



1 Timothy 1:1-2: July 19, 2020

Be Merciful

Pastor JD Farag

Good morning and welcome. On Sunday mornings we're going through the Bible verse by verse and we finished last week 2 Thessalonians. Today we are going to begin a new book, the book of 1 Timothy and today our text today is going to be chapter 1 verses 1 and 2. So you can turn there if you're not there already and those of you that are here if you're able I'll ask you to stand and you can follow along as I read. If not that's alright where you're seated is fine.

The Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy and, by the Holy Spirit in verse 1, by way of an introduction says, "Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus, our hope." Might I add our only hope? Verse 2, "To Timothy, my true son in the faith. Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord."

Let's pray if you would join with me? Lord, thank you so much for your Word and for this portion that we have here before us today here in your Word. Lord, we need now for the Holy Spirit to get our attention and hold our attention so that we can give you our undivided attention so that our minds don't wander or get distracted and in so doing we miss that which you have for us today. Lord, I'm really looking forward to what you have for us in just these 2 verses. In Jesus name. Amen and amen. You can be seated. Thank you.

I want to talk with you today about what I see as the lost art of kindness and compassion of Christians being merciful toward others. Actually, I was thinking about this over the last several months. I've sensed and even said that I wanted to devote an entire sermon to just this one topic. So, this is probably that sermon.

I want to talk about kindness. I want to talk about compassion. I want to talk about being merciful. We live in a day and age where instead of being merciful toward others Christians just fight and argue with others. I have to confess that one of the greatest concerns that I have as a pastor is the infighting among Christians on social media. It is a great concern that I have. It's very disturbing. It's very concerning because you have to understand online the non-Christian is watching the Christian. They're reading those posts.

I think the question that I have to ask and I'll ask it of myself before you and before the Lord. The question I have to ask is, what kind of representation, what kind of witness am I for the Lord, when I post on social media when I get into it? Now don't get me wrong. We contend for the faith. We give to everyone an answer of that hope that lies within us. But there is this component of discernment if I can call it that? That we so desperately need in this day in which we live to be able to discern.

Are they looking for an answer or are they looking for an argument? And I have to confess again that for me, I mean come on, I like a fight just like anybody else. I mean somebody posts a comment on our YouTube channel and oh my goodness. Oh no, you didn't; oh yes, they did. And my sanctification flees from me. It's all in the wrist. I mean there is fire coming off the keyboard! I have to be careful. I don't do that. Don't look at me like that. Some of you are going, oh wow, Pastor, I didn't know. ...

Believe it or not, I am hardly ever on Facebook anymore. There was a time when I used to be on Facebook more often than I care to admit but I pretty much for the most part stay off of it. Twitter, same thing. I'll go to my news feeds to kind of stay up on what is going on. YouTube, we have, of course, a lot of comments posted on YouTube but we don't engage unless it's somebody that is talking about or asking about suicide. Then we're on that very quickly.

Anyway, I only say that to say this that we have to be oh so careful as believers because whether we like it or not, we are advertisement, for lack of a better word, for Jesus Christ and the world is



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watching us. As the Apostle Paul says we are living epistles meaning that we are living letters that people read. They read the letter of our lives and they're asking themselves two questions about our lives and our Christian faith.

The first question they're asking is, is it real? Are you the real deal? Or are you like all the rest? And the second question perhaps more importantly that they're asking is, does it work? And here's the thing. They want you to be the real deal and they want it to work because if it does work and it is real? They need it to be real and they need it to work because they need Jesus. They're looking for hope especially in the world that we're living in today.

So that's what I want to talk about. I just want to talk about kindness, compassion, being merciful. One would think that the Christian has enough to fight with and deal with when it comes to what I call the "Big 3": the world, the devil, and the flesh. You would think that would keep us pretty busy on a daily basis. But then you add fighting with brothers and sisters in Christ to the mix and you have a recipe for disaster, which is exactly by the way what Satan wants.

