

Title: What Grace Have Ye?

Text: Luke 6: 27-38

Date: June 25, 2020

Place: SGBC, NJ

Luke 6: 32: For if ye love them which love you, what thank [grace] have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. 33: And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank [grace] have ye? for sinners also do even the same. 34: And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank [grace] have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35: But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. 36: Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Proposition: If we treat all our relationships as a covenant of grace rather than a covenant of works—if we love and do for others, even enemies, not wanting or expecting anything from them in return—we will find love and mercy to be its own greatest reward.

When a child of God considers God's saving mercy toward us, who he loved freely, how can we not be merciful to others? Every sermon we hear deals with the subject of God's saving, justifying mercy to us. We are continually reminded that God's mercies are "new every morning", "his compassions fail not" (Lam 3: 22-24). Every morning, every hour, every day we "sin and come short of the glory of God"—yet God continues to shower us with new, saving, mercy (Rom 3:23). How can we not love freely and rejoice in mercy.

Now, keep in mind these are not the words of just any man. These are the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ. Believer, this is our Lord and Master, our Redeemer and Savior. And these commands are not *to* everyone—**Luke 6: 27: But I say unto you which hear,...**

Our Lord said, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear"(Mt 11:15). Not everybody has ears to hear. The unregenerate—no matter how religious outwardly—cannot hear with spiritual ears. The Pharisee's heard our Lord speak but they judged and condemned him. So this word is not for the self-righteous, ruled by a condemning spirit.

John 8: 43: Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. 44: Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him....45: And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not...47: He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

This is for our Lord's true disciples: born again of the Spirit, to whom he has given a humble, teachable heart. May God make us hear this word this hour.

Also, remember, it is not by doing these things that we are justified before God. We are made righteous only by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ through faith. The only way any believer can even understand, much less obey Christ's word, is by the Spirit of God giving us grace to behold God's justifying mercy toward wretched sinners like us in his Son. It is by beholding Christ's mercy toward God-haters like us by laying down his life and saving us—"the love Christ constraineth us" to be merciful (2 Cor 5: 14). So let's hear Christ's word and God give us grace to hear with spiritual ears.

Luke 6: 27: But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, 28: Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Our Lord commands us to love our enemies. How? "*Do good to them that hate you.*"

Is that being like our heavenly Father, like our Redeemer? We hated God, we were his enemies,

Colossians 1: 21: And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works,..

That is you, believer. Yet God our Father loved his elect freely. He was merciful to us without a cause in us. In love, he did the ultimate good for us.

1 John 4:10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

This is true love—gracious love, merciful love—love without a cause, love expecting nothing in return—we hated Christ, yet Christ did the ultimate good for us

Colossians 1: 21: And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22: In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:...

Romans 5: 8: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9: Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10: For if, when we were

enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

How can any chosen child of God not be merciful and do good, even to them that hate us, when we remember how we hated God and what great mercy God our Father and his Son Christ Jesus showed us?

Christ says, “*Bless them [speak well of] them that curse you and pray for them that despitefully use you [falsely accuse you].*” Someone curses you and accuses you falsely to others. It hurts. It breaks your heart. But what does Christ say do for them? Speak well of them that speak ill of you. I am ashamed of how many times I’ve done the opposite. Do not even tell others what they said about you. Christ says simply speak well of them that speak ill of you. And pray for God to show them mercy. Do it willingly because you really want them to have mercy. What’s my only true motive? Christ!

We cursed Christ and spoke falsely of Christ but did Christ defend himself?

Matthew 27: 12: And when he was [vehemently] accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13: Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14: And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

Why? Christ had taken the place of his people bearing our sin and guilt before God. Therefore, even before man’s kangaroo court, he opened not his mouth in self-defense. But what did he do for his enemies?

Luke 23: 34: Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

He prayed for his people and spoke well of us. How can I not speak well and pray for my enemies who accuse me falsely after receiving such abundant mercy and grace from Christ?

The only one who can show an enemy mercy and give them a new heart and a new spirit is God. You never know they might be one God chose in Christ from before the foundation of the world. God just might give them a new heart. Or God may have sent them to you for your good. Remember, our sovereign God is controlling that enemy. God sent them to you.

2 Samuel 16: 5: [as David went along]...Shimei,...came forth, and cursed still as he came. 6: And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men *were* on his right hand and on his left. 7: And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: [man of the devil] 8: The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou *art taken* in thy mischief, because thou *art* a bloody man.

He accused David of being the cause for all the trouble in his house—and David knew it was true. Don’t you know that was embarrassing to David in front of all his men.

2 Samuel 16: 9: Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. 10: And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? 11: And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now *may this* Benjamite *do it?* let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. 12: It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day.

Remember, God sent the one cursing and accusing me; maybe God sent them to show me my sin to bring me to repentance; maybe God sent them for me to pray for them; maybe God is bringing *them and me* good. Speak well of them, pray for them.

Luke 6: 29: And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other;

Be sure to get this. Christ is not teaching that the government should not prosecute criminals or that a nation should not go to war or that you can’t defend yourself if someone smacks you upside the head with a baseball bat. He is speaking to believers concerning personal insults.

An open-handed smite on the cheek was a great public insult. That is why the guard smote Paul on the cheek for speaking to the high priest. It is why they smote Christ.

Throughout his life they insulted our Lord Jesus calling him a glutton, a drunk, an illegitimate child, a blasphemer, a madman, that he cast out devils by the devil and so on. The Pharisee’s would have heard him preaching this and judged him, saying, “He threw the tables over in the tabernacle in anger, he does not practice what he preaches.” Our Lord Jesus never insulted back but committed his way to the Father who judges righteously. He is our perfection in every one of these commandments.

