

## *"Blessed Are The Merciful"*

*Matthew 5:7*

- B. The merciful obtain mercy from our fellowmen in some measure in our everyday relationships.
  1. The attitude of men toward us depends largely upon us (Matthew 7:2, 12; 1 Peter 3:13).
  2. This is true even though the most merciful man was crucified.
- C. The merciful always obtain mercy from God, while the unforgiving make the receiving of mercy impossible (Matthew 6:14).
  1. God will no more forgive the unforgiving than make 2 plus 2 = 49. (cf. Romans 3:24-26).
  2. Parable of the unforgiving debtor (Matthew 18:21-35).
  3. "The most expensive thing you can do is to hold a wrong spirit in your heart against another" -- Charles Allen.

### CONCLUSION —

#### I. TO WHOM IS THE MERCY OF GOD EXTENDED?

- A. It is offered to all (Luke 15: Titus 2:11; Hebrews 2:9).
- B. But the impenitent disobedient who spurn his mercy will perish in their sins eternally (2 Thessalonians 1:9-11).
- C. "Will a merciful God send the ignorant heathen to hell?"
  1. That is not for us to decide or say: It is for God to decide and for Jesus to say: Luke 12:4,5,47,48.
  2. All we know and must say is that God sent his only begotten Son from heaven to the cross to save them (John 3:16). He is greatly interested in everyone's happiness, now and eternally (2 Peter 3:9).
  3. **If we are truly merciful and follow Jesus**, we will not allow the heathen to remain ignorant of his saving mercy (1 Corinthians 2:21; Luke 19:10; 9:23; Hebrews 5:9; John 14:6)
  4. **God is infinitely merciful** (2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Peter 3:9), but he is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), and he has promised forgiving mercy only to those who obey his commandments (Acts 2:38; 4:12; 17:30,31; Mark 16:15,16).
- D. If we are to live eternally in the warm summertime of God's unending mercy, our cold unmerciful hearts must be warmed and changed by the powerful, wonderful, brilliant rays of his redeeming love expressed through Jesus Christ our Lord, "the sun of righteousness," **now** in the springtime of our existence.

#### II. WILL YOU NOT ACCEPT THE MERCY OF GOD TODAY BY BECOMING HIS OBEDIENT AND MERCIFUL CHILD?

**Do not spurn the greatest love!** *"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days"* (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

-- Charles E. Crouch

### INTRODUCTION —

- I. THIS BEATITUDE IS ONE OF THE LORD'S MOST APPEALING, ARRESTING, DIFFICULT AND IMPORTANT LESSONS.
  - A. It is important, because without mercy we are without hope.
  - B. It is difficult, because it is difficult to forgive the guilty.
  - C. It is most searching, because it drives us to our knees, causing us to pray, "God, be thou merciful to me a sinner."
  - D. It is appealing and arresting, because it causes us to ask, "What can I do to receive and to extend mercy upon the earth?"
- II. MERCY IS ONE OF THE THREE THINGS GOD REQUIRES (Micah 6:8)
- III. JESUS SAID IT IS ONE OF "THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF THE LAW" (Matthew 23:2).
- IV. WHY DOES EVERYONE LOVE THE GOOD SAMARITAN MORE THAN JONAH (4:1-3)?

### DISCUSSION —

#### I. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE MERCIFUL: *"LEARN WHAT THIS MEANS"* (Matthew 9:12, 12:7).

- A. It is far more than a facility for shedding tears.
  1. Jesus wept in the presence of Martha and Mary (John 11:35).
  2. He also wept over the city of Jerusalem, "the holy city" (Matthew 23:37; Luke 19:41-44).
  3. But he did much more than weep/his tears were meaningful, he came down from heaven and gave himself for lost sinners.
  4. Some who weep are like the steamboat that had to stop and steam up after each blowing of its whistle, which left no driving power.
- B. To be merciful is to do something more than to give, share and serve: **It is something God desires more than sacrifice** (Matthew 9:13).
  1. It is much more than passing out food, sandwiches and clothing.
  2. Not that a merciful person will not do those: He will do them gladly when necessity and opportunity require; but it is possible to do them and not be merciful (Matthew 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3).
  3. Many think of Christianity on a super-market basis!
- C. What then is it to be merciful?
  1. It is primarily a quality of the inner man: It is the disposition, action, reaction and fruit of a loving heart. It is to be sincerely touched, concerned and generous at the misery, misfortune and mistreatment of other persons.
  2. To be merciful is to have the Lord's way of seeing and judging

sinful suffering men: It is compassion and loving kindness; pity for the unfortunate, undeserving and guilty. See *Cruden's Complete Concordance*, p. 428.