One of his strategies, successful strategies I might add, is to get the Christian to do his dirty work for him and instead of him so he can just sit back and watch. He wants us to fight with each other and devour one another and destroy one another. It's almost a textbook case of killing two birds with one stone. You'll forgive the reference.

The first thing he's accomplished is he's gotten us to destroy one another and devour one another. And then secondly, he's gotten the non-Christian to say, you see. This is what a Christian looks like and acts like and posts like and is like? No, thank you.

In John's Gospel Chapter 13:34-35, Jesus is speaking and listen to what he says. He says, "A new command I give you, love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another." That's the source, that's the key, that's the secret if you will. It's that love that comes from God that enables us to love one another.

I've shared this story from early on in my marriage, I was so pious, so full of myself, so spiritually proud. Oh, my goodness. I remember one time just saying to my wife, I thought it was so profound, so deep, and I thought she would be so blessed. I said to her this, I said, honey, I love you with a love that can only come from God. I was fully expecting her to just, oh I love you so much! She didn't do that. She looks at me with this look that only a wife can give and she's like, you mean to tell me that you can't... I am so unlovable that you can't muster up enough love in and of yourself for me that the only way you could love me is if God gives you a love for me? And she started crying! I'm like, what?

Wives, I don't know what it is or where it is that you get that from but you have to understand, us guys, we don't get it. That's why we freeze when you say something and we give you that look like a dog when it doesn't quite understand. It's kind of like so confused. Okay, well, how should I answer this? Be merciful to us, wives, please, that's all we ask. But what I was saying to my wife is true. I talk about this to every groom before I do their wedding because it's a pretty tall order if you think about it.

In Ephesians 5, "Husbands love your wives." Paul says three times, "Love your wives." The first time he says, "As Christ loved the church and gave himself for her." I'm out. Then he says, "Husbands love your wives as you already love your own body." I have yet to meet a guy that is not into how he looks as he walks by, right? And then he says it a 3rd time, "Husbands love your wives as you love yourselves."



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Then he only says it, and it is so imbalanced and disproportionate, because he says 3 times: Husbands love your wives; Husbands love your wives; husbands love your wives. Then he says to the wife, "And wives respect your husbands." That's it? Just one time, just like 5 words, "And wives respect your husbands." Really?

So, here's how it works. If a husband loves his wife that way? The way God has wired her and made her and created her, she will, in turn proportionate to that love, respect him. Come on guys let's be honest with ourselves, right? We want our wives to respect us. Respect me, woman. Don't say it like that.

Isn't it interesting that he doesn't say to the husband, "Respect your wife?" No, that's not how he created the husband. This is not a teaching on marriage. I'm going somewhere with this. Just bear with me

What the Apostle Paul is saying to the husband is basically this. There is no way. There is absolutely no way, zero chance. The odds are slim and none and slim left town. So do the math. There's no way you're ever going to be able to love your wife like that.

Well, there is one way. The only way you can love her like that is by way of the love that comes from God. That God gives you, and enables you to have by the Holy Spirit indwelling you, to love her that way. That's the only way.

Sometimes I have fun... Kind of got in trouble one time with one wedding because I kind of put the groom on the spot. They're up there, and all the family and friends, and I said to him after I read Ephesians, "Husbands love your wives." Then I asked him, I said, so how're you going to do that? He looks at me like, what did you just say? I said, how are you going to love her like that? He's going, I don't know...

I said I'm going to tell you how you're going to love her like that. It's going to come by the Holy Spirit. That's the only way you could love her because see the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, that's the fruit. So, Jesus says you're to love one another with that love that I have for you and have given to you.

Then he takes it further verse 35, he says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." That's how they're going to know. Oh, you mean it's not the Christian bumper sticker I have on my car? No. That's not how they're going to know. It's not the size of the Bible that I bring to church? No. it's not how worn my Bible is? No.

That's not the litmus test if you will. The litmus test is how I treat you. How much I love you. How kind I am to you and is that not what comes from the fruit of love? Gentleness, kindness, goodness, meekness, patience, self-control. If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the greatest, if not the greatest needs, that we have as Christians, this would be it.

