

God's Mercy that Daily Renews the Weak (Mt. 9:13; 12:7, 18-21)

I. WE WILL MAGNIFY THE WONDER OF GOD'S MERCY FOREVER

- A. The Psalmist understood that he would sing of and thus, “build up” or “magnify” God’s mercy forever (Ps. 89:1-2). Our understanding of God’s mercy will forever increase as we continually gain more insight into our eternal exaltation because of it. We will exalt and emphasize mercy more and more as the ages unfold. We will forever sing new songs about it.
- ¹ I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever...² For I have said, "Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens"...⁵ The heavens (angels) will praise Your wonders...Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints. (Ps. 89:1-5)*
- B. The congregation of the saints and angels in heaven will be filled with the wonder of God’s mercy for all eternity (Ps. 89:5). The saints will marvel at Jesus’ leadership on the Sea of glass. Mercy inspires affectionate gratitude that empowers our eternal obedience in the age-to-come.
- ² I saw...a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory...standing on the sea...³, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works...O King of the saints!" (Rev. 15:2-3)*
- ¹¹ I heard the voice of many angels...and the elders...¹² saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches...!" ¹³ Every creature in heaven and on the earth...I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory...to the Lamb..." (Rev. 5:11-13)*
- C. The emerald rainbow forever shines brightly around the Throne because mercy surrounds all that proceeds from it. The most dominant reality seen around God’s Throne is the rainbow of mercy.
- ³ ...There was a rainbow around the Throne, in appearance like an emerald. (Rev. 4:3)*
- D. After the flood in Noah’s day, God set a rainbow in the sky as a sign of His covenant of mercy.
- ¹³ I set My rainbow in the cloud and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth...¹⁵ the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. (Gen 9:13-15)*
- E. The revelation of the vastness of God’s mercy is a vital revelation the enemy seeks to obscure. We easily can believe that God offers mercy for unbelievers coming into the Kingdom. Often times, the longer that some walk with the Lord the less confidence they have in His mercy. Even the most mature are still babes in understanding the vastness of God’s mercy.
- ¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. (1 Tim. 1:15)*
- F. God desires to daily give us a fresh revelation of His mercy that we would grow in it forever.
- ²² Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (Lam. 3:22-23)*
- G. David trusted in God’s mercy or His tenderness in relating to him in his weaknesses and sin.
- ⁵ I have trusted in Your mercy... (Ps. 13:5)*

- H. People often resist instead of trusting God's mercy because it violates their sense of justice. They feel that they do not deserve forgiveness. It is true, they do not deserve it. We receive mercy based on what Jesus did on the cross, not on what we have accomplished (2 Cor. 5:17-21).
- I. When we trust God's mercy, then we have confidence and gratitude before God whether we fail or succeed. Gratitude for mercy conquers spiritual pride (that lacks tenderness towards others).

II. WE ARE CALLED TO LEARN THAT JESUS DESIRES MERCY

⁹ Jesus...saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁰ As Jesus sat at the table in the house...many tax collectors and sinners...sat down with Him...¹¹ The Pharisees...said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with...sinners?" ¹² He (Jesus) said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." (Mt. 9:9-13)

- A. Jesus answered the Pharisees by quoting Hos 6:6 and calling them to "go and learn" the message of mercy as given by the prophet Hosea who married a harlot. In doing this, he gave a prophetic testimony of God's commitment to show mercy to adulterous Israel.

⁶ I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than offerings. (Hos. 6:6)

¹⁸ Who is a God like You...? He does not retain His anger...He delights in mercy. (Mic. 7:18)

- B. Jesus was demonstrating mercy to "adulterous Israel" that would soon crucify Him. This is the only time that Jesus quoted the OT in a way that revealed His heart in the first person. The Spirit is now calling the Church to learn that Jesus desires mercy by experiencing it daily. To receive mercy makes us grateful and thus, merciful to others.

- C. Forgiveness was the focus of the previous scene, when Jesus healed a paralytic (Mt. 9:1-8).

⁶ "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." (Mt. 9:6)

- D. In this passage, Jesus pushes the issue of the centrality of His mercy for forgiveness in immediately calling Matthew, a tax collector, to be an apostle (primary leader) in the Kingdom.
- E. Matthew was sitting at the roadside to collect tax on all products carried in and out of Israel. Tax collectors in that culture were hated by all because they served the oppressive Roman Empire and abused their own people by taking more money than was required by the Roman officials.
- F. Jesus saw the potential in Matthew's future dedication to God. That Jesus called a tax collector to be a leader was scandalous. Matthew's name is on the foundations of the New Jerusalem. Matthew's call was itself a prophetic declaration of the vast mercy in God's Kingdom.

