

Lesson 5

Blessed are the Merciful

As we grow in our understanding of the Gospel, we should desire to be more like Jesus. When we hunger and thirst for the things of God we will grow and desire to be like Him: gracious, merciful, and forgiving. Happy we will be if we receive His blessings and, in turn, bestow them on others.

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12 then record Matthew 5:7.
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Let's review the Beatitudes we have studied up until now.

2. List the first four Beatitudes, record what each one means and write the promise that comes with each one.

Beatitude	Meaning	Promise

3. Now, consider why merciful is next and record your thoughts.

4. Read Luke 6:36 and note any differences/similarities with Matthew 5:7.

5. Next read Luke 6:35. In doing good, for what are we to hope?

6. How can we be recognized as a son (or daughter) of the Most High?

We are exhorted to be like God, and Scripture tells us that God is merciful; but what does that mean? Let's define *merciful*.

The *Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* defines *merciful* as "not simply possessed of pity but actively compassionate," while *sons* (in Luke 6:35) is defined as representing characteristics resembling those of their Father.

Dictionary.com defines *mercy* as "compassionate or kindly forbearance shown toward an offender, an enemy or other person in one's power, passion, pity, or benevolence."

Note: it is kindness toward an **offender or enemy!** Our sin is an offense to God making us the offender. We are saved because of God's grace and mercy. It has been explained that God, in His grace, gives us what we do not deserve - the free gift of salvation and everlasting life. God, in His mercy, does not give us what we do deserve - eternal separation from Him. By the *dictionary.com* definition, we must, at some time, have been an offender or enemy of God!

7. Read and record Romans 3:23.

8. Read Isaiah 59:2. What do our sins do?

9. Read Romans 6:23. What is it that we deserve? _____

10. Read Romans 5:8 and describe our condition and God's great sacrifice, and how this exhibits mercy.

11. Read Romans 10:9. What is the undeserved gift (grace) we have been given?

12. Now, review the definitions and the verses, and summarize God's mercy.

13. There is much to be said of God's mercy! Look up the following verses and record the description of His mercy.

Psalm 86:5

Lamentations 3:22-23

Luke 1:50

Ephesians 2:4-8

1 Peter 1:3

The fourth beatitude, *blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness* prepares within us the desire to be more like God. By desiring to be like Him, we desire to be merciful.

Mercy is an act of self-denial, since to show mercy is to offer compassion to one who does not deserve it. Therefore, mercy is not a popular concept with the unbelieving. But it is also not a popular concept with our flesh.

Think of a time when someone hurt you or caused you or someone close to you harm.

14. What was your first instinct toward that person?

15. Was it merciful?

16. As a believer, how should you, can you, and do you show mercy to others?

Read Romans 12:14-20.

17. Use *blueletterbible.org* to look up *bless* from verse 14 and record a summary of the definition below.

18. Now, rewrite Romans 12:14 with the above definition in place of *bless*.

19. Verse 17 says, “repay no one evil for evil.” Instead, what are we to do according to verse 20.

20. When we are wronged, who can we trust to take care of us? (v. 19)

21. Write out the command from verse 21.

22. Review Romans 12:14-21 and summarize what these verses teach.

Last week we studied *blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness*. We read of Abraham and how he was counted righteous, because he simply believed. We too are counted righteous when we believe, when we have faith. However, if we believe and we truly have faith in the One Who is truly righteous, we will not remain stagnant; we will grow.

**Blessed are the Merciful – A Character Study
Joseph**

Joseph was one of Jacob’s 12 sons. He was the eleventh born, yet the first son born to his favorite wife, Rachel. Jacob’s 12 sons would go on to form the 12 tribes of Israel. While Jacob loved Joseph very much, Joseph’s brother did not share their father’s enthusiasm.

Read Genesis 37:1-4.

23. Why did Joseph’s brothers hate him?

24. Did Joseph ask for the coat given to him by his father? _____

Read Genesis 37:5-8.

25. Why did Joseph’s brothers hate him even more?

26. Did Joseph have any control over his dreams? _____

Read Genesis 37:9-11.

27. Why did Joseph’s brothers envy him?

28. Again, was Joseph able to control what he dreamed about? _____

29. **THINK:** Did Joseph do anything directly to his brothers that warranted their hatred? (Answer without speculating about Joseph’s demeanor or attitude. Look only at what the text tells you.)

Their hatred of Joseph grew to the point of selling him as a slave and leading their father to believe he was killed by a wild animal. Joseph was then purchased by an officer of Pharaoh, named Potiphar. While working for Potiphar, Potiphar's wife took a liking to Joseph and when he refused her advances, she accused him of rape. (Genesis 39:7-18) As a result, Joseph was thrown in prison.

While in prison, Joseph interpreted two dreams. One for the Pharaoh's chief butler and one for the Pharaoh's chief baker. Each time Joseph asked that they remember him when things went well for them, to mention him to Pharaoh and to help him get out of prison; but they did not.