Namely, that of loving one another, being kind to one another, and being compassionate and merciful toward one another and here's why. We are living in perilous times. By the way we're going to see this in 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy actually. The times we are living in are most unforgiving of unkindness. Not having love one for another; not being merciful towards one another.

I think you would agree that there are serious concerns with what's happening in the world today. If there was ever a time that we needed to be loving, kind, gentle, patient, compassion, merciful, it's now.



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Enter the text before us. Here the Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy and I love this, he affectionately refers to him as his true son in the faith. And to understand why you need look no further than to the account that we have in Acts where Paul first met Timothy when he was there in Lystra. He mentored him. He was like a spiritual father to him. He fathered him in the faith.

Then Paul goes on to tell him, "Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus who is our Savior, our hope, and our Lord." Pretty much covers it all. But here's what's interesting. This is not how Paul usually greeted the other churches as we've seen in our study through the Bible. His typical greeting is, "Grace and peace." One has referred to them as the Siamese twins and it's in that order. It's never peace and grace.

It's always grace and peace and here's why. When you know the grace of God, you'll have the peace of God and the peace from God. Grace and peace. But interesting, he doesn't greet Timothy, his true son in the faith, by saying grace and peace. He says, "Grace, mercy, and peace."

The question becomes one of why does he add mercy to grace and peace? It should be noted that there are only two letters where we see grace, mercy, and peace and they are to Timothy and Titus. We often refer to as the pastoral epistles and the reason is because both Timothy and Titus were pastors. Stay with me. Here's what I'm thinking.

The reason why Paul would say grace, mercy, and peace, is because both Timothy and Titus were pastors, and pastors really need mercy. I know this might sound self-serving when I say this but as a pastor, pastors need mercy more than anyone. It's important to understand that the word for mercy in the original language carries with it this idea of kindness and compassion.

In other words, Paul expresses the mercy of God in the sense of showing concern for someone that's in serious need. He's in effect saying to Timothy, "Grace, mercy, and peace, to you my true son in the faith." Because I know that you have a serious need and I have compassion for you, Timothy, and I know that you need the mercy of God.

I would suggest that pastor or not, there is this need, and again I would venture to say it is the greatest need that we as believers have. It's just to be merciful, compassionate, and kind one to another, just a kind word. Listen I think I can go a month with one kind word, one kind word.

What if I told you that the degree in which we are merciful to one another will determine the mercy shown us. It's true and so too is this true when it comes to forgiveness. The degree in which we forgive will determine the forgiveness that was shown us. Is that not how Jesus taught us to pray?

What we, I think wrongly, refer to as the Lord's Prayer is not really the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's prayer is in Matthew 17. This prayer is really our prayer that Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven hallowed be thy name."

In Matthew 6 verse 12, Jesus says to pray this way, "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." Other translations render it, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us." Matthew Chapter 5 verse 7, the Beatitudes. Isn't it interesting, they're called the "be-attitudes" and not the "do-attitudes"? I know that's kind of weird but these aren't what you do; this is "who you be". I know that's not proper English. Don't email me. We don't "do merciful"; We are to be merciful.

And Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful." Do you want to know why? For they will be shown mercy. Really? So, the blessing that comes upon me for being merciful is that I will be shown mercy. Yeah.



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How about that? Wow, I want to be shown mercy. Be merciful! That's kind of a mean way to say it, let me say try that again. Take 2: Be merciful. Was that better?

Luke Chapter 6, this is an interesting passage, I'm going to read verses 36 through 38. It's oftentimes and you've probably heard it taught in the context of giving financially. I don't see that here. What I see here is this context of being merciful. Listen to what Jesus says, verse 36 Luke 6, "Be merciful just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge and you will not be judged."

Look at the equivalency here; the proportionate response. He says, "Do not condemn and you will not be condemned." And then he turns it the other way. He says, "Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and it will be given to you. A good measure pressed down shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured to you." Did you catch that?