¹⁴ The City had 12 foundations, and on them were the names of the 12 apostles. (Rev. 21:14)

III. JESUS AGAIN EMPHASIZES THE NEED TO LEARN THAT “HE DESIRES MERCY”

¹ *Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples...began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 When the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" ... 7 If you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Mt. 12:1-7)*

A. In Mt. 12:7, Jesus again quoted Hos. 6:6, as He did in Mt. 9:13. God's mercy prevails in God's court as well as in transforming our heart. It triumphs by causing people to turn to righteousness. Mercy is God's best plan to win people to voluntarily commit to righteousness.

¹³ *Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas 2:13)*

⁴ *...Not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)*

B. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus again refers to His weighty desire for mercy.

²³ *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees...you pay tithe of (herbs) mint, anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law (Word): justice and mercy and faith. (Mt. 23:23)*

IV. GOD'S ZEAL TO RENEW THE WEAK IN HIS GREAT MERCY (MT. 12:18-21)

¹⁵ *Great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all...17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 18 "Behold, My Servant...I will put My Spirit on Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles. 19 He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; 21 and in His name Gentiles will trust (hope or rejoice)."* (Mt. 12:15-21)

A. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah (the suffering servant in Jesus' first coming) would refuse to raise His voice in the street to mobilize military force to deliver the nation of Israel from the oppression of the Roman Empire. Jesus refused to act against Rome as the revolutionary Jewish zealots wanted Him to. Scripture did promise that the Messiah would bring "justice" (v. 18) or a spiritual breakthrough to individuals suffering spiritual oppression (due to their bondage to sin).

¹⁸*My Servant...will declare justice to the Gentiles...20 A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory... (Mt. 12:18-20)*

1. There are two sides to God's justice (judgment and salvation): **Judgment** or punishment on the rebellious and **salvation** or deliverance to those who receive His grace as His power makes wrong things right.
2. Examples of God's positive justice include: **holiness** or God's deliverance from sinful addictions and **physical healing** as God's deliverance from sickness (Mt. 12:15).

- B. Jesus promises to bring “justice to victory” (v. 20) or a spiritual breakthrough to individuals who suffered spiritual oppression (bondage to sin). The Lord committed to deliver even the “pagan Gentiles” who did not know God at all. The justice in v. 21 refers to positive deliverance of sin as clarified in the Gentiles trusting Him.
- C. In verse 20, Isaiah used the metaphors of a broken reed and a smoldering wick to picture those who are fragile and without hope. Many feel like a bruised reed and smoldering wick. They are tempted to give in (to sin) and give up (in their struggle to please God).
- D. They want to quit because they feel hopelessness in their persistent struggle against sin. The wick is almost entirely out. Only smoke is seen, but in Jesus there is hope if there is still a stirring of conscience or yearning for Jesus, however feeble and inconsistent. Their life and fire feels as if it is entirely gone or is false. The Lord sees real life and fire in them. Jesus esteems even the smallest evidence of life and the least spark of fire in our spirit.
- E. The Lord plans to fan the flames and restore the life flow and fire in our heart that the hopeless will again trust and rejoice in the Lord. Each of us have important things yet to do.
¹⁴ Yet God does not take away life, but plans ways so that the banished one may not be cast out from Him (His presence). (2 Sam. 14:14 NAS)

V. THE NEED TO RESPOND TO GOD’S MERCY

- A. Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest who deals tenderly with us as we repent of our sins.
¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses...¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy... (Heb. 4:15-16)
- B. It is vital to feel forgiven as we trust God’s mercy because without it some we feel like quitting in our wholehearted pursuit of the Lord. The enemy tells us two lies. First, that we have gone too far to be forgiven. Second, that our sin is too strong to overcome. We declare Mt. 12:20 to him.
- C. How we respond to God’s mercy determines our future in God. We take it in vain by refusing to trust it or refusing to war against those things holding us back. To honor God’s mercy, we must refuse both compromise and condemnation.
¹ We...plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1)
² Indeed the gospel was preached to...them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith (confidence) in those who heard it. (Heb. 4:2)
- D. Jesus promises to bring justice (spiritual victory) to all who believe in His mercy by cooperating with His grace. We must not be casual about receiving God’s mercy. It is essential to receive it in a way that produces gratitude, obedience, and the fear of God as we love Jesus by resisting sin.
¹² Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (Jas 1:12)