

Paradox - a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that when investigated or explained may prove to be well founded or true.

Matthew 5:7 (NASB 2020) *“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.”*

Matthew 18:23-35 (NASB 2020) ²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴And when he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. ²⁵But since he did not have the means to repay, his master commanded that he be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment be made. ²⁶So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.’ ²⁷And the master of that slave felt compassion, and he released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe!’ ²⁹So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you.’ ³⁰But he was unwilling, and went and threw him in prison until he would pay back what was owed. ³¹So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their master all that had happened. ³²Then summoning him, his master said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And his master, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he would repay all that was owed him. ³⁵My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.”

Matthew 5:7 (NLT) - God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Matthew 5:7 (ESV) - Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.

John 2:17 (NLT) - There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when He judges you.

**Your heart can mature in extending mercy to others by intentionally minding these
“Manners of Mercy”:**

Manner #1 – Always begin by reviewing God’s Mercy toward you.

Romans 12:1-2 (NASB 2020) ¹Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Luke 7:47 (NASB 2020) (Jesus is talking to Simon the Pharisee) ⁴⁷For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but the one who is forgiven little, loves little.”

Manner #2 – Do your best to encounter others through God’s Mercy.

Hebrews 4:15-16 (NASB 2020) ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things just as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Therefore let’s approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of our need.

Hebrews 2:17-18 (NASB 2020) ¹⁷Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brothers so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

What would it look like if we practiced “Manners of Mercy” in all areas of our lives?

Mercy at Home

- At home, we tend to know each other’s faults very well. Resist the temptation to pile on a mistake but extend

mercy by believing the best about each other.

- Be quick to listen and slow to anger (**James 1:19-20**).

Mercy at Church

- Always enter church reviewing God's mercy toward you before you consider other people.
- Don't sweat the small stuff. Keep the big perspective. Most of your offenses are over little things.

Mercy at School

- Try to see people who give you a hard time as "*captives of the enemy*" instead of enemies themselves.
- Be quick to listen and slow to anger (**James 1:19-20**).

Mercy at the Workplace

- Take some time to get to know your coworker's life story so you can have increased mercy regarding their shortcomings.
- Resist the temptation to be easily offended. Ask questions before rushing into judgement.

For Small Group Discussion

1. In addition to the Gospel Message of Jesus, what is the most merciful act that you have ever heard of between people?
2. So far we have looked at five of the Attitudes in the Beatitudes. In review, which ones have left the deepest impression on you so far and why?
3. In your own words, define what *Mercy* is.
4. Using the parable of the *Unforgiving Slave* (**Matthew 18:21-35**) what do you think is the main point that Jesus was driving at?
5. What is the difference between *Mercy* and *Forgiveness*?
6. Can you think of someone who has extended mercy to you? How did it affect you? Can you think of someone you wish would extend some mercy to you? Why?
7. Who is someone to whom you have extended mercy? Is there someone to whom you need to extend mercy?