Now if you're anything like me and I suspect that you are this was always quoted from those asking for money. There is somebody that's going to give \$1000 in Jesus name and if you will give it will be given to you pressed down and shaken together and running over. Wait, let me see, this is a different translation. Let me see if there is anything [looking in the Bible]. No, it's not money; Mercy. Because Jesus is saying that the measure you use will be the measure that's used in return.

Somebody sent me, I hope I don't botch it. It's a gift; I have the gift of botching quotes when I don't have them in my notes. But it goes something like this. What if you woke up one day with only the things that you thanked God for yesterday? Oh, my goodness! Boy, that changes your perspective, doesn't? In other words, what if you woke up one morning and you realized that the measure that I have used has been the same exact measure that has been used to me. I am so convicted right now.

I want to move on to Proverbs 11:17. We just finished the book of Proverbs. What an amazing book, yeah? Listen to 11: 17, "The merciful man does good for his own soul but he who is cruel [merciless?] troubles his own flesh." In other words, when you don't show mercy, when you're merciless and cruel? You do so and you do so to your own peril.

Conversely, that's what I love about the contrasting Proverbs as we saw in our study through the book, but you have the contrast between righteous and unrighteous. You have the contrast between good and evil. The contrast between foolishness and wisdom. What's the wisdom? The wisdom is, hey you want to bless your own soul? I do. I want to be blessed. Hey, listen I'm the first person I think about when I get up in the morning. I would like to stand here and tell you that I think about you all the time. That would be dishonest; I don't. I'm the person I think about the most and so are you so don't look at me all spiritual like that.

I want to be blessed. I want good for my own soul. Okay, you do? Well then be merciful. I'm getting better at that, aren't I? Be merciful. Micah 6:8, this is familiar I'm sure to most. We've made songs out of it. We've certainly memorized it and quoted it. It is actually very profound because the prophet is writing and basically saying this is what God has revealed to him that is good and even required.

This is what God's will is for me and my life, "He has shown you, O man what is good and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." That's what he requires. That's what's good. It's good for you and he's shown you this would be good.

In fact, it is not just that is good; it's actually a requirement. This is what the Lord requires of me to do justly [do the right thing as hard as it is, do justly, do what's right] and to love mercy." Now that's interesting, is the implication here that I could actually not love mercy? Oh absolutely. What do you



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mean? Well, we don't really, if you think about it, value mercy. We don't see mercy as rising to the level of being at the top of the list of importance or priority in the eyes of God.

A number of years ago, well, it was actually when I was a young believer. I still want to say a number of years ago, because if I say like 38 years ago, then I feel really old. So, I'm just going to say a number of years ago when I was a new believer, my whole vocabulary changed. It's that regeneration of the Holy Spirit where he just changes you from the inside out and he changed me. Oh, my goodness, he had a lot of changing to do in me.

But one of the things he had to change me was my vocabulary. So, whenever I would respond to somebody, I would say something like, oh gosh. Then I just became uncomfortable because it's just a kind of a different way, maybe a more kosher way or acceptable way in lieu of saying oh, God, which would be inappropriate for what I think would be deemed obvious reasons. So, I just got uncomfortable saying, my gosh, and I started saying, mercy, and it changed everything.

It changed the whole complexion of the conversation, changed me, and I think it had an effect on the person to whom I was saying mercy. Oh mercy, mercy me, mercy, mercy. Because when you're saying that, what you're saying is, oh my goodness. This is a situation; this is a conversation that requires, requires, the mercy of God. It's a valuing of an appreciation for the mercy of God.

James Chapter 2 verse 13, this is interesting. James writes, "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment." Think about this. It's not the judgment of God. It's the kindness of God; It's the mercy of God. If the source from which we draw upon to love comes from him, then wouldn't it stand to reason that the source from which we draw upon for mercy also comes from him?

