

MONDAY FEBRUARY 19, 2024

Key Text - Matthew 5:7



LET'S BEGIN

Read this Psalm (preferably out loud!) before you begin your study:

“Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by. I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me. He will send from heaven and save me; he will put to shame him who tramples on me. Selah God will send out his steadfast love and his faithfulness! My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie down amid fiery beasts—the children of man, whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth! They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves. Selah My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody! Awake, my glory! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn! I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!”

Psalm 57:1-11 ESV

OPENING PRAYER

Begin your time today with a brief prayer. It doesn't have to be fancy or formal. Keep it focused on asking God to help you read and understand today's study.

Lord, thank You for the mercy You've shown to me. Thank You for not giving me what I really deserve. Thank You for showing grace and forgiving my sins. Please help me this week to dwell on this passage and give me opportunities to show mercy to others around me.

DIG IN

- 1) What do you think of when you hear “mercy?”
- 2) What people in the Bible have shown mercy? Joseph is an example Jay gave; he is a great example of showing mercy to his brothers. What are others?
- 3) How have other people shown you mercy?
- 4) Is there anyone in your life you need to forgive and show them mercy?

APPLY IT

Mercy isn't a quality that's admired in most business settings today. Mercy is often viewed as weak by many. Think about the attributes listed in Matthew 5 so far and whether the world views them as positive or negative. Do you share some of those same views? What about your friends and people you hang out with? What would they think of showing mercy?

PRAY IT OUT

Spend some time in prayer. A couple prayer suggestions:

- Pray for your day.
- Ask God to help you live today more in alignment with His way than your way.
- Ask God for strength to make that one small change you thought of in the question above.
- Ask God to give you guidance for your decisions today.
- Ask God to give you words in your conversations today.

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2024

Key Text - Lamentations 3:22-26



LET'S BEGIN

Read this scripture (preferably out loud!) before you begin your study:

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him.’ The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.”

Lamentations 3:22-26 ESV

OPENING PRAYER

Begin your time today with a brief prayer. It doesn't have to be fancy or formal. Keep it focused on asking God to help you read and understand today's reading.

Father, please help me today to show mercy to others. Give me the strength to show mercy even if it's hard for me to do. Please help me to show mercy to those who haven't shown it to me. Please let those who I have wronged show me mercy.

DIG IN

1) Read all of Lamentations 3. It is thought that this Book was written by Jeremiah. The first part of chapter 3 is “lamenting” of the suffering of him and his people. And in verse 22 the writer says even though I've suffered all of this, God still shows him mercy, every day. Every day we mess up. And every day if we ask for forgiveness, God is merciful to forgive us. We receive mercy from God every day.

2) Read Matthew 18:21-35. This is a parable of Jesus where the king forgives a man whose debt is so large it could never have been repaid. The same man who was forgiven, left and went to his servant who owed him money and demanded repayment. Verse 32 says the king called him back and said, “You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?” This parable is similar to Matthew 5:7. We should show mercy because we have been shown so much mercy by God already, the same as we should forgive others since we have been forgiven by God of so much.

3) This beatitude and parable don’t mean that you don’t get mercy unless you give it. Similar to the fruits of the spirit, mercy comes from a heart that desires to be like Christ. When we love others we should want to show them mercy. And in giving mercy and forgiveness it’s better for our heart as well. It’s not healthy to hold on to the wrongs others have done to you.

Extra Credit – read [this commentary](#) to help understand the back story of Lamentations 3.

APPLY IT

Who needs to show you mercy for something you’ve done? Have you asked them for forgiveness and asked for mercy from them? Who has shown you mercy that you didn’t deserve? How did it make you feel to be the recipient of mercy? How has it made you feel to be the one showing mercy to someone else?

PRAY IT OUT

Spend some time in prayer. A couple prayer suggestions:

- Pray for those around you to show mercy to others.
- Pray for our nation to show mercy to those we don’t agree with.
- Pray for your pastors and staff at Church.
- Pray for your boss, and any employees that report to you and ask for ways to show mercy.

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2024

Key Text - Matthew 22:35-40



LET'S BEGIN

Read this scripture (preferably out loud!) before you begin your study:

"And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question to test Him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.'"

Matthew 22:35-37, 39-40

OPENING PRAYER

Begin your time today with a brief prayer. It doesn't have to be fancy or formal. Keep it focused on asking God to help you read and understand today's reading.

Dear Father, thank You for loving me so much even to send Your only son to die so that I could live with You in heaven. Thank You for all Your blessings You've shown me this week. Please help me show Your love to others, especially those that are hard to love. And help me to love You more.

DIG IN

- 1) Jesus said the 2nd greatest commandment, just below loving God, was to love others. How does love go with mercy?
- 2) What are the consequences of not showing mercy? Jay shared a story Sunday about two men who spent years apart and at odds with each other because of a misunderstanding. I can't tell you how many conflicts I've had recently just because of misunderstandings. Do we rob ourselves of living a blessed life because we hold back mercy from others?

