

## Matthew 5:7 - Kingdom Character – Merciful

### Scriptures:

Psalms 18:25a - With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful...

Genesis 50:15-21 - When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." 16 So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying, 17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants." 19 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

James 2:13 - For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Romans 12:8 - ...he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Luke 10:25-37 - And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" 27 So he answered and said, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all

## <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, for they

G1655 - pertaining to those who show compassion on the lowly – "merciful person n. — a person who shows leniency, compassion, or forgiveness; especially towards someone who has offended them."

## shall obtain mercy.

G1653 – "to be shown mercy (state) v. — to be or become the recipient of leniency and compassion."

your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' " 28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay

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?'

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.

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.

"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." (Pink, 2011) page 33-34

"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." (Pink, 2011) page 34

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

receiving mercy is more mercy (Psa. 18:25).

Mercy is the fruit a believer bears as they understand and embrace the mercy they have received. The more we appreciate the mercy we have received the more readily we will extend mercy to others.

Showing mercy is evidence that we have received mercy – that we have been forgiven of our sins and that we expect to receive mercy in the future.

The 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 (Gen. 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 (Gen. 50:18-21).

"The merciful person remembers his own sin and God's mercy on him, he understands the weaknesses of others, and he forgives." (Hughes, 2001) page 49

"One who truly understands the freedom of being forgiven will share the same release with others." (Augsburger, 1982) page 60

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).

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

### Notes:

'Blessed are the merciful...' could also be read, God approves of the 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 a right view of self. The second four describe selflessness.

"A blessed selflessness!" (O'Donnell, 2013) page 115

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.

No one beatitude 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.

Also, we must remind ourselves that the Beatitudes are not about how to be saved – they are the signs that we have been saved.

"Our Lord's subject when giving the Beatitudes was not how we are to be saved. He here gives us the signs and evidence of the work of grace in the soul." (Spurgeon, 1997) page 91

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 feeling 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

you.’ 36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?” 37 And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

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?

2 Corinthians 9:7 - So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

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.

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.”

Proverbs 11:17a - The merciful man does good for his own soul...

Proverbs 14:21 - He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.

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.

Samaritan had mercy on him. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Samaritan man got more out of the encounter than did the hurt who was helped by him. The injured man received some oil for his wounds and enough money to cover his expenses while healing. The Samaritan got his deed recorded in the Bible and people have been blessed by his work for 2,000 years.

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](#)).

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, and that is more than we are capable of giving to others.

Paul says we should be cheerful as we extend mercy to others ([Rom. 12:8](#)). Based on this beatitude, that makes good sense. If the result of being merciful to others is more mercy for me, why would I not happily be merciful to others? We should take pleasure in extending mercy, especially when it comes to forgiving those who have wronged us in some way. Paul also said God loves a cheerful giver ([2 Cor. 9:7](#)). While the context of that verse is the giving of money for the work of the ministry, it applies to anything God has given us to give to others, including mercy.

‘they shall obtain mercy’ – Paul was inspired to tell us that we get what we deserve ([Gal. 6:7-10](#)). 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](#)).

The bible also teaches that being merciful is good for the soul ([Prov. 11:17](#)). Being merciful should also result in happiness ([Prov. 14:21](#)). God loves mercy ([Mic. 7:18](#)).

The ultimate expression of this promise of 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.

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