In other words, like Romans 2:4 says, "It's the kindness of God that leads to repentance." Here's what it doesn't say. It doesn't say it's the judgment of God. It's the law of God that leads to repentance. No. It's the kindness of God. It's the mercy of God. I was thinking about it like this. In fact, I mentioned it in the prophecy update.

You know how the law of God, the 10 Commandments, is likened unto this mirror that shows us, us. Let me say this way. The 10 Commandments were never given for us to keep. There's no way. Come on I mean the first Commandment? I'm busted right there. I'm guilty and then the 2nd Commandment? Guilty; 3rd Commandment? Guilty; 4th Commandment? Guilty.;

5th Commandment, really guilty. You do know what the 5th commandment is right? My parents made me memorize it, "Thou shall honor thy father and thy mother... so that the land upon which the Lord thy God giveth to you might be long and blessed." The only commandment that comes with a blessing and a promise.

The other ones are "Thou shalt not" or you're going to die, basically. All 10 Commandments, guilty. So, what's the point of the law? It's not for us to keep. It is for us to realize there's no way we can keep it. Because when we see ourselves as God sees us in the perfect law, the mirror of his law, and we see how we fall short. Now all of a sudden, we're looking for a savior and that's when the Holy Spirit comes like a tutor, a schoolmaster, takes us by the hand and says, follow me. Where are you taking me? Oh...

You see what's going on here, yeah? I'm toast with a capital "T". Well, that's the bad news and that's the whole point. Because now that you've seen the law of God, you're ready for the mercy of God.



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The schoolmaster takes us by the hand to the Savior where we find grace and mercy. That's the mercy of God. That's what changes us; That's what brings us to repentance.

Here's another marriage illustration since I'm kind of picking on marriages today my wife's not here so I can. Here's a scenario, okay? Husbands, wives. So, you're in this conflict/argument. I made the comment on Thursday night that my wife... We've been married for 32 years this year. We don't argue anymore and the collective gasp, much like the response now, on Thursday night was, you don't?

Is that even possible? Yes, it is but not for the reasons you might think. It's not because I'm such a godly husband. We have such a godly marriage. It's really because we're at the age now where you just have to ask yourself: Do I possess the energy?

I was telling my son this, my son Levi, this and said... Because he's asked, and so have all of our children, you and mom just get along so well. Yeah, because I'm such a... They know better. I just tell them the reason is, is because we just don't have it in us anymore. Really, we're just tired. I mean you look at the situation and you go, do I do want... Nah, it's okay honey. It's okay. That's it. If you don't put another log on that fire, then guess what? It goes out! Which is also in the Proverbs by the way.

Here's our illustration, our marriage illustration. You're in a, well pastors, we call it "intense fellowship" as one said. You might call it an argument; You're not. You're having a marital argument. A conflict, okay? And you're standing your ground. Oh yeah? Me? What about you? That's the pot calling the kettle black. And I mean that's it, man... Forget log, just go to a gas pump and just....

What if, stay with me. What if instead of saying, "Me? What about you!" You said to your wife, husband because you're the leader, right? We want to be the leader in our home. Why don't you take the lead when it comes to conflict? Take the higher road.

So, what if instead of saying, "Me, what about you?" You were to say, honey, you're right. I'm sorry. Shame on me. Will you forgive me? Her response might be something like what you did you do with my husband? Who are you? What do you want, right? How out of character is that? It shouldn't be.

That's called mercy. That's called kindness. It's called humility, humility. Colossians Chapter 3 verses 12 through 14 Paul is writing and he says, "Therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on..." This in some translations is "clothe yourself".

In other words, when you put on your clothes in the morning, here's the clothing, the articles of clothing, using this metaphor in the spiritual realm. These are the spiritual articles of clothing to put on. Are you ready? We're going to get dressed up, man. We're going to get really dressed up. We're talking "to the nines", whatever that means; I don't know what it means. Dressed to the nines, to the hilt man, we're going to get dressed in our finest nicest clothes spiritually.