When a person insults us—pointing out our sin—our reaction from our sin-nature is to insult back. We stumble at times. It is wrong. It is sin. But the believers “walk” is not “isolated steps” but the “overall walk of his whole life.”

But it is one thing when we are overcome now and then and insult back, off the cuff, in the heat of the moment. It is another thing to pre-meditate and carry out malice against another with systematic vengeance from a grudging spirit of resentment.

The one who can go on in that, who God never corrects, is a bastard not a son. God chastens those he loves. The Spirit of God shall turn his child from that malicious spirit and break our hearts. He will not remove all our sins—you will sin, you will do things you regret and others will use it against you—but eventually the Lord will speak through the gospel and command us inwardly to stop defending ourselves and start trusting our sovereign Redeemer to defend us, saying,

Psalm 37: 5: Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass. 6: And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

At the same time, he will move us to love our enemy, do good for them, speak well of them and pray for them.

Luke 6: 29: ...and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. 30: Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

This is when an enemy takes you to court or they steal from you. Believers are never to take one another to court, to law. But if he does, Christ says give him more than he asks or takes.

We can only practice this kind of sacrificial love when we believe that God will take care of us. So remember while we were enemies, our Substitute was willingly made under the law, willingly made sin for us, willingly made a curse for us, he willingly gave everything he had for you and I who believe. Do you think, now that he has made you reconciled friends with God, that he will let you do without because you obeyed his command? No way!

Luke 12:30: For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; [do what Christ tells you to do] and all these things shall be added unto you. 32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Romans 8:32: He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Luke 6: 31: And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

This is the "golden rule"; it is what our Lord has been teaching. Indeed, it is golden. But be sure to get what he is saying.

If I hear this and I think, "Well, I have done this but someone else has not treated me as they ought." Then I just found out the point of contention between me and that person. What is it? I am making my relationship with that person a covenant of works—"I will, if they will." That will always, only result in strife and division. What Christ is declaring here is free grace. But if I do what I do expecting something in return or because they already did something for me that is not grace that is works

Luke 6: 32: For if ye love them which love you, what thank [grace] have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. 33: And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what [grace] have ye? for sinners also do even the same. 34: And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what [grace] have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35: But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great,...

May God help us hear this. Love, grace, mercy, longsuffering, kindness, obedience to God, is its own reward. The reason we get so unhappy in relationships is because we approach it as a covenant of works—"I do, if you do." Then we become disappointed when the other party does not do the works we expect from them or when we think we have done more than they have done. It is so easy to think these things because we are approaching the relationship as fleshly, works-based relationship.

We expect nothing in return when we do things for a little baby—and is there anything that makes us happier? I spent two hours in the toy store looking for a gift for Josiah and was overjoyed to watch him open it.

Our marriage vow is not a covenant of works—"It is not I do, if you do." It is "I do." Why? True love is not a covenant of works but of grace. We become unhappy, critical and contentious when we turn a covenant of grace into a covenant of works.

Christ is saying love even the one you consider an enemy—love expecting nothing in return! Love like a mother loves her child. Imagine if we all loved like that! It would be heaven. The reward of heaven will be that everyone will truly "love" expecting nothing in return. That is the great reward Christ speaks of. But even in this life "love, graciousness, mercy, longsuffering"—all these fruits of the Spirit are their own reward. Listen to the scripture:

Matthew 5:7: Blessed [happy] are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Proverbs 14:21: He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.

Proverbs 11:17: The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.

In our flesh we start thinking we are going to really get that enemy back. So we are really cruel to them. The only thing we do is trouble our own selves.

Love and mercy are its own reward because we prove to be true children of God created in his image.

Luke 6: 35...and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. 36: Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

What does that mean. Be as your father and he will honor it. That is what he is showing next.

Luke 6: 37: Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: 38: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete, withal it shall be measured to you again.

When he speaks of giving here he is speaking of all these things he has been exhorting us to do: doing good to our enemy, not speaking ill of them, praying for them, do not insult back, lend to them, be merciful to them—do it all in abundance. God will honor the faithfulness God puts in his child.

Every earthly religion is a bad-knock off. This is not karma. This is our heavenly Father delighting in his child and honoring obedience. His children will do as he does by his Spirit. Those that are not his children will not because they are under the power of the devil. That is why Christ said,

Matthew 6: 14: For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

All his children shall forgive because God's Spirit makes us willing. All his children do all these things because God's Spirit makes us do so.

Matthew 6: 15: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Those that are not his, will not forgive because they are under the spirit of the devil. Neither will God forgive them.

“For with the same measure that ye mete, withal” your heavenly Father shall *“measure to you again.”*

Psalm 18: 25: With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; 26: With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. 27: For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks.

Every child of God should hear our Savior's words and say, “O how I have failed to obey my Master. But I want to be more merciful, more loving, more forgiving, more like my Redeemer, more like my Everlasting Father!”

Well, God's mercies are new every morning. So tomorrow morning we get a fresh start with God. Let us give our enemies a fresh start in the morning. Give mercy and love and grace in abundance as our heavenly Father gives to us and we will find that doing so is its own reward.

We will be happy when we stop looking for the other person to do for us. We will be content when we simply give because we really want to, because it is who we are by the grace of our God. And our heavenly Father will see to it that we do not do without any good thing. Oh may God give us grace to be children of our Father.

Amen!