLJ – **Pity Plus Action**
  - C. Obtain Mercy – “I have been shown mercy, so I show mercy.” – MLJ
    1. Not: If I show mercy, I get mercy (grace, not of works)
    2. MLJ Quote – “Let me put it like this...”
    3. Betsy ten Boom – we feel a sense of sorrow for all who are helpless slaves of sin.
    4. See it best at the Cross
      - a. Quote MLJ – “Look at Him there...”
      - b. Quote Barnhouse – “When Jesus Christ died...”
      - c. We feel a genuine sense of sorrow for those who are slaves of sin
  - D. Definition – Mercy is grace in action.
    1. Needed, but never deserved.
    2. Identifying with the miserable in their misery because we’ve been there – 2 Cor. 1:3-4
    3. JMB Quote – “If we do not show mercy...”
- II. Transformed by Mercy – Rom. 12:1-2
  - A. Attitude vs. Action
    1. Belief affects Behavior
    2. “The transformed character of the one who now has been touched by Christ’s Spirit and is being progressively remade in Christ’s image.” – JMB (*by the mercy of God*)
    3. “The man who has tasted God’s righteousness is to show mercy to others; he is to be pure in heart; he is to be a peacemaker.” – JMB

4. The person given this divine character is instructed to live as the rest of the Sermon indicates.
- B. The Mind of Christ
1. As a new creation, after the new birth, we have the mind of Christ
  2. It controls our thoughts, our outlook, our imagination, and as a result, our actions
  3. We must yield to the Spirit's control (mind, will, emotions) and be constantly renewed in the spirit of our mind – Eph. 4:23-24
- C. Being vs. Doing
1. “The gospel puts a greater weight upon or attitude than upon our actions.” – MLJ
  2. It is what we are, rather than what we do.
  3. If we are what we are supposed to be, we will do what we are supposed to do.
  4. “We are not meant to control our Christianity; our Christianity is rather meant to control us.” – MLJ
- III. Mercy, a Divine Quality – Luke 1:76-79; Psa. 86:15; 136:1; Eph. 2:4-7
- A. Having Experienced Mercy, We Must Show Mercy
- B. Mercy is a Gift of the Spirit – Rom. 12:8
- C. Mercy in one of God's Attributes – MLJ Quote – “The merciful person...”
- IV. Mercy or Vengeance – Rom. 12:17-21
- A. We Want Vengeance
- B. Are We Merciful? – Matt. 5:43-48

## Quotes

MLJ – “Let me put it like this. This Be-attitude follows all the others; therefore, I put it in this form. I am poor in spirit; I realize that I have no righteousness; I realize that face-to-face with God and His righteousness I am utterly helpless; I can do nothing. Not only that. I mourn because of the sin that is within me; I have come to see, as a result of the operation of the Holy Spirit, the blackness of my own heart. I know what it is to cry out, ‘O wretched man that I Am! Who shall deliver me?’ And I desire to be rid of this vileness that is within me. Not only that. I am meek, which means that now that I have experienced this true view of myself, nobody else can hurt me, nobody else can insult me, nobody can ever say anything too bad about me. I have seen myself as something truly hateful, and it is because of this that I have hungered and thirsted after righteousness. I have longed for it. I have seen that I cannot create or produce it, and that nobody else can. I have seen my desperate position in the sight of God. I have hungered and thirsted for that righteousness which will put me right with God, that will reconcile me to God, and give me a new nature and life. And I have seen it in Christ. I have been filled; I have received it all as a free gift! Does it not follow inevitably that, if I have seen and experienced all that, my attitude towards everybody else must be completely and entirely changed? I do not merely see them and what they do. I see them as slaves of hell and of Satan, and my whole attitude toward them is changed. And because of that, of course, I can be and must be merciful with respect to them. I see everybody who is in a state of sin as one who is to be pitied.”

MLJ – “Look at Him there upon the cross, who never sinned, who never did any harm to anyone, who came and preached the truth, who came to seek and save that which was lost. There He is, nailed and suffering agonies on that cross, and yet what does He say as He looks upon the people responsible for it? ‘Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’ Now you and I are to become like that. Look at Stephen the martyr attaining to that. As they are stoning him, what does he say? He prays to his heavenly Father and cries, ‘Lay not this sin to their charge. They do not know what they are doing, Lord.’ He has pity on them and is merciful in respect to them. And that, I say, is to be the condition of everyone who is truly Christian.”

Barnhouse – “When Jesus Christ died on the cross, all of the work of God for man’s salvation passed out of the realm of prophecy and became historical fact. God has now had mercy upon us. There could not be any more mercy than this.”

JMB – “If we do not show mercy to others, we show that we either understand little of that mercy by which we have been saved, or else have never actually received it.”

MLJ – “The merciful person, many people think, is one who smiles at transgression and law breaking. Easy going – easy to get along with. Obviously, that is not what is meant by our Lord’s description of the Christian at this point, and for very good reason. Being merciful is an adjective that is applied specially and specifically to God Himself. How we define mercy is how we define God, for it is one of His attributes. He is merciful, and holy, and righteous, and just....in God mercy and truth meet together.”

## **Cross References**

### **1 Timothy 1:2**

2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **2 Timothy 1:2**

2 To Timothy, a beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Titus 1:4**

4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

### **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

### **Romans 12:1-2**

12 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

### **Ephesians 4:23-24**

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

### **Luke 1:76-79**

76 “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, 77 To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; 79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

### **Psalm 86:15**

15 But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.

### **Psalm 136:1**

136 Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

### **Ephesians 2:4-7**

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

### **Romans 12:8**

8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

### **Romans 12:17-21**

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### **Matthew 5:43-48**

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

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