3) What are the limits on how much mercy God shows to us? Do we have limits on how much mercy we show to others?

4) Jay gave us the story of Corrie Ten Boom, a famous figure from the persecution of Jews during WWII. Mercy for her wasn't easy. It didn't happen overnight. Just like her, sometimes we have to get up every morning and tell ourselves we forgive those who've wronged us and show them mercy. It's not always easy.

APPLY IT

We've talked in the last few weeks of the first five of the beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit, Blessed are those who mourn, Blessed are the meek, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and now Blessed are the merciful. If you continue to read the rest of Matthew 5, you'll read where Jesus talks more about what our hearts should be like. He says in verse 21, "You've heard it said whoever murders will be liable for judgment. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable for judgment." Jesus starts by saying how to live a blessed life and follows with what was very new to them - that your heart matters as much or more than your actions. Even if you don't murder your friend, if you have hate in your heart against him or her, it's just as bad. So comparing this week's beatitude about mercy - meditate on this and how this and all the beatitudes thus far are Jesus teaching us about our heart and how to act out loving others.

PRAY IT OUT

Spend some time in prayer. A couple prayer suggestions:

- Pray for your day.**
- Ask God to show you people in your life you need to show love to.**
- Ask God to show you people in your life you need to show mercy to.**
- Ask God to point out things in your life you need to ask him forgiveness from.**
- Ask God to help you live out loving others like Christ loves us.**

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2024

Key Text - Genesis 45:1-15



LET'S BEGIN

Read this scripture (preferably out loud!) before you begin your study:

“Since Joseph could no longer control his feelings in front of his servants, he sent them out of the room. When he was alone with his brothers, he told them, ‘I am Joseph.’ Then he cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him and told about it in the king's[a] palace. Joseph asked his brothers if his father was still alive, but they were too frightened to answer. Joseph told them to come closer to him, and when they did, he said: ‘Yes, I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt. Don't worry or blame yourselves for what you did. God is the one who sent me ahead of you to save lives. There has already been a famine for two years, and for five more years no one will plow fields or harvest grain. But God sent me on ahead of you to keep your families alive and to save you in this wonderful way. After all, you weren't really the ones who sent me here—it was God. He made me the highest official in the king's court and placed me over all Egypt. Now hurry back and tell my father that his son Joseph says, “God has made me ruler of Egypt. Come here as quickly as you can. You will live near me in the region of Goshen with your children and grandchildren, as well as with your sheep, goats, cattle, and everything else you own. I will take care of you there during the next five years of famine. But if you don't come, you and your family and your animals will starve to death.” All of you, including my brother Benjamin, can tell by what I have said that I really am Joseph. Tell my father about my great power here in Egypt and about everything you have seen. Hurry and bring him here.’ Joseph and Benjamin hugged each other and started crying. Joseph was still crying as he kissed each of his other brothers. After this, they started talking with Joseph.”

Genesis 45: 1-15

OPENING PRAYER

Begin your time today with a brief prayer. It doesn't have to be fancy or formal. Keep it focused on asking God to help you read and understand today's reading.

Father, thank you for the Bible. Thank you for Your Word that was given to us so that we can better understand Your character and Your love for us. Please help me to understand it better every time I read it. Please speak to me through Your Word.

DIG IN

- 1) Jay shared the story of Joseph Sunday in his message. It's such a powerful story and Joseph's mercy abounds. Although he does torment his brothers a little in the story, ultimately he does not give them what they deserve. What are ways Joseph showed mercy?
- 2) What are ways others have harmed you that you've had trouble to forgive? Have you forgiven them now? Do you still hold on to any of their offenses to you?
- 3) The Bible says God forgives and forgets. Can you re-count those grievances against you or have you forgiven so much that you don't even remember them?

Read Matthew 5:7 again.

- 4) Like we've discussed in some of the other beatitudes, there is a blessing and then a promise. What's the promise for those who show mercy?
- 5) Does Jesus mean in this passage if you don't show mercy to others none will be shown to you?
- 6) What are some things God has shown you this week that you need to show others mercy for?

APPLY IT

Mercy is hard. We all want justice; it's almost a part of us. But that's the sinful heart we have, and God is trying to mold us and change us into something better, something more in his image. It doesn't make it less hard, but it makes the reward even sweeter.

I hope this verse and the other verses we've shared this week and studied together have brought the need for mercy in all of our lives to your thoughts. I hope that you don't have a need for mercy any time soon, and I hope that nobody wrongs you soon so that you need to show mercy. Psalm 119: 10-13 says "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." I hope that we can all hide these words in our heart so that we don't withhold mercy when the time comes that it's needed.

PRAY IT OUT

Spend some time in prayer. A couple prayer suggestions:

- **Ask God to speak to you today.**
- **Ask God to help you see where He is near to you today.**
- **Ask God for forgiveness and an understanding of His grace today.**
- **Ask God to guide your steps all day long today.**