Do you know what they are? Tender mercies, [not just mercy, tender mercy] kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering. Do you know what long-suffering means? Oh, it means suffering-long. I know that's deeply profound but yeah, I looked it up in the original. What does long-suffering mean? It means to suffer long. I'll just let the Holy Spirit deal with you on that one.

Verse 13, here it is, "Bearing with one another and forgiving one another. If anyone has a complaint against another..." Post on social media and talk stink about them. No, it doesn't say that. Call up, you know who, sister so and so. Can you believe...? ... No! Yes! No way! Way! Ho! And then they call up somebody and then the next thing you know, I mean the person isn't even saved anymore.



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"Forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another even as Christ forgave you so you also must do." Must do! This is not a suggestion. This is a requirement again. This is what we are to do! "But [and here it is in verse 14] above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfection."

If you want to take it further you can just picture in your mind's eye wearing the nicest clothes you have in your wardrobe and the final article of clothing, I mean, it just makes the whole thing. It matches; It ties together. I mean you look marvelous: It's love. It's love. The bond of perfection.

Think of when the world watches us, do you know what they should say and see? They should say and see what was said and seen of the early church, by the non-Christians, and the saying was, "My, how they love one another." Love covers a multitude of sins. Being kind, just a kind word. Would you agree with me that if someone were to just be kind and merciful and considerate even, just being considerate?

Do you know what being considerate is? It's being considerate. Consider someone else. We are to think more highly, not of ourselves, but others. Here's the thing. Never think for a moment it's like God saying, you need to do this or else! Or you need to do this because I'm gone and I said so! No.

It's more like this. It's more like, I love you so much and I can't stand to see you suffer needlessly, unnecessarily. So, I'm giving you this charge, this command, so that it will be good for you. It will be good for you. One has referred to the 10 Commandments as the Tender Commandments. Such that it's God saying don't have any other gods before me because there are no gods at all and they will never be there for you. They are not God; I am, your God.

Thou shall not commit adultery. Not because I'm God and I said so. No. I love you so much and I can't stand to see what would happen to you if you were to do this. Thou shalt not commit murder. Not kill by the way it's murder. Why? Because I can't stand to see anyone who is haunted even hunted for the rest of their life, because of that act of murder. Thou shalt not covet. Why? Because it will "eat your lunch". It will eat you up from the inside out and I'm trying to protect you. I love you so much.

Do you know why God hates divorce? I think we talked about this, was it last week? I don't remember; it's all a blur. My daughter said to me once, what did you teach on? It's like ... I forgot; It was just last week. I know it's getting bad. Lord, come quickly.

Do you know why God hates divorce? Because of what divorce does to the divorced and certainly to the children. It's not that God hates the divorced. No, he hates divorce because he can't stand to see what divorce does to the divorced. Think of it as an earthly parent with your children, grandchildren.

In the Proverbs, we read where grandchildren are like the "cat's meow". I keep using these idioms, metaphors, whatever they're called having no idea where they came from. So, I hope that's not a bad thing to say it like that but we haven't quite got there yet. I'm hoping the Lord comes back before

But I've heard that grandchildren are like, man, they're so great. And they bring so much joy and the reason is that you can give them back to your kids after. I haven't tasted from that cup yet but should the Lord tarry I am looking forward to that because I think it's just the... Talk about the justice of God? I can say told you so.

Reminds me of when I was a young boy, my mom with her thick accent, would say to me, high-pitched tone, Wahiba, you just wait till you have children of your own. I'm like, yeah, yeah whatever



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and then I did. Oh, my goodness. So, what do we do? I say the same things to my kids. You just wait till you have your own kids and I'm going to be there too to remind you. See? I told you.

You know how are we as earthly parents with our children. Won't we do everything and stop at nothing to protect them from needless pain and suffering if it's in our power to do so? Why? Because we love them so much. Don't do this and here's why. It's not because I'm your parent and I told you so. Because that's what we do, right, as parents?

