

The Builder Named Mercy

© Tim Dubberly, March 22, 2000

Text: Matthew 5:7

Mercy is a builder; Jesus used him to help build a bridge from where He was to where we were. Mercy built a bridge. Mercy also builds relationships. Mercy is the act of showing compassion. Mercy is the opposite of punishment. You see, we all deserved judgement but instead God gave us mercy. Mercy and compassion seem to almost mean the same thing. And we are taught to have compassion.

This beatitude deals mostly with forgiveness; and how God showed mercy to mankind and mankind should show mercy to each other.

g A young employee secretly misappropriated several hundreds dollars of his business firm's money. When this action was discovered the young man was told to report to the office of the senior partner of the firm. As he walked up the stairs toward the administrative office the young employee was heavyhearted. He knew without a doubt he would lose his position with the firm. He also feared the possibility of legal action taken against him. Seemingly his whole world had collapsed.

Upon his arrival in the office of the senior executive the young man was questioned about the whole affair. He was asked if the allegations were true and he answered in the affirmative. Then the executive surprisingly asked this question: "If I keep you in your present capacity, can I trust you in the future?" The young worker brightened up and said, "yes, sir, you surely can. I've learned my lesson."

The executive responded, "I'm not going to press charges, and you can continue in your present responsibility." The employer concluded the conversation with his younger employee by saying, "I think you ought to know, however, that you are the second man in this firm who succumbed to temptation and was shown leniency. I was the first. What you have done, I did. The mercy you are receiving, I received. It is only the grace of God that can keep us both."
Don Mallough,
Hewitt (347)

g As John Chrysostom once said, "Mercy imitates God and disappoints satan. Hewitt (346)

This mercy is a Godly mercy; it causes one to yearn and hurt for others. There are several "truths" about mercy that will help us understand it.

- I. Mercy builds an attitude of compassion.
 - A. Mercy is an attitude not a response. God has an attitude of mercy, for He shows that mercy to all that call upon His name.
 - B. Mercy responds to our heart. If your heart is not full of love and forgiveness then mercy will not come pouring out.
 - C. The attitude of mercy demands consistency on the part of the Christian. If we are wishy-washy then we will have an unstable attitude. And scripture teaches us that a double-minded man is worthless and many times does more damage than good.

Everyone must decide how to display mercy and we can be sure that not everyone will agree on every act of mercy.

^g Way out West, a cowboy was driving down a road, his dog riding in back of the pickup truck, his faithful horse in the trailer behind. He failed to negotiate a curve and had a terrible accident.

Sometime later, a state police officer came upon the scene. An animal lover, he saw the horse first. Realizing the serious nature of its injuries, he drew his service revolver and put the animal out of its misery. He walked around the accident and found the dog, also hurt critically. He couldn't bear to hear it whine in pain, so he ended the dog's suffering as well.

Finally he located the cowboy—who suffered multiple fracture—off in the weeds. “Hey, are you okay?” the cop asked.

The cowboy took one look at the smoking revolver in the trooper's hand and quickly replied, “never felt better!”

Rowell (16)

- II. Mercy builds in every situation.
 - A. The action of mercy is compassion displayed. It shows mercy to every man regardless of creed, color, or nationality.

- B. Forgiveness is the main fruit of mercy. God teaches mercy to us. If we fail to show mercy and forgive, then our heavenly Father will not forgive us.
- C. We should never let a situation decide for us if we are going to be merciful. If we are to love our enemies, then we should at least forgive those who are not our enemies.

We need to be like the little boy in the Christmas play:

- g It was a children's play, and as the children portrayed the story of the birth of Christ, they came to the time when Joseph and Mary could find no room in the inn. At this particular place, the boy playing Joseph was carried away by the part, and he began to passionately plead with the innkeeper, pointing to Mary and explaining their difficult straits. Finally, the other boy who was playing the innkeeper said, "Aw, shucks, I'm not supposed to do this, but come in anyway."

Hughes (52)

III. Mercy builders love the finished product.

- A. Whatsoever a person sows, according to the bible, he will reap. That does not necessarily mean that the person you are showing mercy to will show mercy back to you. But it does mean that God will show mercy to you.
- B. Showing compassion must come from our heart and we should look to God for our rewards. America is eaten up with the "I do for you and you do for me syndrome." But God teaches that we are to lend looking for nothing in return. If we are sued and they take our coat to give them our cloak also.
- C. Mercy stands on mercy not on rewards. The bible teaches us that our work shall be rewarded. So we should not be weary in well doing. Don't stop showing mercy just because America has forgotten how to be merciful.

g On Saturday, September 18, 1982, the U.S. government released the results of a sad investigation. The government determined that an army soldier stationed in Korea had been a defector to the Communists. According tot he investigation, on August 28, 1982, this twenty-year-old private willingly crossed the Korean Demilitarized Zone into North Korea "for

motives that are not known.” His fellow American soldiers pleaded with him to turn back, but he did not respond.

The day after the findings were released, the parents of the young man held a press conference on the lawn of their St. Louis home. Wiping tears from his eyes, the father said that they had accepted the fact that their son was indeed a defector. “He has lost his credibility in this country, even with me,” said the man. But then he showed the heart of a father. “I still love my son,” he said, “and I want him back.”

God is like this father. You many have turned away from Him, but if you will come back the door is open, and the light is on. Come home, says the Father. Please come home.

Larson (84)

Conclusion:

We need to keep our eyes on God. He said, “for as much as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” We need to help people without expecting anything in return. Just be merciful and forgive whether they ask you or not. Treat them as if they have never done anything wrong. Show mercy!

The story has been told of a mother who sought from Napoleon the pardon of her son. The emperor said it was the man’s second offense, and justice demanded his death. “I don’t ask for justice,” said the mother. “I plead for mercy.”

“But,” said the emperor, “he does not deserve mercy.”

“Sir,” cried the mother, “it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask.”

“Well, then,” said the emperor, “Will show mercy.” And her son was saved.”

Green (240)

As we have looked at the “truths” of mercy. We can see how mercy can build a relationship. God’s mercy was shown to all men, and those who have come and accepted His forgiveness and salvation have come to love and adore the one who showed mercy to their soul.

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