30. **THINK:** Was Joseph treated well by the butler? Did he deserve to be treated well? (Genesis 40:23)

Sometime later, Pharaoh had a dream that no one could interpret. Finally, the butler remembered Joseph. Hearing the dream, Joseph predicted a terrible famine in the land. As a result, Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of preparing Egypt for what was to come.

Just as Joseph said, a great famine spread through Egypt and over the face of the earth. As a result, people of all countries came to Egypt to buy grain. The rest of the story is filled with the sorts of twists and turns that make for the best novels. In short, the evil-plotting brothers find themselves standing face to face with the brother they sold. They were in need of the grain, he now controlled. Unrecognized, Joseph demands they return a second time with the youngest brother and Joseph's full-blood brother, Benjamin. More drama.

Just when it looked like Benjamin would be forced to stay in Egypt while the others return to Canaan - in stepped mercy and changed everything!

Read Genesis 45:1-15.

31. What realization did Joseph come to all these years later? (v. 7-8)

32. Do you think Joseph could rightly consider his brothers as offenders?

33. Would Joseph have been justified in sending his brothers away without his help?

34. **THINK:** What do you think brought Joseph to the place of mercy vs. giving his brothers what they deserved? Consider Genesis 39:3, 5, 21 and 23 when answering.

Joseph paid the price for his brother's hatred and envy, and his brother's received mercy. Just like Jesus paid the price for our sin, and we have received mercy.

When we realize there is no way to save ourselves, we mourn over our sin. This brings us to the realization that God is ALL we will ever need, allowing us to give all our grievances to Him in meekness. This knowledge should leave us only wanting more of Him as we hunger and thirst for righteousness; and as we are transformed by the power of His Spirit in our lives, mercy becomes an option even in midst of the deepest hurts. All because of Him.

Read James 2:13-18.

35. What should be the outcome of our faith?

36. Explain how mercy can be evidence of our faith.

God loved us and sent His Son to die for us because of His great mercy. Our sins caused Him great pain and yet He showed us mercy. Mercy always costs those who practice it. In his commentary on the Beatitudes, Warren Weirsbe says, "To extend mercy means to withhold judgement...But there can be no true mercy apart from justice; somebody simply has to pay the price."

37. Read 1 Peter 2:24 and record below the great cost for our sins.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us.

- Romans 5:8

38. Read Luke 23:34. Was Jesus asking the Father to forgive His best buddies?

No! He was asking for forgiveness for His enemies!

39. What does this prayer teach us about Jesus?

40. What does this prayer teach us to do?

41. Read Matthew 26:53. What did Jesus have the power to do?

42. What do we learn about mercy from Jesus' abilities vs. His actions?

43. Read Ephesians 4:32. You only need to forgive someone if they have sinned against you. Describe how this is an act of mercy?

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. This verse does not mean that we earn mercy for being merciful. Rather, **because** you have been shown mercy, you can now show mercy.

44. Read and record Psalm 23:6.

45. Is there someone in your life right now to whom you should show mercy? Are you holding a grudge? Are you unable to forgive? Do you desire to “get even”?

If so, ponder these verses while considering God’s great mercy which you have obtained.

...who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously...

- 1 Peter 2:23

Happy is she who is merciful. Happy is the one who has received mercy and can, therefore, show mercy.

46. Think on the previous four beatitudes. Could you truly be merciful without these characteristics?

47. Spend some time reviewing this week’s material and then summarize what have you learned about being *merciful*.

Lesson 5 – For Further Study
Blessed are the Merciful

Read Titus 3:1-8. What instructions are given in verses 1-2?

Why are we instructed to be peaceable, gentle and showing all humility to all men?
(v. 3)

What do the foolish, disobedient, deceived and idolater people who envy and hate
deserve?

But... What appeared toward men instead? (v. 4)

Verse 5 says, that He saved us. Not by _____,
but according to _____.

He doesn't just save us. Whom has He poured out on us?

How has this been poured?

What has the Holy Spirit done for us? (v. 5)

Use blueletterbible.org to look up the words:

regeneration (1. A. Definition)

renewing

THINK: Stop and really think about these definitions in contrast to what you deserve. What does this mean to you?

Still, it doesn't end there. Having been justified by His grace, we also become what?

Mercy has given us kindness, the love of God, Jesus and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. This renewing and regeneration and has made us heirs!

So, as those who believe in God, we should be careful to do what? (v. 8)

Use blueletterbible.org look up the word *good* (1. C. Definition).

Read Micah 6:8. What has the Lord shown us?

What does He now require of us?

Act in a just manner toward others. Treat them how you want to be treated, and **don't just show mercy, love showing mercy!** Give it as liberally as you hope to receive it! Finally, remember who God is, always remain submitted, always following and always being transformed into the image of His Son.

Write a prayer of gratitude and application.