Because our kids will say when they're young, why? Because I told you so that's why. That's not a good answer. What is the why behind the what? Now I'm not dismissing parental God-given authority. But sometimes that's where the instruction comes when we train up our child in the way that they should go. Proverbs 22:6 and the fear in the admonition of the Lord.

Do you know the word, discipline, comes from disciple to train, discipline, disciple train up? Sometimes I think we miss those teachable moments as they are called and again this isn't a teaching on parenting or marriage for that matter. But sometimes you just need to sit down and say here's the why behind the what.

This is something with my daughter especially she's 13 now. Boy, I'm just praying the Lord comes before. I have an application, by the way, if the Lord tarries. Have you heard about this application to "Date My Daughter"? It's like, 50 pages long. I have them in a fill-able PDF file so they can do it online. But one of the questions is: Do you like hunting? Are you afraid of guns? Anyway, so she's going to have to give any boy this application when she's 30. Anyway, so I digress.

But how much do we as earthly parents want to protect our children because of our love for our children? And how much more does our heavenly Father. You know when your children are young and they fight? Man, when my boys, Elias and Levi, were young? Man, they used to fight all the time. I remember sometimes I would just like pray, Jesus, make it stop. It's killing me; I can't stand it. And my reaction was this when I was younger and had energy again, right? I'd get in the mix and... you're grounded for the rest of your childhood.

Now, it's more like I just cry. They look at me like, look what we did to Babba and they stop. I'm like, it worked! I wish I would have thought of this years ago. It's just heartbreaking. Why? Because I love them so much and they're going at each other and fighting with each other. It just breaks my heart.

How much more the heart of God when his children... You do know we are brothers and sisters in Christ? Have you ever thought of it like this? We're siblings in Christ. Why do you say it like that? Because there is a thing called, "sibling rivalry" and we fight as siblings as brothers and sisters in Christ.

As I was preparing my heart for this teaching, I thought Lord, this is one of those teachings that I just feel so inadequate because it is such an important principle and truth and how apropos for such a time as this. Brothers and sisters, I'm your brother in Christ; See me that way. I mean I know you see me as your pastor but see me as your brother in Christ. I just would implore you to be merciful one to another.

Just love one another, please I want to close with an illustration. Okay, I first heard this like 25 years ago, now? It's been a long time. I think it says it best; You may have heard different versions of it. There are extended versions of it but it basically goes like this.



1 Timothy 1:1-2: July 19, 2020

Be Merciful

Pastor JD Farag

I was walking across the bridge recently and I saw this guy who looked like he was ready to jump off. So, I thought I'd try to stall him until the authorities showed up. Don't jump, I said. Why not? He said. Nobody loves me. God loves you! I said. You believe in God, don't you? Yes, I believe in God, he said. Good, I said. Are you a Christian or Jewish? Christian, he said. Me too, I said. Protestant or Catholic? Protestant, he said. Me too. Are you Episcopalian or Baptist? Baptist. Wow! Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord? Baptist Church of God. Me too! Are you original Baptist Church of God or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God? Reformed Baptist Church of God. Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God Reformation of 1879 or Reformed Baptist Church of God Reformation of 1915? He said, Reformed Baptist Church of God Reformation of 1915. I said, heretic and I pushed him over.

Oh, we laugh, yeah? But is that not how it is? I'm sorry to end on that note but I think you got the point. That's how we treat each other. Be merciful.

Why don't you stand and we'll pray? Thank you, Lord. Humor is good but at the same time, this is a serious truth that requires a sobering response. Lord, I just pray that and I include myself in this that we would all allow you unfettered access to our hearts, to search our hearts, to see if there be anything at all that is keeping us from knowing you, hearing you, loving you.

Lord, if there's something that you would like to remove that has taken up residence in our hearts, will you, as only you can, and you're always so gentle, will you just surgically remove it with the instrument of your Word? Because we don't want anything that would grieve your heart, oh God.

Lord, thank you. I pray that the Holy Spirit will take it from here in all of our lives.

In Jesus' name. Amen.