

God's Sovereign Mercy (i). (Quality: Very good)

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- [0 : 00] For the Lord's help, I will direct your attention to the chapter that we read, the epistle of Paul to the Romans, the 9th chapter, the 15th and 16th verses.
- The epistle to the Romans, chapter 9, verses 15 and 16. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.
- So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.
- For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.
- So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.
- [1 : 22] That which the apostle is endeavoring to set before the church at Rome in this epistle, in this particular part of it, is in reference to the sovereign prerogative of God to do as he will to all his creatures.
- Sometimes it is necessary for us to be in the place of Jeremiah when the Lord took him down to the potter's house.
- And he did not leave Jeremiah just to look. But as Jeremiah looked and saw the work of the potter upon his wheel, and sometimes casting away some of those things which he had made, the Lord himself is the commentator on the whole and uses the illustration to set before Jeremiah and in turn to the church of God, the absolute sovereignty of God to do what he will with one and all.
- It is not easy for us to learn about God's sovereignty. We, by nature, are proud and think that we should have a say in what God will do.
- But the word of God makes it so clear, not only in this particular chapter, but in many parts of the word of God, that the sovereignty of God is displayed continually.
- [3 : 36] It was displayed in the creation. It was displayed in the creation of Adam and the ultimate coming, bringing forth of Eve.
- It was displayed also in the case of Abel and Cain. So early in the history of the world, we see God's sovereign purposes being brought about.
- And yet, despite it all, we may say, in connection with these words, that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all his works.
- And from this point of view, we may remember that when Cain was solemnly dealt with and made conscious that he was under the curse, yet must we not say that in a sense he received the mercy of God in that God set a mark upon him that he should be preserved and that men should not seek to destroy him.
- This mercy, however, is very different from the mercy of God, which is brought unto the people of God as they are born again of the Spirit and are molded that in due time they might be made ready to enter heaven.

- [5 : 22] The sovereignty of God is expressed in the well-known case of the promise of God, for this is the word of promise, at this time will I come and Sarah shall have a son.
- Not only this, but when Rebecca also hath conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.
- It was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.
- In considering this last verse, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, we must consider what God is in being so distinct from ourselves.
- Though it may be truly said of God that there is hatred in him, yet it is not with that same vindictiveness that is found in poor fallen nature.
- [7 : 09] Indeed, we may say in respect to the people of God that he hates their works and yet still loves them.
- Is it not true to consider in this respect that we may indeed love our children and our family, and yet have sometimes to be greatly disturbed and hate some of the ways that they pick up as they go on through life.
- But this, we need the Spirit of God to unfold to us. A great mystery is contained here, that God should love Jacob and yet hate Esau.
- Which means that Jacob would be saved and Esau would not be saved. Now the natural mind may have difficulty in receiving such a point as this.
- I remember one of our gracious ministers being asked this question as to why it was that God loved Jacob and he hated Esau.
- [8 : 37] He said he could not explain why God loved Jacob. This was quite beyond him. But he could see why God hated Esau.
- Now if we know ourselves, if we are taught by the Spirit of God, we shall be able readily to see why God should hate us.
- But it will be beyond our comprehension to consider that God could ever have loved us.
- And that with an everlasting love. Of course, those people that have not had their eyes opened to see the truth, to know the truth about themselves, that they are absolutely abomination in the sight of God.
- even their righteousnesses are of filthy rags. Such will, of course, say I cannot understand why the Lord should hate me.
- [9 : 50] We must be careful here because with regard to the Church of God in his covenant love, he has no hatred to that Church and to those people.
- What I now try to speak about is this point. That the people of God, by reason of the teaching of the Spirit and the opening to their minds and understanding of their sinful propensities, can find it so difficult to believe that God loves them and can more easily find it their ability to see that God should hate them.
- They can bring forth many reasons why God should hate them. Because they have rebelled against him. Because they have sinned against him.
- Because they have been hard-hearted against him. Because they have felt no love in their hearts towards him. These are just a few points.
- The whereby a sinner born again and awakened to his own simpleness will say, I can readily understand why God should hate me.
- [11 : 09] But when it comes to this remarkable expression that God loves a people, can he love me? How is it possible that he could ever set his love upon me?

