

**Matthew 5: 7 – “Blessed are the Merciful”, Sermon # 7 in a series entitled –
“These Sayings of Mine”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
June 30th, 2019, in the Morning Worship Service.**

I hope that you see that these beatitudes are the new attitudes which are developing in the life of the Christian because of Christ’s grace is at work in them. They are really quite opposite from the attitudes of people in the world who do not know God. For them, it is never a sign of strength to them, to have these particular attitudes, and the reason that they think this way, is because they are still people wedded to their sins and to the world. Now today, I want to take up with you this marvelous phrase – “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” I want to 1st of all – Attempt to define for you what it means for a Christian to be merciful. 2nd – I want to show you a few ways that a Christian can show mercy to people around him. And 3rd – I want to show you, that the blessing of being merciful is that you shall obtain mercy. There will be something for everyone here today to take in, to learn about, and to do in order that you might be truly blessed and happy.

1st – I want to attempt to define for you what it means for a Christian to be merciful.

As we think about how the word mercy is used in the Bible, we find that mercy is thoughts and feelings of compassion and pity which lead to acts of love and kindness which are undeserved in the person receiving them. The person who thinks these thoughts of mercy, is affected with the misery of the person that they will show mercy to. Compassion is sympathy for the suffering of others, often including a desire to help them. Sympathy is the ability to enter into, or understand, or share somebody else’s feelings. Now, mercy is something which people who do not know the Lord may show to others around them in various situations, but it is the person who knows the Lord who will better be able to realize that they need to show mercy to needy folks around them, more than the unbeliever, because of the greatness of the mercy which has been shown to them by God Himself. As they have and are trusting in Him, He does not punish them for the guilt of their sins. By faith in Christ, God graciously grants them salvation from sin and removes His wrath which was upon them before they believed in Christ. They learned what mercy was through God’s having shown it to them personally.

Mercy is shown to the undeserving when they believe in the promises of God concerning their receiving grace; unmerited favor and blessing from God, when the glory of the righteous and holy God is revealed to them. You see this Exodus 33:12-23 – “Then Moses said to the LORD, ‘See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people.’ “But You have not let me know whom You will send with me.” “Yet You have said, ‘I know you by name, and you have also found grace in My sight.’ “Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight.” “And consider that this nation is Your people.” “And He said, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ “Then he said to Him, ‘If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.’”

“For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us?” “So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.” “So the LORD said to Moses, “I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name.” “And he said, ‘Please, show me Your glory.’ “Then He said, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you.’ “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” “But He said, ‘You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.’ “And the LORD said, ‘Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock.’ “So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft

of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.” “Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.”

You will notice that Moses was shown mercy here while Moses recites God’s dealings with him. He repeats back to Him the very things that He said to Him in a declarative way of salvation. I know you by name, and you have found grace in My sight. He prays on that basis of having been shown saving mercy in the past by God, that He would now show him His way; that His Presence would go with them, and that He would give him rest. These are not only statements related to God’s bringing Israel into the land, but they are statements of faith in God that God’s presence would go with them and that He would give them rest; that is, everyone believing in Him, His presence would go with them.

Remember, Moses did not get to enter into the land, but He did receive the answers to His prayers, knowing that God would be merciful to him. He would be gracious to whom He would be gracious and have compassion on whom He would have compassion. This is the very statement that was quoted by the apostle Paul in Romans 9, verses 14-19, concerning election of some to eternal life. He says there – “For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” “So then, it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.” Verse 18 – “Therefore He has mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardens.” He is the sovereign God of mercy and grace, basing the gift of grace on the fulfillment of His law through Christ.

God’s showing the greatness of His mercy in salvation, to Moses or to any person for that matter, is based upon His dear Son fulfilling all righteousness on their behalf. This is pictured for us well, in Exodus 33: 19 where God says to Moses – “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you – “I will be merciful” to you Moses and to all those whom I choose to show mercy to. And He places him in the cleft of the rock, a picture of Christ, and cover him there with His hand while He passes by. God places every elect person in Christ by His sovereign mercy, and He is gracious to them.

