

Matthew

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[0 : 00] As the Lord is pleased to help and direct me in independence upon his grace, I venture to speak in the words in verse 7 of the 5th chapter of Matthew's Gospel.

Matthew chapter 5 and verse 7, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Here, as I understand it, Jesus is really beginning to point out the effects of that which he has before mentioned.

That is, the particular exercises of the newborn soul. Those who are born and taught of the Spirit of God soon begin to feel their poverty.

They are humbled in the dust before God, and realize their own nothingness.

[1 : 13] And they also mourn over the cause of that condition, the sin that they so deeply feel.

And these things do produce, by the grace of God, that spirit of meekness, which is so necessary and so honoring to God.

Now, my dear friends, where these exercises are found in the heart, they will lead to a hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

After that which is right and acceptable in the sight of God. After that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

So, as I said before, verse 6, in a way, represents a climax. All these needs are met in this longing desire, this earnest thirsting and hungering for that which is so found to be needed.

[2 : 29] And the promises are fulfilled, as I have said, not only in the future, but to some degree here in the present.

The hungry and thirsty, after righteousness, they are filled, in some measure, here below. These desires are satisfied.

And these things have their effects. Which now, the Lord Jesus goes on to deal with. For instance, those who are truly humbled will be merciful to others.

They will see, at times at least, what that good man saw when it's so often been told.

It was, I think, John Bradford, when he saw a criminal going to the gallows. And he said, there go I, but for the grace of God.

[3 : 39] He could see himself in that miserable and wretched condition. And he could feel before that criminal. And realize that apart from the restraining hand of God, he could have been just there.

Now this will make you merciful. And so also, if you mourn over your sin, you will long for holiness. And that is the one way to attain through the goodness of God and by his grace to purity of heart.

And then those that are meek, for they are the peacemakers. The meek spirit is more conducive to peace than any other can be.

And so there is the correspondence between these beatitudes. Those who are truly humbled will become merciful in their disposition towards others.

So in this word we have again a description of the character of the people of God, of the disciples of the Lord Jesus, a description of the people, and then a pronouncement of the promise, the blessing that shall attend them.

[5 : 07] For they shall obtain mercy. First then we have this character, the merciful. The meaning of this expression clearly has changed somewhat since it was first made.

Clearly, the word literally means to be full of mercy. In agreement with that word which we read concerning the wisdom that is from above, which is first pure and then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, without partiality and without hypocrisy, full of mercy and good fruits.

It is that heavenly wisdom that does lead to this merciful spirit. Now, mercy is really that sensitive and practical regard for those who are in misery.

mercy. Mercy really is that respect for misery. We have it very prominently brought before us in the wonderful parable that Jesus taught which we read before.

To pass by on the other side is not much of an indication of any merciful spirit. when that person, that man was in such very great and sore need.

[6 : 59] About the Samaritan, those of course were generally despised by the Jews, he came where that man was and had compassion and bound up his wounds pouring in oil and wine and took him to the inn and bade them to take care of him and committed himself to pay for any expenses that were caused.

Surely, he did all that he could to relieve that very sad and distressing condition. He acted as neighbor to him that fell among thieves.

And so, the lawyer who replied to Jesus and probably would not even mention the word Samaritan, he said, that was the neighbor, rightly, he that showed mercy on him.

Now, that mercy is often manifested in a natural way. There are those who are merciful in their way of acting towards others.

Wherever that is, it is to be commended. It is very sad when we see such a hard and callous and unmerciful spirit, as we often hear about, which can cause so much suffering to others without any apparent feeling about it.

[8 : 48] There is much cause in this world where there is so much woe and misery in various ways to do all that one can to relieve the misery that there is.

But here especially we are concerned with a spiritual condition. Although it is sad indeed to find so many who are in deep suffering in this present life, it is very plain from the word of God, that that is very little compared with the suffering of everlasting misery in hell.

And that especially is the danger which threatens so many. For those who are out of Christ are in danger, as Jesus says later here, in danger of hell fire.

that is especially what we should be concerned about in this case. The Lord has been merciful to us, and has blotted out the vast number of our sins, and brought us into the knowledge of the liberty and joy of the children of God.

heart, then surely we should feel deeply in our hearts the case of others. What an example Jesus himself was in this respect.

[10 : 33] He above all is brought before us as being merciful. How constantly he relieved the needs of those that were around him.

Their temporal needs indeed. How we read of him being moved with compassion when he saw those that were as sheep having no shepherd.

And again being moved with compassion when he saw that poor man who was full of leprosy. And so he did relieve those needs and labored night and day to that end to bring relief to those in need and especially to set before them the only gospel that could ever relieve their spiritual need and bring them into a lively hope of everlasting joy.

And then also the apostle Paul what an example he is to us of the merciful in a lesser degree.

He could say and write brethren he says that God himself was his witness to this that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for my brethren according to the Jews according to the flesh who are Israelites.

[12 : 12] Why was that? Because he could see that he was once in that very same case. He was once a self-righteous Pharisee. He thought in those days that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth when he persecuted the church of God.