What shall we there say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? People may be ready to say, well now, this is not fair.

But Paul immediately is led by the Spirit of God to take up the point and to say, is there unrighteousness with God?

Dare any say that there is unrighteousness with God because he should take one and leave another? Sometimes we sing the lines, sovereign ruler of the skies, ever gracious, ever wise, all my time shall ever be ordered by thy wise decree.

And furthermore, we sometimes echo the lines based on Eli's utterance, it is the Lord enthroned in light whose claims are all divine who has an undisputed right to govern me and mine.

[12 : 39] We need a great deal of grace to be honest with ourselves and not many are in this field that the Lord may take two of a family and leave others of them to perish in their sins.

He may take one of a city and leave the rest of them to perish in their sins and yet be righteous still. I've sometimes thought that some may be deeply concerned with regard to the truth here especially when we consider that Jacob and Esau were twins.

But we do have those references in the scriptures that would encourage those that might be concerned on this account to be aware of this that there are such cases where whole families have been called by grace.

He setteth them in families like a flock. So then though the word of God may be searching in some respects and may seem to drive its two-edged sword between our thoughts and our intent to be heart and so on.

Yet let us read the whole of the scripture that we may behold that what obtains at one time does not necessarily obtain at all times.

[14 : 30] We are persuaded of this that the Lord will save his people whether they be in a family or whether they be taken out of a family.

Now the reason for this for he said to Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

we may see in this an expression a revelation though in part of the goodness of God.

Had I have taken the same passage from the 33rd of Exodus it would have been in complete agreement with the first hymn that we sung whereby these words are said I will make all my goodness pass before thee I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and so on.

Now is this not wonderful that in those days when the law was the order of the day this do and thou shalt live was continually set before Israel yet the gospel was present also and so it could be said to Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

[16 : 22] Mercy and compassion are what we refer to as the attributes of God and yet not so much the attributes as a revelation of what he is in his nature.

Though man may be merciful yet we read that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel and therefore we have to conclude that man is not merciful in his nature that is in his fallen nature but God is merciful in his nature even though he is also just in his nature also righteous and holy in his nature yet he is merciful.

Now the Lord here says I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. This is a door of hope in the valley of Acre.

If we are brought into trouble by reason of conviction of our sins then we are in the valley of Acre a valley of decision a decision which God has brought us to do shall I perish or shall I be saved shall I be delivered or shall I be cast out and here is the door of hope for God says I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion now let us not say this shuts me out as some may be ready to conclude for who can tell that this might close you in do we not read in the book of

Jonah concerning the Ninevites that when they were brought upon by the spirit of God and listened to the words of Jonah we read that they put on the word for the word came unto the king of Nineveh and he rose from his throne and he laid his robe from him and he covered him with sackcloth and sassy and ashes and so on until we come to these words who can tell if God will turn and repent and turn away from his fierce anger that we perish not when we read words like this in the scripture it is not to give us the idea or to convey the intention that

[19 : 32] God is movable in his thoughts he says I know the thoughts I think toward you thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end God's thoughts are eternal will there is what we sometimes call God's secret will as opposed to his revealed will now the Lord God he knew that these Ninevites would repent at the preaching of Jonah and so did Jonah and that is why he was so upset sad evidence of fallen nature but bringing these words who can tell if God will turn and repent do you feel any of you that God's mind is against you at the moment then what will you do will you despair or will you say who can tell though my sins deserving hell

I'll not despair for who can tell that these words that were spoken to Moses in the first place I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion may not be made over to me and therefore if any should be tempted this morning to say because there is a sovereignty in the dispensing of God's mercy and his compassion that puts me outside God forbid that we should think so of course it is true to say that we may be outside the mercy of God may never reach us but it will not be the result of this scripture therefore may we take courage I will have mercy on whom

I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion it is the devil's purpose to bring the children of God to despair it is the devil's purpose to persuade them that they are not in the covenant of grace that they are beyond salvation that because they are such sinners because they have broken God's righteous law because they feel the things that they do in their hearts then there can be no hope for them well the children of God do come under severe temptations we are reminded by one brethren those that come to bless come through sore temptations may we each remembering this pray for faith and patience faith in