But when we come to show mercy to others, as Christians, we are not the sovereign God, choosing whom we show mercy to. No, we show mercy to those who need it according to our having been commanded to be merciful to everyone who we think that we can help. Listen to Luke 6: 35 and 36. “But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High.” “For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.” “Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.” So in defining mercy for you, I have had to take you to the example of God Himself. He shows all men mercy in giving them their life, and He is kind to them all in showing them the temporal mercies of providing for their needs and often delivering them from physical death and granting them daily strength and wisdom and help in many ways that they are totally unaware of.

But 2nd – I want to show you a few ways that a Christian can show mercy to people around him.

A Christian, I am saying, is to show mercy in accordance with the instructions that they are given in the word of God. Let’s start with giving to the poor and giving to those in need. The Bible talks about giving alms to the poor, or what we would think of as charitable giving. In Matthew 6, verses 1-4, Jesus says – “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds to be seen by them.” “Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.” “Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men.” “Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.” “But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who see in secret will Himself reward you openly.”

It is very important for each and every Christian to see to it that they deliberately interact with the Lord over their giving. The words, “charitable deed” here are translated in Young’s Literal Translation as “kindness”. When you do your kindness, when you show mercy to the poor or the needy, you are not to be proud of yourself in your giving, but you are to realize that you are showing mercy in the way that the Lord Jesus and God the Father would have you to. You pray about your giving. You think about people in need; especially the brethren in relation to your giving. The Father who sees in secret rewards the generous giver, openly. He knows exactly how to reward you. He will make it plain to you. You will not lack in your own supply. You do not give for the reward; but you know that you have given in the right way when you think to yourself – It is more blessed to give than to receive, as Paul said, that the Lord Jesus said, at one time. Dear Christian, do you see it this way?

What is the reward? It is the quiet assurance that you have done something for the Lord, in His name. In Luke 6: 38, just the next verse after those I just quoted to you about loving your enemies, which is an act of mercy to them, it says – “Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom.” “For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” A Christian is one who has been given all that they have and all that they own, and all that they possess in money and possessions from God. A principle is being enunciated here by our Lord Jesus. It is the principle that if you give, it will be given to you. And you should understand by this, that all of your giving to others is a reasonable act. God is the One who supplies all of your needs, and He takes careful notice of all that you give, and he is well able to repay you with more, the more that you give to meet true and real needs that he has commanded.

How do you measure out what you will give? The measure will be determined largely by the mercy that you want to show to others in the name of Christ. If you give in good measure, it will be given to you in good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. In other words, you will not be lacking in resources for God sees precisely what you have given and why you have given it. One time Jesus was dining in the house of a certain Pharisee, who invited him to his house. The account is found in Luke 11: 37-41. It says – “And when Jesus sat down to eat, He had not washed, and when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that Jesus had not first washed before dinner.” “And the Lord said to him, ‘Now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and dish clean, but your inward part is full of greed and wickedness.’ “Foolish ones!”, He said. “Did not He who made the outside make the inside also?” “And then He said, “But rather give alms of such things as you have; then indeed all things are clean to you.”

What did He mean? He was saying that the Pharisees were only looking at things outwardly. If their hands were washed they were ceremonially clean. If not, they were defiled. But really it was their inward purity, the state of their heart before God that was most important. They were not concerned about being greedy, about the wickedness of covetousness and hoarding their money. He was saying that there is something very cleansing about being able to give out of what you have, to help others to the glory of God.

What about showing mercy to people who have been abused or taken advantage of by wicked men? When you see an accident on the road, if no one else is around, do you pull over to check and see if the person needs help? What about those persons who might have been robbed or assaulted and left for dead on the street. You see them lying there. But will you help? Or do you think to yourself – This is really none of my business and it will be so inconvenient if I take the time to call the police or the ambulance or try to minister to them. Well Jesus addresses this in Luke chapter 10, verses 25-37. A certain lawyer stood up and tested Jesus, saying “Teacher what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” “He said to him, ‘What is written in the law?’ “What is your reading of it?” “So he answered and said, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.’”

“And He said to him, ‘You have answered rightly; do that and you will live.’ “But he, wanting to justify himself said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’ “Then Jesus answered and said, ‘A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.’”

