

Sermon Title: Deuteronomy: Faithfulness and Fellowship, Part XXI 11.12.2023

Themes: Mercy and patience toward the difficult others in your life. Video devotionals are at christforlife.life. trinitycg.org has live-streaming and sermon notes.

Weekly Question: Are you merciful?

Sermon Points:

1. The prodigal. God blesses the merciful. As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew 5:7 The merciful are blessed, for they will be shown mercy.**

Let's begin with one of the most memorable acts of mercy recorded in the Bible. The parable of the lost son in **Luke 15:11–32**. Who is *your* prodigal?

2. The killer. Mercy has been a hallmark of God's character since the very beginning. He spared murderous Cain's life in **Genesis 4:9–16**. Mercy does not mean there are no ramifications for our actions. Cain still suffered the consequences of his vile deed, but the Lord gives us an opportunity to repent. **2 Peter 3:9 The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.**

3. The other. One of the ways we see the mercy of God on full display is in the treatment of those who made serious mistakes but were innocent of malicious intent. Rather than leaving it to chance that their life would be spared, the Lord in His mercy provided them with cities of refuge. **Deuteronomy 19:4–7**.

Likewise, other than the cities the Lord set apart for destruction, Israel was to show mercy when they conquered other nations. **Deuteronomy 20:10–11** ¹⁰ “**When you approach a city to fight against it, you must make an offer of peace.** ¹¹ **If it accepts your offer of peace and opens its gates to you, all the people found in it will become forced laborers for you and serve you.**

Why be merciful? 1. *It is beneficial.* What we sow, we reap. If we sow mercy we often receive mercy. 2. *It is helpful.* The people we are merciful toward may one day bless others. 3. *It is ordained.* God wants us to show mercy, especially when we have the absolute power *not* to be merciful (as when Israel was conquering other nations).

Who is *your* prodigal? Will you show them mercy today?

Invitation: Lord, give me a heart of mercy, especially for that person in my life with whom I really need an extra measure of patience.