God's ability to save faith to believe in the mercy of God and the compassion of God oh that we might be favored in our darkest hours to have the enlightenment of our minds thereby we may say that God is merciful still and that I cannot cast away that God is compassionate still and therefore I cannot cast away my hope that he will be compassionate we are the subjects of so many changes in our feelings sometimes we are born to the things of God sometimes our hearts are as cold as ice sometimes we are drawn to the scriptures of truth and other times we are averse to them by reason of the power of our carnal nature but whatever our changing feelings may be may we be favored to see this that

God is absolutely constant whom once he loves he never leaves but loves them to the end and this means under all conditions it is not possible for me to know how you have felt this morning what temptations might have abounded in your minds and souls well whatever they may be if you have a hope in Christ then still look to those words that he has spoken and he cannot lie those words that he has set forth in regard to his truth I will never leave thee nor forsake thee there is a comprehensiveness in that promise of God it means I will never leave thee under any circumstances you may leave me or attempt to but

[25 : 12] I will never leave thee Dr. Dodridge has set this forth in a very powerful line of his hymn I'll never no never no never forsake the reason for this is I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion now I would make this point that this is a continual experience of the people of God we read in the lamentations that thy mercies are new every morning great is thy faithfulness and if the mercies of God are new every morning shall we not be conscious of the depth shall I say of repetitive fruit in these words

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion we might consider the point as to what experience we may have in order to be fully persuaded upon the depth of truth that is contained in this doctrine before us we will take some simple things in respect to the evidences that we may have of the mercy of God which will pertain to us all if we are blessed with a good night's rest and watched over and brought to see the light of day we have an evidence of the mercy of God how defenseless we are when we're asleep people could come in and if they were so minded not only could they rob us but they could kill us and we would be defenseless and yet how many years have we lived how many nights have we slept how many indeed have we been preserved can we say that we've all been preserved at least from killing if we've not been preserved all ways from robbery shall we not reflect upon this to consider an experience of the mercy of

God I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and therefore we should give thanks for the mercies of God even such in a simple matter as this but then again may we not observe the mercy of God in his preservation over us as we go about from place to place or as we may stay in one place thus we are united of the manner of God's mercy and of his compassion when he says the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him connected also in another place is to those that hope in his mercy now just leaving those two points as general points in connection with what we may perhaps refer to as the general mercy of

God we now come to consider what we shall speak of as the particular mercy of God and that is that mercy of God that saves sinners but the mercy of the Lord was born in eternity and the mercy of God will continue to eternity therefore when we speak of this

Paul he said to Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy we are speaking of that which will be continuous and in its various facets will be revealed to the people of God as they go on in their journey we therefore observe in the first place the mercy of the Lord in his setting his love upon those upon whom mercy will be revealed in due time in his covenant love even the love of God the Father in choosing them unto salvation now you see some people may be ready to say that election is a hard doctrine we cannot stomach it but you know it will be so different with your feelings when you see that election is the result of God's mercy if there had been no election there had been no salvation and if there had been no salvation then one and all we should have perished in our sins and would have found hell to be our everlasting place and therefore we have to look back and to see why the mercy of God is everlasting it is because it is from God's election from God's love in choosing a people for he says

[32 : 20] I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy now can we feel this morning that God has had mercy upon us in respect to that point that he has chosen us one has said I cannot tell why and that will be echoed throughout the whole region of the saints of the most high wherefore he should choose them they cannot possibly say we are reminded of the words in the gospel of John ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain now it will be some consummation to us this morning if we reflect upon this part of God's this revelation of God's mercy

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and it is seen as everlasting mercy when it is seen in the election of God in God's election by grace to save a people that which automatically follows is the mercy of God revealed in the redemption that he provided in his son Jesus Christ is it not a deep point for us to consider the mercy of the father that he should send his love how deep is mercy when we consider that it required the sending of his only begotten son to redeem his church from going down into the pits I say how deep is mercy can we get some idea yea our thinking will fail surely but will it bring us to approach unto the depth of God's mercy that when he says

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy that is set before us in the glory of sending his only begotten son to bleed and to die upon Calvary have we ever looked at the cross of Christ and seen therein these words richly inscribed I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion the glorious gospel shines forth from a bleeding saviour seen by faith I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy now those upon whom the Lord even the Father has mercy those upon whom the Lord even the Son has mercy and respect to redemption are all wretched sinners you know there will be those that will not be saved and one reason why they are will not be saved is that because they are righteous in their own eyes