And so he could see that but for the amazing goodness and grace of God there he would have been in that case self-righteous proud and so far off from God.

Now how many of us have anything of that disposition of that great heaviness and continual sorrow in the heart of those who are lost as all of us once were and for all I know some of us may still be.

Let us look at the manifestation of this merciful spirit in the way in which it is to be seen and known. First of all it means a disposition to be sympathetic to feel compassion that must begin that must be the beginning of this merciful spirit it must commence in our own hearts feelings it is that compassion which the saviour so showed in his whole life when he came to seek and to save that which was lost when he pronounced no doubt with great joy in his own heart that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repented my dear friends are we really moved with divine compassion does the grace of God so affect our hearts that we deeply feel the needs of others there are countless around us who are with little doubt in a desperate spiritual state and condition there is but a little while unless the grace of

God prevent there is but a step between them an everlasting misery and do you care and pray that our hearts are so hard by nature and our disposition is often so self centered and so selfish that we lack at least in some degree this deep feeling for the needs of others which is at the very root of this merciful disposition may the Lord grant us more of that compassion we read of the Lord himself repeatedly that the Lord is gracious and full of compassion we read later in this wonderful sermon the saviour for himself the way in which

[16 : 29] God himself is so merciful that although there is so much sin and iniquity so much blasphemy and contempt for him in this world yet he causeth his sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good and send his rain upon the just and upon the unjust he is constantly pouring out of his good and of his perfect gifts upon this world which is so utterly undeserving of his mercy and Jesus therefore says after that be ye therefore merciful even as your father which is in heaven is merciful it means then first that spirit that the Samaritan felt when he had compassion when the feelings of his heart were moved the apostle writes concerning having bowels of mercies humbleness of mind meekness long suffering he could write to those

Philippians and say I beseech you concerning this and in the bowels he said in the bowels of Jesus Christ he said in effect now I write to you with the same tender compassion of the Saviour himself not of course in the same degree but the very same nature that mercifulness of the Lord Jesus now secondly this means also a readiness to relieve that condition the Samaritan as we read in the parable was not content just to feel pity but he went and did all that he possibly could to relieve that need he was ready to help and there are so many occasions for this in our lives and especially as regards these spiritual things things it is not only that there are those who are lost and ruined in their sins and in danger of everlasting misery there are also those who are in great distress of soul in one way or another those who are mourning over their sin it may be who have long been seeking the Saviour and yet have not really found him to their hearts content and satisfaction there are those who are not yet brought into the liberty of the gospel and to that degree of faith to be able to say my beloved is mine and I am his now do we feel for such is it our concern also for those do we pray for them and do we do all that we can to help those in any such condition and then there are also the saints of God often in distress of mind often afflicted in various ways they also experience deep sorrows in their lives now do we have a compassion for those that is evidenced in those things that we do to relieve any such need my dear friends how much we do need this tender gracious gentle spirit this deep feeling for the needs of others that is expressed in this word merciful and how the saviour himself continually showed the perfect example of this as he went about doing

God as he healed those who had need of healing and as he went amongst them preaching and teaching the things of the kingdom of God for he knew well enough that that eventually was the only answer to their sorrows temporary relief of suffering is certainly to be commended as far as that possibly can be but it is the disease that really needs to be treated the deep rooted disease of sin in the heart and life that is really the cause eventually of all the sorrows that are in the world and so my dear friends surely we should do all that we can in prayer and in practice to bring the gospel of Jesus

Christ before others to love to love and so on this will really relieve their deep spiritual needs so where there is that real feeling of tender compassion there will be the practical effect of it as far as we may be able to manifest that there well may be with all of us more occasion to show a merciful spirit in a practical way but in the third place there is also the matter of forgiving others of those things in which they may have offended us now mercy is very much connected with forgiveness the mercy of God is extended to his people especially in that way in pardoning all their transgressions through the

[23 : 48] Saviour's blood and how often this appears in the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ as we read in the 18th chapter of this gospel a part of that time there was that occasion or that parable concerning the debtors one owed a comparatively small amount a considerable amount but very very small in comparison with the other and yet that one who had been forgiven was not ready to forgive Jesus said plainly that if we are not of a forgiving disposition then the heavenly father will not forgive their trespasses how pointed were those words where we read

I forgave thee all that debt how about the debt of our sins in the sight of God when we really stop to consider the sins of every moment of our lives and in some cases it must be very aggravated transgressions sins against light and truth and knowledge and love the sins of our lips and the sins of our hearts and our minds from day to day and from moment to moment and if the Lord in great mercy has said concerning that I even I am he that bloteth out thy transgressions for my name's sake and will not remember thy sins then surely that word has great significance

I forgave thee all that debt shouldst thou not have forgiven thy fellow servant what a tiny debt it was in comparison with the other and what a minute debt it must be if any have offended against us in any way in comparison with the immense debt for which we need the mercy of God no wonder dear friends that these things are so said when we think how much our father has forgiven and does forgive brethren we should seek the rather free from wrath and strive to live far removing all that would offend and grieve now you may say well this is very difficult if that other person has done me a great injustice has caused me a great hurt and I find it very hard to forgive and whoever said that true

