



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Blessed Are the Merciful

Date: October 20, 2024

Scripture Text: Matthew 5:7

Notes:

We all experience trials. They are part of life. [James 1:2-8, 12](#) encourages us to find joy even in the midst of our trials. When we have the proper perspective of trials, seeing them from an eternal perspective, not temporal, there are opportunities for personal, emotional, and spiritual growth. Opportunities to experience God in a special and intimate way. Alternatively, we can miss those opportunities by falling into self-pity, blaming others, and growing bitter. In trials, when we “count it all joy”, we can experience God’s mercy. When we experience God’s mercy, Jesus instructs us to show that mercy to others. Let’s see what *mercy in action* looks like.

I. The Definition of Mercy

Mercy is an essential experience and reasonable response toward an actual or perceived offense or need of a Christian. “Kingdom servants must reflect in their own hearts the heart of the King. That they are part of the kingdom implies that they are objects of mercy. They are ‘others-oriented’. What we have received in such abundance, we must dispense abundantly. Kingdom servants are compassionate toward others.” (Weber) Unfortunately, even as Christians, we may struggle with mercy. We want mercy for ourselves, but demand justice for others. Out of mercy comes compassion, kindness and forgiveness.

- How would you define mercy?
- What are characteristics of a merciful person?
- What do you struggle most with mercy?
- Why is it important for Christians to be merciful?
- What are ways you can practice being merciful to others?

II. An Illustration of Mercy (Matthew 18:21-35)

Jesus shares this parable about forgiveness. There was a servant who had a debt so great he was unable to pay it (10,000 talents = more money than was circulating in all of Palestine. This was roughly 1 billion days of peasant wages, or about 2,737,850 years). When it was time to settle his account, he begged for patience. As a result, he was shown compassion, and his enormous debt was forgiven. But, when he wanted to collect a minor debt owed him, (100 denarii = about 100 days wages) he did not show the same compassion he was shown. As a result, his lord was moved with anger and handed him over to the torturers. We are to show the same mercy we’ve been shown by God, but if we don’t God will do the same as what happened to the unforgiving servant ([Matt. 18:35](#)).



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- What is your reaction to the parable?
- How could the servant who was shown such compassion not do the same to a fellow servant?
- What is an example of this parable today?
- Reasons we need to forgive:
 - We will one day give an account to God ([vs. 23](#))
 - Because we've been forgiven much ([vss. 24-27](#))
 - For unity's sake ([vs. 31](#))
 - For fellowship with the Father ([vss. 32-35](#))
- Which of these reasons are the biggest motivator for you to forgive?
- Who is someone you are having a hard time forgiving?
- How can dwelling on the forgiveness you've received from God help motivate you to forgive others?

Just as the debt the servant owed was more than he could ever repay, the debt we owed God because of our sin was more than we could ever repay. By Christ's demonstration of mercy on us, our debt was forgiven.

III. A Demonstration of Mercy

God wants to use us to impact the world. Each of us has a decision to make how we respond to the trials we encounter; will we become *better* or *bitter*?

³⁰ Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. [Ephesians 4:30-32](#)

People watch to see how we as Christians respond to our circumstances. As a result, we have a platform. Will they see a natural response ([vs. 31](#)), or a supernatural response ([vs. 32](#)). Will they see Jesus?

- How will you demonstrate mercy this week?