

“THE KEYS TO A BLESSED LIFE”

Big Idea . . . Part 6: Blessed are the MERCIFUL

Matt. 5:7

INTRO: Examining opening verses to SOM, the Beatitudes. They are distinguishing MARKS of a true Christian. They are progressive in order: 1st 3 are *roots* (vv.3-5 more vertical) . . . leads to a *life* pursuing righteousness (v.6) . . . *fruit* follows (vv. 7-9). Beatitudes 5-7 more horizontal in how we treat others. What are the evidences of righteousness?

TODAY: 1st Fruit #5 Beatitude “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (5:7) Ours is an increasingly harsh and intolerant society—so much animosity . . . much like the culture in Jesus’ day. As Christians called to make a difference, we must be better by NOT only NOT being like that, but being very opposite and show mercy.

ILL: My weakest, next to meek (Linda . . .)

I. MERCY DEFINED

- A. Familiar story Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37) illustrates and helps define what it means. More than pity or sympathy.
- B. Two components: tenderness of heart/compassion (v.33) and love in action (v.34). Often giving others what they do not deserve. Mercy vs. grace, justice . . .
- C. *Mercy is a tender heart that cares and acts for the good of others.* It is compassion in action.

II. MERCY DEMANDED Why? Reasons:

- A. God is Merciful – If you only had one word to describe the character of God, what is it? Exo. 34:6 (7 times); Psalms 103:1-5, 8-13. He is “rich in mercy” (Eph. 2:4-5).
- B. Jesus, too – look at His ministry . . . Ex: Peter, Thomas (Heb 2:17; 4:15-16).
He has been so merciful to each of us (Ex: Matt 18:21-35).
- C. Called to be Merciful (Micah 6:8; Hosea 6:6 (Jesus quotes 2 times) Mercy over sacrifice (Worship, service) – see Matt. 9:13.
- D. Will need it in the future.

III. MERCY PRACTICED

How/Where can I live out being merciful? Different circumstances where we can . . . 7 opportunities where we can practice mercy.

- A. Toward meeting MATERIAL NEEDS (1 Jn. 3:17-18) Ex: Good Samaritan. He didn’t get hung up on the cause, or complain that society didn’t help; he cared and acted (Pro. 3:27; Rom. 12:8 with joy). Our current mission project . . .
- B. Toward all in SPIRITUAL STRUGGLES (Jude 22). All face them. Be merciful not judgmental.
- C. Toward all who HURT YOU or OFFEND you (Lk. 6:35-36; 1 Tim. 1:12-16; 1 Pet. 4:8). Love covers the sins of others (esp. against us) – not crimes – Hard hearts make big deals of little failures and offenses. God doesn’t treat us as our sin’s deserve and we shouldn’t either (Eph. 4:32). Ex-Joseph (God tests us)
- D. In NOT GOSSIPING? (Ph. 4:8) Don’t speak lies or give unproven reports (Satan is a subtle liar). Get the facts. Never slander others (better to steal their stuff than ruin their name)
- E. In relation to UNREASONABLE EXPECTATIONS (both of self and others). We are all frail and fallen (Psalms 103:14).
- F. By VALUING RELATIONSHIPS over RULES. Always choose love over law (Matt. 12:1-8)
- G. Toward the LOST (Jude 23). Look at Jesus as He wept over the people (Lk. 19:41).

IV. MERCY RESULTS? “. . . for they shall obtain mercy.”

- A. We will obtain mercy from others as we offer it (usually). James 2:13; Matt. 6:12, 14; Psalms 18:25. Mercy can’t happen to us until it happens *through* us.
- B. We help ourselves when we are merciful (Pro. 11:17)
- C. We are most like God!

CONC: God condemns mercilessness (Psalms 109:14-16) – enslaves and fosters poisonous emotions: resentment, hatred, bitterness, anger, etc. Showing mercy sets us free. Go back to how we can actually practice mercy this week. Read all 7 and put names in . . . This is our calling as children of God and imitators of Christ. The world is waiting. God help us be there!