

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."  
Matthew 5:7

## Mercy! Please!

### Beatitudes – Blessed are the merciful – Matthew 5:7

Have you ever played "Mercy"?

It is that game where you hold hands with someone and then try to twist and turn their hands until they shout, "Mercy!", admitting defeat. Sometimes it is called "Peanuts" or "Uncle". It is a game that can be played in many different ways, like slapping, punching, etc., but the basis is still to take turns inflicting pain on each other until someone gives.

I am almost sure a guy made it up so that he could prove his manhood or something like that.

I am not sure why it carries the name "mercy" because it is not mercy. Mercy is not pushing someone to their limits, waiting for them to give in or inflicting pain to show dominance or victory. That is not mercy; that is cruel and in some areas would be considered torture.

How would you define mercy?

---

---

Jesus proclaims, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy."

I am not sure if your mom ever told you that to receive mercy, you need to give it. I am not convinced that is true.

Is it too much to say that we are completely self-centered from birth and only an act of God (salvation) will save us from our self-centeredness?

I am convinced of this every time I drive my car in the city. We may be as merciful as possible and still get kicked in the teeth. This is not new to our society. In Jesus' day, Roman philosophers claimed that mercy was a disease of the soul and a sign of weakness. It was not uncommon for a father to have his new baby drowned simply because he did not like what he saw. Slaves could be killed with no repercussions. It sounds horrible, but we are guilty of that same attitude of self-centeredness.

Jesus makes a statement that flies in the face of His society and ours.

The term translated "mercy" means compassionate or loving. True mercy is a genuine compassion with a pure motive that reaches out to people in need. Mercy is compassion in action.

When was the last time someone showed compassion for you?

---

---

---

Mercy can be seen in many ways, and one of the primary ways is forgiveness. Forgiveness flows out of mercy. Think about a time when someone has wronged you. It may have been something small or something that changed you. The enemy would have you to think that

*“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”  
Ephesians 2:4-7*

they should pay you back for what they did. They owe you, but instead you realize that you have been guilty of the same thing, or at least you are not perfect, so you have compassion on that person. You come to a point of needing to forgive them.

You have shown mercy. You have given them something they did not deserve. It is very similar to what the cross did for those who are saved.

Ephesians 2:4-7 explains the role of mercy in the life of the believer. God had mercy on mankind and provided a way of salvation while we were dead. God showed us compassion and mercy by not giving us what we deserve – that is eternal damnation.

When was the last time you thought of this mercy? What is your response to God for saving you?

---

---

---

Sometimes I am silent, and sometimes I am able to sing praises, but it helps me to realize how poor I am.

So if mercy is compassion in action, it does come down to what we can do for others. Physically, we have the opportunity to minister in unending ways. There is giving to the needy or feeding the hungry. There are so many ways to show compassion or mercy. It could also be giving forgiveness to someone that you have been holding a grudge with. It may be forgetting a debt that is owed you.

Is God prompting you towards some action of mercy?

---

---

There is also the spiritual ministry of mercy. There is the caring aspect of mercy that has a compassion on sinners. Jesus expresses this from the cross in Luke 23:34 and then Stephen does the same when he is being stoned in Acts 7. There is a sharing aspect of talking with people about the truth of the Word of God (Jude 22-23). The final aspect of mercy is prayer. Your prayer is an act of mercy because it releases God's blessing (James 5:17).

It might cross your mind that there is sacrifice involved. I would be wrong to say there wasn't. Remember, you are a self-centered species. Any attempt to be merciful will cause us to sacrifice. I could mention the sacrifice that Jesus made, but Jesus says himself that those who show mercy will receive mercy and in the end have joy.

When it comes down to it, God gives me mercy, I show others mercy, then God gives me more mercy which in turn is joy. If this were a math problem, then no matter what I sacrifice or lose, I will never be in the negative.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.”

I like the way God does math.

"But Jesus was saying,  
'Father, forgive them;  
for they do not know  
what they are doing.'"  
Luke 23:34

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

