

Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment

I. THE POWER OF MERCY IN HEALING RELATIONSHIPS

- A. One important aspect of our spiritual life is how we respond: when we fail or when we are mistreated as well as how we respond to others who fail. If we respond with mercy, we will experience greater joy and freedom in our heart. If we respond wrongly, then a residue of bitterness or anger will slowly build in us, causing us to live with unresolved pain and turmoil.
- B. Mercy triumphs over judgment—spiritually, emotionally, relationally, economically, physically, etc. Judgment here speaks of unhelpful criticism, accusation, uncovering faults, whispering, etc.

¹³Judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas. 2:13)

- C. Kindness triumphs by giving opportunity for relationships to recover after a difficult season.
- D. Love and mercy cover a multitude of sins or faults in others—we look hard to see good in them.
⁸Above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” (1 Pet. 4:8)

- E. The Lord spoke to me about how His gentleness leads people to greatness. (Dec. 19, 1976)

³⁵Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great. (Ps. 18:35)

¹⁸Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity? ... He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

- F. Jesus wants His people to learn how much He desires mercy (Mt. 9:13; 12:7).

¹³But go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.” (Mt. 9:13)

⁷But if you had known what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Mt. 12:7)

- G. We must re-align our heart to see the Lord *as our primary source* instead of looking to people to establish us. No man can steal our calling or the sphere of influence that the Lord ordained for us.

²⁷John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.” (Jn. 3:27)

¹¹The Lord will give grace...no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (Ps. 84:11)

- H. Joseph was able to speak kindly to his brothers by perceiving the big picture of God's purpose.

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. ²¹Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you...” He spoke kindly to them. (Gen. 50:20-21)

II. ENTRUSTING OURSELVES TO GOD WHEN WE ARE MISTREATED

A. King David is a good example of how to respond rightly to God in mistreatment and adversity. In Psalm 31, we see how David interacted with the Lord when he was being greatly mistreated. By trusting God to intervene, and by refusing to retaliate, he brought God into the conflict.

⁵*Into Your hand I commit my spirit...¹⁵ My times are in Your hand. (Ps. 31:5, 15)*

B. When David “committed his spirit” into God’s hands, he was committing to God everything that deeply touched his spirit—his reputation, money, possessions, position, impact, etc. David was *entrusting the outcome* of the most important issues in his life to God’s leadership. To commit “our times” to God is to *trust His way and timing* in fulfilling His promises to us.

C. Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father to be vindicated in the right way and in the right timing. By committing ourselves into God’s hands in times of mistreatment, we make a transaction with God trusting Him to intervene to establish ***His will*** in our lives, both in ***His way*** and in ***His timing***.

⁴⁶*He said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” (Lk. 23:46)*

²³*While being reviled, He [Jesus] did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously. (1 Pet. 2:23, NASB)*

D. Anger is often caused by people blocking our goals (for honor, comfort, money, etc.).

¹*Where do...fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure...? (Jas. 4:1)*

E. We must be diligent to discern bitterness in our heart because its powerful influence can quickly spring up in devout believers to trouble their heart with pain and to defile many relationships.

¹⁵*Looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled... (Heb. 12:15)*

F. Much potential good is lost in our relationship with God, our family, and friends if we neglect to actively love, bless, do good, and pray for people who trouble, disappoint, or hurt us.

⁴⁴*But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you... (Mt. 5:44)*

G. Deborah Hiebert had a dream in February 2001 that the Lord would release a “Zechariah 3 blessing” in our midst (Zech. 3:1-7). Every year after that she wondered when it would be released. On February 2, 2015, I had a dream that the power of demonic accusation was being broken in our midst. Since then the Lord has repeatedly alerted us not to participate with accusation.

H. In this heavenly scene, Zechariah saw Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord (3:1). Satan accused him of not being qualified for leadership—and he was, in fact, guilty (3:4).

¹*Then he showed me Joshua...standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose [accuse] him. ²The LORD said..., “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?” (Zech. 3:1-2)*