3. It is to be possessed of a forgiving spirit in dealing with the offenses of others.
4. It is to "love kindness" (Micah 6:8): to have a heart made warm by genuine brotherly kindness.

## II. CHARACTERISTICS OF MERCIFULNESS: HOW MERCY IS EXPRESSED.

- A. If this feeling of brotherliness is in the heart, it will give evidence of itself in outward conduct (Matthew 12:34; 15:18,19).
  1. When spring comes, it cannot keep that fact a secret: It tells of its arrival in a thousand ways, without boasting.
  2. Even so, a heart of mercy will make itself known in a multitude of ways, without vaunting itself or seeking "its own" (I Corinthians 13:4-7).
- B. If merciful, we will be kind in our judgments: Some men slander and insult while they attempt to serve.
  1. We will search for the best and not for the worst in our fellows, and seek to encourage the best, not the worst.
  2. Like Barnabas, in judging John Mark (Acts 9:27; 15:39; 2 Timothy 4:11).
  3. If merciful, we are going to be slow to condemn, and quick to commend (James 1:19,20,26).
  4. Mercy is not merely a thing of duty, it is something we are or are not: "The quality of mercy **is not strained, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest, It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.**" It is not something you do once a week or each month and then forget about it.
  5. It is a spontaneous expression of a loving heart: Poem: "Let something good be said." A Christian is predictable.
- C. The merciful person is also forgiving. (1 John 4:20).
  1. He refuses to harbor a grudge (Ephesians 4:26,31,32).
  2. He loves and prays for his persecutors (Matthew 5:11,44).
  3. He loves his enemies: Not merely their souls but the person himself, as David showed mercy to King Saul (1 Samuel 26).
- D. The merciful person does more than say, "I'm sorry," etc. He gives and serves God and mankind!
  1. The good Samaritan is a classic Bible example of kindness toward the distressed (Luke 10). The world remembers him, though nameless.
  2. Christ dares to set the priest and the Levite in the prisoner's dock with the robbers-- **not because they assisted with the robbery and beating, but because they passed by without doing anything to help, thus showing they were without mercy** (Matthew 25:31-46).

3. Of course the merciful man does not confine his service to the giving of his material substance: Sympathy **and the bread of life are both needed: therefore he is merciful in seeking and teaching the lost** (Luke 15:1-10; 19:10).

## III. OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS.

- A. If we are eager to become merciful, we may begin by remembering our own need of mercy.
  1. Galatians 6:1: "...*Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*"
  2. Read Acts 20:28 and 2 Corinthians 13:5.
  3. Since we have such great and absolute need of divine forgiveness, we must be ready to forgive (Matthew 6:12; Mark 11:25).
  4. When Governor Oglethorpe berated a servant who had drunk all his favorite wine, and said, "I will be avenged" and "I never forgive," John Wesley said, "In that case, I hope you never sin." - Chappell, *The Sermon On the Mount*, p. 68.
- B. We need to consider how imperfectly we often know those whom we condemn so freely and quickly.
  1. If we knew all we might find it easier to forgive all; but we know so little. Story of preacher/ bootblack.
  2. "*Judge not that ye be not judged. For...*" (Matthew 7:1,2; John 7:24).
- C. There is no being merciful in the truest sense without the help of "the Father of mercies" **and Jesus** (2 Corinthians 1:3; John 5:42).
  1. The mercy of God, who is "*rich in mercy,*" is our most powerful motive power to become merciful (Romans 12:1; Ephesians 2:4; Titus 3:5).
  2. The central fact of the Bible is rooted in the mercy of God (John 3:16). Nowhere do we imitate God more than when we show mercy/lovingkindness to others.
  3. Unless we learn of Jesus and follow his word and will, we can never attain true mercifulness: It is a quality inspired of Him (1 John 4:7-21; 2 Corinthians 5:14).
  4. God and Christ must dwell in us through faith, which comes from hearing God's word (Acts 2:38,39; Matthew 11:28,29; **Ephesians 3:17**; 1 John 3:24).
  5. There is also power in prayer for growth in mercy (1 Thessalonians 5:14-17).

## IV. THE RICH REWARD OF MERCY: THEY ARE "BLESSED."

- A. This does not mean our Lord hires us to be merciful.
  1. He is not a merchant who sells mercy, ounce for ounce, but a Saviour who inspires, leads and gives.
  2. The merciful receive mercy because they are prepared and capable of receiving it (Galatians 6:8,9; Eccl. 11:1). To be wanting in mercy is to make the receiving of mercy impossible.