



St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)

Worship Address : Cerritos High School Auditorium
12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703
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November 29, 2009

Theme: Blessed Are The Merciful...

Text: Matthew 5:7

Our beatitude for today is this: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." What does mercy mean really? We want to begin by saying that mercy comes from God first. It refers to the loving and faithful treatment that we can expect from God. We expect it not because we deserve it, but because He has promised to show mercy to those who believe. King David wrote in Psalm 145: "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy." Before we can be truly merciful, we must receive God's mercy through Christ's forgiveness.

When we receive God's mercy, God expects us to show that mercy to others. Mercy is love in action. What does that look like? We can make at least four observations about what mercy looks like in action: (1) It means that I will be longsuffering with those who are different than I am. Longsuffering is one of the traits that the apostle Paul lists as being the fruit of the Spirit. It means that I will, with God's help, be slow to anger with those around me. (2) It means that I will forgive those who have fallen or who have offended me. Forgiveness is an essential mark of mercy. The Bible says that we must forgive others just as God has forgiven us. (3) It means that we will help those who are hurting. This is what Jesus did. Jesus had a powerful compassion for those who were hurting both spiritually and physically. But he did not only feel sorry for people, he acted to help them. Mercy is love in action. (4) Finally, it means, that we will love our enemies by doing good to them. Jesus asked his disciples, "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that." Jesus said, "...Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." These are four marks of mercy.

Being a merciful person is not an easy thing to do. Therefore, we need strong motivation to be merciful. I want to mention three motivations to be merciful: (1) First, as believers, we must be merciful to others because God has been merciful to us. This is a simple principle and a powerful motivation. (2) Second, we must be merciful because we are going to need more mercy in the future. For this reason I should consistently show mercy to others. (3) Third, I should be merciful so that I will receive God's blessing. Merciless people are miserable people. Proverbs says that if I am merciless I hurt myself: "A kind man benefits himself, but a cruel man brings trouble on himself."

So how do we become merciful people? The first step is to receive God's mercy for ourselves. If we do not receive God's mercy and forgiveness for ourselves, we will not be able to truly give it to others. We must recognize and believe that God has shown us His mercy through his forgiveness and in many other ways. If we still do not recognize that



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we live in a state of forgiveness, we need to immerse ourselves in Scripture to claim the promises that God has made to us. A second step might be to begin looking at others through Jesus' eyes. Jesus had a ministry of mercy. He lifted up the lonely. He loved the unlovely. He accepted the rejected. He helped the helpless. In fact, Jesus intentionally sought out these people so that He could help them. We must look through the eyes of Jesus to see those in our lives who are in need of mercy. Make it your project to be merciful this week and be blessed!