I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance the Jews whether they were Pharisees scribes or Sadducees they were righteous in their own eyes and therefore they abominated mercy and if any person is righteous in their own eyes they will abominate mercy but when God shows to us his our own abominations there will only be one plea and that plea will be the mercy of God for he saith to Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy now you see there is a denial in the natural mind the carnal mind of man that God should ever have the right to have mercy upon any but when that mercy comes to you and to me if it does then we shall see how wonderful that mercy is how glorious it is how full of love it is how rich in grace it is for he saith to

Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and to think that that mercy should have come to me now we come to consider the revelation of God's mercy in the work of the spirit in the soul and perhaps here we shall see more deeply and fully what we refer to as Christian experience the teaching of the spirit is to show us our need of mercy and it will be a wonderful blessing and favour if we are shown our need of mercy we shall never seek for mercy surely unless we are shown our need of it can some of us look back to our beginnings and discover in those beginnings a sudden realisation that we needed mercy it's a good beginning where we feel that we're in need and that we're in need of mercy well then we should look at this scripture not as a hard scripture not as an overpowering scripture not as an autocratic scripture but rather as one that sets forth the glory of God in his greatness and in his mercy

[39 : 20] I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and an evidence in your soul of God being merciful to you is to discover that you are in need of mercy mercy through blood I make my plea O God be merciful to me now one good man said on one occasion a good beginning is a beginning felt I feel that that should be sought after by us all God's beginnings are beginnings that are felt it does not necessarily mean that we have got to feel them deeply but we have got to feel that this that now something has taken place that has never been experienced before we cannot lay down a hard and fast rule because we shall hear of some who felt suddenly the mercy of God had come upon them that the love of

God was toward them and yet at that time they had not had a deep conviction of sin that others may speak of but they will have had this knowledge I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and the revelation of the love of God to our souls in any way is a revelation of mercy now can we trace the beginning to this perhaps it didn't begin with a need of mercy but it began with a revelation that we had obtained mercy not thinking of anything about God not thinking of anything about his salvation not even realising our need of it and yet God came in the power of his sovereignty and made known to us his mercy it may have been an isolated instance there have been isolated instances in childhood which some can speak of when such experiences have been had and then the time has gone on and they have gone according to their own course of their natural mind but such a time has not been a time forgotten and such a time they've never been able to cast away as being nothing at all and meaning nothing at all

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy now any part of God's work upon us is an evidence of his mercy whether that work is in convicting us deeply of our sin or whether it is in showing us our sin at all whether it is revealing to us that we have need of mercy whether it is showing to us that we shall surely perish in our sins if we are recovered from the brink of the pit then we shall surely see that it was a mercy that God gave to us in setting before us our deep need of mercy you see we may hear we may experience we may see or read of others who have been put to great straits who have come to great extremities when they have said

I despair there can be no hope for me but some may well take up the words of Mr. Hart who went to great extremities extremities after he had been called by grace not always are extremities before we are called by grace if he comes to extremities after we are called by grace we can all the more be amazed that the mercy of God should still be constant I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and Mr.

Hart says who of mercy need despair since I have mercy found I will have mercy therefore on whom I will have mercy now mercy itself is centered in our Lord Jesus Christ the mercy of God the Father is revealed to the people of God through our Lord Jesus Christ by his spirit and if we reflect upon it shall we not find this to be so in our own experiences for we read in the scripture that the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ therefore shall we not see this mercy of

[45 : 08] God when we see the face of Jesus Christ when we speak about seeing the face of Jesus Christ we do not mean that we could see his face with our mortal eyes but our faith sees Christ there are such things as visions not to always to be discounted God speaks by the apostle when he writes into the Corinthians he says I come now to visions and revelations of the Lord I believe I may venture to refer to an occasion when I saw the face of Jesus Christ now that was revealed in vision in a dream in my soul and yet it was a vision of faith and that vision of

Jesus Christ on that occasion was one of divine compassion and it registers in my soul even at this present time divine compassion which spoke so fully so loudly and yet so quietly I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion we will leave the subject for this morning thank you