



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

Kingdom Character - Merciful

Matthew 5:7

Message #11 of 80 – S1039

Sermon given on April 2, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- We have been in a section referred to as the Beatitudes.
- These eight beatitudes describe to us what a Christian is supposed to be.
- They don't tell us how to become Christians.
- The Beatitudes presume that someone is a Christian and then describes those traits that ought to be present in their lives.
- As an example, if I were to describe our dog to you, I would assume that you know what a dog is.
- Of course, you don't need to be a dog to understand my description of our dog.
- But you do need to be a Christian to understand these Beatitudes.
- Paul explained why that is **1 Corinthians 2:14**.

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

- It makes sense that an unbeliever doesn't understand what it means to be poor in spirit or to hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- That is not to say that believers have it all figured out – None do!
- But we understand enough to ask God to help us live these traits out in and through our lives.
- Each beatitude begins with the word 'blessed.
- It can be translated but also has the meaning of approved – by God.
- When God approves of your life, He will bless your life – that is good!
- Let's pray and ask the Holy spirit to teach how to live lives that are more "blessable" before God. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **Kingdom Character - Merciful**

- The first four beatitudes focus on the spiritual reality of a believer and their relationship to and with God.
- The fifth one is a response to those and focuses on the relationship between the believer and other humans.
- The first four deal with the perception of what is defective within their faith.
- The next ones deal with the positive outworking of our faith.
- The first four cause people to have the right view of self.
- The second four describe selflessness.
- God created humans to find satisfaction in selfless acts of grace and mercy.
- The world seeks satisfaction in things meant to enhance their own existence.
- We are meant to seek to enhance the existence of others and trust God to enhance our lives.
- Let's look at the fifth Beatitude.
- **Matthew 5:7**
- We must remind ourselves that the Beatitudes are not about how to be saved – they are the signs or evidence that we have been saved.
- None of the beatitudes can be divorced from the others.
- Each of them is linked to the others.
- Someone who is merciful but does not humble themselves before God or seek His righteousness should not expect mercy.
- We must make a distinction between mercy and grace.
- Grace is shown to the undeserving.
- Mercy can be defined as, 'To give help to the wretched, to relieve the miserable.'
- Mercy is compassion to the miserable.
- Compassion is a synonym for mercy.
- As in all the beatitudes, it is not about feelings like compassion.
- Mercy is something that requires action on the part of the compassionate to the person who needs mercy.
- A believer has received mercy and therefore should extend mercy to others.

- We do not extend mercy so that we can receive mercy – we extend mercy because we have received mercy.
- Each of the first four Beatitudes is evidence of God’s mercy to us.
- We could not manifest those character traits apart from God’s mercy.
- The result of us extending mercy because of receiving mercy is more mercy **Psalm 18:25a**.

With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful...

- Turn to **Genesis 50**.
- The primary mercy we have received is the forgiveness of our sins through faith in Jesus.
- All other mercies we might receive are an extension of that primary mercy.
- In turn, to extend mercy, we must be willing to forgive others who have offended, hurt, or betrayed us.
- One great example of this is Joseph with his brothers.
- When Joseph was young, ten of his brothers conspired to kill him.
- They changed their mind when a caravan came by and decided to sell him into slavery.
- Decades later, after they were all in Egypt, their father died.
- Fearing what Joseph might do to them for their sin, they seek Joseph’s forgiveness.
- **Genesis 50:15-17**
- Joseph’s response was to weep.
- He had forgiven them in his own heart, but they were still living with the guilt of their sin.
- **Genesis 50:18-21**
- Forgiven people forgive others. **R. Kent Hughes**
“The merciful person remembers his own sin and God’s mercy on him, he understands the weaknesses of others, and he forgives.”
- Someone who withholds forgiveness doesn’t fully appreciate how much God has forgiven them.
- In a powerful teaching on forgiveness, the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Jesus makes it clear that unforgiveness is great wickedness and calls into question one’s salvation.
- The greater the sin, the greater is the need for mercy.

- As believers, we ought to judge sin as the wickedness that it is, but at the same time, we must love the sinner and be ready to show them mercy, no matter how repugnant their sin is to us.
- We must ask ourselves, ‘Would we lay down our lives for that sinner if it meant they would be saved? Would we lay our life aside to show them God’s love?’
- Jesus did that for us – we should be willing to let God help us to do that for those who have sinned against us.
- To deny forgiveness is to deny mercy.
- It was mercy that enabled you to be forgiven of your sins.
- To deny someone that same mercy is a great sin **James 2:13**.

For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

- This is not referring to those who are struggling with bitterness and maybe even hatred after they have forgiven someone.
- Deep hurts, offences, or betrayals may leave scars that might take a long time to heal.
- This is meant to call those who refuse to forgive to a place of humble surrender to God for the strength to do what they cannot do in their own flesh – to forgive.
- Forgiveness is the primary expression of mercy, but it is not the only one.
- Mercy carries the idea of identification in the suffering of others, of going through something with them, of entering another’s problem with understanding and acceptance.
- That is exactly why Jesus came, took on human flesh, and walked among His creation.
- **Arthur Pink** describes mercifulness like this...
“What is mercifulness? It is a gracious disposition toward my fellow creatures and fellow Christians. It is that kindness and benevolence that feels the miseries of others. It is a spirit that regards with compassion the sufferings of the afflicted. It is that grace that causes one to deal leniently with an offender and to scorn the taking of revenge.”
- He also said this...
“The mercifulness of this fifth Beatitude is that spontaneous outflow of a heart that is captivated by, and in love with, the mercy of God.”

- The parable of the Good Samaritan is an example of the mercy God is looking for (Luke 10:25-37).
- The religious people avoided the misery of the man, but a despised Samaritan had mercy on him.
- The apostle John says that if we can look on the misery of others and not be moved to some kind of mercy, we might not be saved **1 John 3:17**.

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

- It is by mercy that we have been delivered from the eternal, unquenchable fires of judgment.
- It is by mercy that we have been delivered from the soul-crushing, power of sin.
- It is by mercy that we will be delivered to the everlasting blessing of heaven.
- The better we understand and appreciate that, the more we want to extend mercy to others.
- We should be willing to give as much mercy as we have received – even if that is impossible – be willing to be more merciful.
- ‘they shall obtain mercy’ – Paul was inspired to tell us that we get what we deserve **Galatians 6:7-10**.

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

- If we sow mercy, we will reap mercy.
- If we are merciful to others, others will be merciful to us.
- Jesus gave us an important principle on giving mercy **Luke 6:37-38**. **Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**

- The bible also teaches that being merciful is good for the soul **Proverbs 11:17**.

The merciful man does good for his own soul...

- Being merciful should also result in happiness **Proverbs 14:21**.
He who despises his neighbor sins; but he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.
- And then as we prepare to close - God loves mercy **Micah 7:18**.
Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.
- The ultimate expression of this promise of obtaining mercy will come when Jesus returns and takes us to be with Him forever.
- We might not be able to describe what form that mercy will take in heaven, but we can know that it will be glorious.
- Be merciful – God has been merciful to you. **Amen!**