Christianity was easy I'm not for one moment saying that these things which are found in this passage are easy my dear friends they're impossible apart from the grace of God you will never be in the spiritual sense merciful and pure in heart and peacemakers apart from divine grace this is what makes these things really very searching statements they're very simple they're greatly admired in the earth they're frequently read but how seldom are they truly put into practice and yet the Saviour has so plainly taught the necessity of this forgiving spirit we have that word in the epistle be ye kind one to another tender hearted forgiving one another even as

God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you even as that and then we also have here the promise that is attached blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy they shall obtain mercy from God here and also everlasting mercy in the life hereafter does this mean then it is because they deserve it is this the result an issue of their being merciful that they obtain mercy not for a moment could that really surely be entertained mercy in its very nature means that which is freely granted it is without any desert or merit on those that receive it they shall obtain mercy this is in a way of equity but not a way of desert the situation surely is really very clear first there is the mercy of

[30 : 10] God to unworthy sinners you remember how in the gospel by Luke we read of that woman who was a great sinner coming to Jesus apparently quite speechless but just washing his feet with her tears and wiping them from with the hairs of her hands when the Pharisee who was there thought in his heart that Jesus should not have permitted that woman that was a sinner so to come he also spoke in that way to him concerning his own case and the great debt that she had been forgiven him and then he said to the woman go in peace my faith hath saved thee and he said to

Simon she loved much because she was forgiven much it was because she had been so greatly forgiven the parable was concerning those two debtors who were both forgiven and one but one had owed much more and Jesus said who then will love him most and Simon said I suppose that one who had been forgiven most and he said thou hast answered right seest thou this woman she had been forgiven her great sin and therefore she loved much well when that sin is known to be forgiven there will be that effect of it we shall also be merciful in our way in our feelings and in our actions the mercy of God comes first but it must be followed by a merciful spirit in us otherwise it is plain we have not truly been forgiven

Jesus in his teaching made that very clear how he spoke to Peter when Peter asked him should he forgive his brother seven times in a day no doubt he thought that was a lot as much as he could ever be expected to do but Jesus said no I tell you not seven times but until seventy times seven nearly five hundred times in a day what a great number that was to speak of that is how much by the Saviour's teaching how much should be forgiven all that many times in a single day what a standard this is how much grace is needed for such a merciful spirit but Jesus plainly says that this is necessary he said again later in this sermon if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your father forgive your trespasses if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly father will also forgive you not because you deserve it but because you have shown the reality and the proof of the forgiveness that God himself has already given so first there is the mercy of

God then there is the merciful spirit evidenced and then there is the mercy of God promised unto such later on again in this sermon Jesus says judge not that ye be not judged for with what measure ye meet it shall be measured to you again and so we have it in the psalm with the merciful thou that is God will show thyself merciful with the forward thou will show thyself throw it the more merciful we are the more we shall know of the mercy of God and his dealings with us that is very plain it is those who are merciful who shall obtain mercy and the more merciful they are then the more they shall taste of the sweet and precious mercy of

God not in the least because they deserve it but because this is God's own way of dealing may the Lord enable us to take these things to heart how much cause how much grace we need for such a spirit as this do do you show it we might all well ask ourselves now do

[36 : 50] I show it as much as I should in my life this spirit of compassion and of forgiveness may the Lord grant us that grace we so much need to be more merciful in all that we do and say for his name's sake Amen Hymn 1014 June Russo 687 Hymn 1014 Brethren, let us walk together in the bonds of love and peace

Can it be a question whether brethren should from conflict cease? Tis in union, hope and joy and love increase While we journey homeward let us help each other in the road foes on every side beset us snares through all the way past truth it behoves us each to bear a brother's love 1014 Brethren, let us walk together in the bonds of love and peace Can it be a question Where the brethren, let us know from conflicts Tis in union, tis in union

Tis in union Hope and joy and love increase When we journey homeward Let us help each other in the road Help each other in the road Fools on every side Fools on every side It sends us Snatches through all the way past truth It behoves us It behoves us

It is to bear a brother's love When we think of us Our father Our father Has forgiven And us Forgift Paul Fools on you Arred We Thou Foster Please Behoves to live Far removing Far removing O love might thou have no dream.

Then let he just be made rather better than himself to be.

[41 : 24] And let it take on our life.

O love, love, and be free. Happy are we, happy are we.

When you're in this way, O God, we. O God of all grace and power and wisdom and love, we do come to thee confessing our own faults and failings.

We do entreat more of that grace that we so need, and that thy word so plainly points out to us that we do constantly and greatly need.

O do grant us more grace. O help us to be merciful always in our dealings with one another and with those without.

[42 : 55] With all those in our lives, O Lord, do grant us thy compassion. And do help us to do all that we should do with that desire to relieve the misery and distress that others feel.

O do grant us more of the spirit and love of Jesus. And do help us each through the hours of this day.

And do bless us in those things in which we speak together and preserve our hearts and our lips from sin.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[44 : 01] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[46 : 38] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[49 : 08] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[51 : 38] Thank you.

Thank you.