“Now, by chance a certain priest came down that road.” “And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.” “Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.” “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was.” “And when he saw him, he had compassion.” “So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” “On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again I will repay you.’” “So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?” “And he said, ‘He who showed mercy on him.’” “Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’” You see, showing mercy is going to cost you time and money, and it may seem bothersome to you, but really there is great blessing in it, for the Lord is watching you to see what you will do, for the poor and the needy and bruised and battered of this world; those who have been taken advantage of, or who haven’t the resources to be able to get through another day. But you do.

You may remember the story of Hudson Taylor who before he went to China decided that he must prepare for it by learning to live by faith alone. He thought to himself – “When I get out to China, I shall have no claim on any one for anything; my only claim will be on God.” “How important therefore, to learn before leaving England to move man, though God by prayer alone.”

He says - “That Sunday was a very happy one...After attending Divine service in the morning, my afternoons and evenings were filled with Gospel work, in the various lodging-houses I was accustomed to visit in the lowest part of the town... After concluding my last service about ten o’clock that night, a poor man asked me to go and pray with his wife, saying that she was dying. I readily agreed, and on the way to his house asked him why he had not sent for the priest, as his accent told me he was an Irishman. He had done so, he said, but the priest refused to come without a payment of eighteen pence, which the man did not possess, as the family was starving.’

‘Immediately it occurred to my mind that all the money I had in the world was the solitary half-crown, and that it was in one coin; moreover, that while the basin of water gruel I usually took for supper was awaiting me, and there was sufficient in the house for breakfast in the morning, I certainly had nothing for dinner on the coming day. Somehow or other there was at once a stoppage in the flow of joy in my heart; but instead of reproving myself I began to reprove the poor man, telling him that it was very wrong to have allowed matters to get into such a state as he described, and that he ought to have applied to the relieving officer.

His answer was that he had done so, and was told to come at eleven o’clock the next morning, but that he feared that his wife might not live through the night. “Ah,” thought I, “if only I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of this half-crown, how gladly would I give these poor people one shilling of it!” “But to part with the half-crown was far from my thoughts. I little dreamed that the real truth of the matter simply was that I could trust in God plus one-and-sixpence, but was not yet prepared to trust Him only, without any money at all in my pocket.” “Up a miserable flight of stairs, into a wretched room, he led me; and oh what a sight there presented itself to our eyes!” “Four or five poor children stood about, their sunken cheeks and temples all telling unmistakably the story of slow starvation; and lying on a wretched pallet was a poor exhausted mother, with a tiny infant thirty-six hours old, moaning rather than crying at her side, for it too seemed spent and failing.”

“Ah!” thought I, “if I had two shillings and a sixpence instead of half-a-crown, how gladly should they have one-and-sixpence of it!” “But still a wretched unbelief prevented me from obeying the impulse to relieve their distress at the cost of all I possessed.” “It will scarcely seem strange that I was unable to say much to comfort these poor people.” “I needed comfort myself.” “I began to tell them, however, that they must not be cast down, that though their circumstances were very distressing, there was a kind and loving Father in heaven; but something within me said, “You hypocrite!” “Telling these unconverted

people about a kind and loving Father in heaven, and not prepared yourself to trust Him without half-a-crown!"

"I was nearly choked." How gladly would I have compromised with conscience if I had had a florin and a sixpence! "I would have given the florin thankfully and kept the rest; but I was not yet prepared to trust in God alone, without the sixpence." "To talk was impossible under these circumstances; yet, strange to say, I thought I should have no difficulty in praying." "Prayer was a delightful occupation to me in those days; time thus spent never seemed wearisome, and I knew nothing of lack of words." "I seemed to think that all I should have to do would be to kneel down and engage in prayer, and that relief would come to them and to myself together."

"You asked me to come and pray with your wife," I said to the man, "let us pray." And I knelt down. "But scarcely had I opened my lips with "Our Father who art in heaven" than conscience said within, "Dare you mock God?" "Dare you kneel down and call Him Father with that half-crown in your pocket?" "Such a time of conflict came upon me then as I have never experienced before or since." "How I got through that form of prayer I know not, and whether the words uttered were connected or disconnected I cannot tell; but I arose from my knees in great distress of mind." The poor father turned to me and said, "You see what a terrible state we are in, sir; if you can help us, for God's sake do!" "Just then the word flashed into my mind, "Give to him that asketh of thee," and in the word of a King there is power."

