

# Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy

Matthew 4:23-5:12

Theme of Matthew: "Behold your King is coming to you" (Zech.9:9; Mt.21:4-5)

Theme of the Beatitudes: Christ's Portrait of His People (John Stott)

Theme of the Sermon on the Mount: Life Styles of the Rich and Famous

## INTRODUCTION TO JONAH

- The book of Jonah is about God's mercy and compassion.
- The prophet Jonah was not merciful and compassionate but angry.
- The prophet Jonah's last words to God were, "I have good reason to be angry, even to death" (Jonah 4:9).
- God's last words to the prophet were, "Should I not have compassion on Nineveh..." (Jonah 4:11).
- One of the funniest parts of Jonah is the zeal of the Ninevites when they hear Jonah's message of repentance (Jonah 3:5-8).
- Jonah is about God's mercy and compassion toward us and how we are to share it with others – even our enemies.

## REVIEW OF THE BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in spirit – "I have need to be baptized by You" (Matthew 3:14).

Blessed are those who mourn – "Oh that my head were waters And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jeremiah 9:1)

Blessed are the gentle meek – "Behold your King is coming to you, Gentle, and mounted on a donkey" (Matthew 21:5 with Zechariah 9:9-10).

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness – Find out Wednesday ☺

## I. WHAT IS MERCY?

Mercy is an attribute of God who is 'the Father of \_\_\_\_\_' (2 Cor.1:3).

God's mercies are over all His \_\_\_\_\_ (Psalm 145:9).

God's great \_\_\_\_\_ caused us to be born again (1 Peter 1:3).

God's mercy is s\_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 33:19; Romans 9:15-16).

Synonyms for God's "mercy" are com\_\_\_\_\_, g\_\_\_\_\_, gra\_\_\_\_\_, pity,

kin\_\_\_\_\_, lov\_\_\_\_\_, forg\_\_\_\_\_ (Exodus 34:6-7; Nehemiah

9:16-19; Psalm 86:15; 103; 116:5; 145:8-9; Luke 10:33 with 37; Romans 2:4; Titus 3:4-5).

Isaiah 49:15

"Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

Mercy means that one is slow to \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex.34:6; Neh.9:17; Ps.86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2). (Note how they are often used in conjunction).

**II. MERCY ILLUSTRATED IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL** (Matthew at 5:21-22,44; 6:2-4; 9:13,27-31; 12:7; 15:21-28; 17:14-18; 18:33; 20:29-34; 23:23; cf. Mt.25:31-46)

- A. Calling your brother a “fool” is unmerciful (Mt.5:21-22).
- B. Mercy is loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us (Mt.5:44).
- C. The Greek word for mercy (□λεέω) is related to the word for the giving of alms (**ejlehmosuvnh, eleēmosunē**) (Matthew 6:2,3; cf. Psalm 112:5).
- D. Twice in Matthew, Jesus quotes to the Pharisees from Hosea, “I desire compassion/mercy, and not sacrifice...” (Matthew 9:13; 12:7).
- E. Jesus’ casting out of demons and His healing are examples of mercy (Matthew 15:21-28; 17:14-18).
- F. Forgiving our brother from the heart is an obligation of mercy (**Matthew 18:33**).
- G. The best illustration of mercy is the cross (Matthew 26-27).

**III. THERE ARE REMNANTS OF MERCY WITHIN FALLEN MAN, BUT WE HAVE BEEN INFECTED WITH THE CANCER OF CRUELTY**

- A. The womb, the place of compassion, has become the most dangerous place on earth. Abortion is merciless.
- B. The people we are closest to and love the most are often the people we are most cruel to.
- C. Divorce is cruel and unmerciful not just for the husband or wife, but for children, family and friends.
- D. Road rage
- E. Children can be extremely cruel and merciless toward their siblings, toward their peers or even to teachers and parents.
- F. The cross is the greatest proof that we are merciless.
- G. Mercy is a supernatural grace. It’s not something that comes naturally to us.
- H. What about people like Gandhi?

**QUESTIONS FOR SABBATH DISCUSSION & MEDITATION:**

*Take what you have learned this morning and make it into a prayer. Are you merciful? Pray that God would enable you to have or to grow in this grace.*

*Why was the Old Testament reading from Jonah? What did it have to do with mercy?*

*What is mercy and what are some synonyms for mercy?*

*What is the relationship between mercy and almsgiving?*

*What is the relationship between mercy and “slow to anger.”*

*Are people merciful at heart?*

For tonight:

- ✓ *What’s the difference between mercy and grace?*
- ✓ *Are mercy and justice compatible?*
- ✓ *Also, we’ll be looking at how mercy is rooted in the second greatest commandment.*
- ✓ *How can you grow in mercy.*