"I put my hand into my pocket, and slowly drawing forth the half-crown, gave it to the man, telling him that it might seem a small matter for me to relieve them, seeing that I was comparatively well off, but that in parting with that coin I was giving him my all; what I had been trying to tell him was indeed true: God really was a Father, and might be trusted." "The joy all came back in full flood-tide to my heart; I could say anything and feel it then, and the hindrance to blessing was gone; gone, I trust, forever." "Not only was the poor woman's life saved, but I realized that my life was saved too!" "It might have been a wreck, would have been a wreck probably, as a Christian life, had not grace at that time conquered, and the striving of God's Spirit been obeyed." "I well remember how that night, as I went home to my lodgings, my heart was as light as my pocket." "The lonely, deserted streets resounded with a hymn of praise which I could not restrain."

"When I took my basin of gruel before retiring, I would not have exchanged it for a prince's feast." "I reminded the Lord as I knelt at my bedside of His own Word, that he who gives to the poor lends to the Lord, and that which he hath given, will He pay him again." (Proverbs 19: 7) I asked Him not to let my loan be a long one, or I should have no dinner next day; and with peace within and peace without, I spent a happy, restful night." "Next morning for breakfast my plate of porridge remained, and before it was consumed the postman's knock was heard at the door." "I was not in the habit of receiving letters on Monday, as my parents and most of my friends refrained from posting on Saturday; so that I was somewhat surprised when the landlady came in holding a letter or packet in her wet hand covered by her apron." "I looked at the letter, but could not make out the handwriting." "It was either a strange hand or a feigned one, and the postmark was blurred." "Where it came from I could not tell."

"On opening the envelope I found nothing written within; but inside a sheet of blank paper was folded a pair of kid gloves, from which, as I opened them in astonishment, half-a-sovereign fell to the ground." "Praise the Lord!" I exclaimed; "400 per cent for twelve hours investment; that is good interest." "How glad the merchants of Hull would be if they could lend their money at such a rate!" "I then and there determined that a bank which could not break should have my savings or earnings as the case might be, a determination I have not yet learned to regret." "I cannot tell you how often my mind has recurred to this incident, or all the help it has been to me in circumstances of difficulty in after-life." "If we are faithful to God in little things, we shall gain experience and strength that will be helpful to us in the more serious trials of life."

3rd – I want to show you, that the blessing of being merciful is that you shall obtain mercy.

We have already seen this truth demonstrated in the first 2 points of this sermon, but there is one more area of showing mercy that I need to mention to you. It is the subject of forgiveness. And so turn with me over to Matthew 18: 21-35. "Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?' "Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." "Therefore the

kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.” “And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.” “But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.” “The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’” “Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.”

“But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’” “So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’” “And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.” “So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.” “Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.’” “Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?” “And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.” “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

Now we will end where we began, with thinking about the fact that God’s mercy, shown to us in granting us grace and forgiving our debts, should lead to our showing mercy to those who have sinned against us, and owe us a debt which they cannot pay back. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. This parable is teaching us that there are some Christians who have been forgiven of their great debt of sin; the obedience they owed to God, and all of the neglects of doing what was right, sometimes a Christian is unwilling to forgive some brother or sister who have sinned against them; a debt which in the eyes of God is much smaller than the debt which He forgave them of.

This man did not show mercy, but took his debtor by the throat and said – Pay me what you owe! I think that it is evident that he had forgotten just how great his debt was, 10,000 talents, and how freely it was forgiven him through Christ. The Master had showed him compassion and had showed him this great mercy in forgiving his debt. He was moved with pity and forgave that servant’s great, great, debt.

Shouldn’t the man who was forgiven, then, have forgiven the one who owed him the smaller debt, a hundred denarii, instead of throwing that fellow servant person into a prison of their own making in their mind and heart? It says that the Master was angry. Did he cast this unforgiving servant into hell? No, it appears that what he did was to delivered him to the hands of the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. What was due to him, except the man’s repenting of an unforgiving spirit? The person who will not forgive his brother from his heart must come to repent of his unforgiving spirit while he yet lives. And if he does forgive from his heart, he shall be himself be forgiven. He who is merciful shall obtain mercy. May we all we all be merciful, seeing what great mercy has been shown to us.

