

Become Merciful Just as Your Father Is Merciful

by Ian Robson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of becoming merciful as God is merciful, starting from our homes and extending to our communities.

Duration: 56:13

Scripture: Ephesians 2:4

Topics: "Gods Mercy", "Christian Compassion"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of God's mercy, highlighting how God's mercy is slow to anger, full of compassion, and willing to forgive. It stresses the need for believers to be merciful to others, not just in forgiveness but also in showing compassion and lifting others up. The message encourages cheerful and wholehearted mercy, reflecting God's character, and calls for a response of offering oneself as a living sacrifice in gratitude for God's mercy.

Transcript

I'm very happy to be back with you. There's no place like home and home is where the heart is and this is where my heart has been. So we thank God for family and we thank God for the family of God and really glad to be back with you, particularly in this anniversary month that we are celebrating this month, August, as we enter our 42nd year.

And I've been thinking much, not just of today, but something and God has been working in my own heart and speaking to my own heart. Well, the richness of God's mercy towards us and that's what I want to share with you this morning. And you wonder what this plaque is doing up here.

Actually it should be back there. We've been trying to get it up for the last few months. So many things happening here.

We never succeeded. I hope we can do it this week. Just to remind ourselves that, see all these plaques here, what you see on the wall, they were verses that Brother Zach chose very prayerfully and carefully before we built the old hall in 1981, when we moved in there.

I think it was October 1981. And we took such care, both of us, personally with the carpenter, he was very good in seeing that everything was aligned. That's why if you see, everything is so perfect, because he

likes to do everything to perfection, like I do.

And this verse here, he said, I want this up right in front. And this was in the old church, you know, behind the pulpit. And to remind us, he was saying, as we pursue holiness, as we pursue an overcoming life, as we pursue victory over sin, and most people, if you look at church history, end up being hard and legalistic and unmerciful.

And we want to steer clear, he said, from that. So we want to remind ourselves what it says here. Be merciful to others, just as God has been merciful to you or to us.

And that has been on my heart, not just for today, but these last few weeks that I've been away, that God has been speaking so much to me about being merciful. And like the proverb says, charity begins at home, we could also say mercy begins in the home. Very easily when we say, be merciful to others, we think of the brothers and sisters.

But if we think of the one living closest to us, the one who lies in our bosom, our partner, or those we live with, if you don't have a partner, those you live with, 24 by 7, that's where we need mercy. I know that's where God has been working in my own heart. And if we begin there, we can be merciful to others, the brothers and sisters in the church.

But if we don't begin there and we only think of others, then we'll have something that is artificial and superficial. And so that's on my heart this morning. And in Luke chapter 6 verse 36, you know, some of these verses where Zach has expanded and paraphrased, it may not be exactly as it is there.

This is one of them, which is expanded and a little paraphrased. It's Luke 6 36. Jesus also said, you know, blessed are the merciful, in Matthew chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount, for they shall receive mercy.

In Luke chapter 6 verse 36, Jesus said, and I like to read it, which is in the margin. If you have a margin in your Bible, it's very encouraging. Because be merciful, you know, you can think that it can be a big weight.

But if you look at your margin, it says become. I hope you're encouraged by that. Encourage me.

Become merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Because we don't suddenly become merciful. We get on that path, but we become merciful as we see, as we will see this morning, how we can become merciful.

Every morning, and like we just said, that memory verse, we remind ourselves of God's mercies, which are new every morning. I'm reminded every morning. I thank Him and I say to Him, Lord, there are new mercies today for me, new mercies every morning for the day ahead.

His mercies are new every morning and they are fresh every morning. Great indeed is His faithfulness. I hope all of us here could say that, that God has been merciful to me.

It's new every morning and great indeed has been His faithfulness. I know I could say that. Let's look back on 41 years, that God has indeed been tremendously merciful to me.

I wish that the progress in me becoming more merciful could have been better, but I believe it will get better because like we read here, become merciful, just as your Father is merciful. The first thing that we have to recognize, you know, if you turn to Ephesians chapter 1, I want you to look at that word in Ephesians chapter 1, first verse 17. What's on my heart is Ephesians chapter 2, but you cannot read Ephesians chapter 2, what it says there from 1 to 8 without going to Ephesians 1 17, where Paul says, he

prays, he says that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

I pray that the eyes of your heart, he says, may be enlightened so that you know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might, which He brought about in Christ. And he goes on to say then that Jesus was raised from the dead and seated at the right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority, and all things have been put in subjection under His feet, and He has been given as head of the church.

He has given Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. And it's an unfortunate chapter division there, and you were dead in your trespasses and sins. He did all this.

And He says, you were dead in your trespasses and sins, and which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them, we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind by nature, children of wrath, even as the rest. But, thank God for that but, but God being rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgression, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved and raised us up with Him, seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come, He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a may boast. What a height God has lifted us to.

When you see, He didn't just lift Jesus then, seated Him at the right hand, but when you and I were dead, and I think back, not just 41 years, I think back of nearly 46 years, 48 years, 1967 I came to know the Lord. I was dead in my trespasses and sins, but God has made me alive. God was rich in mercy to me, and all of you, you can think back to that day when you met with God, or God met with you and raised you.

He has raised us up, seated us with Jesus in the heavenly places. By grace, you have been saved. How thankful we must be to God for such mercy, my brothers and sisters, and particularly as we celebrate 41 years as a church, for all that God has been to us, done for us.

We must really be thankful, and like I was saying, remind ourselves, apart from overcoming sin, apart from seeking after victory, apart from seeking to love one another as Jesus loved us, and all this, let us never forget that God has been merciful. He's been rich in mercy towards us, not just merciful, rich in mercy. He's rich in so many things, rich in grace, rich in goodness, so many things, rich in kindness like we read here just now, but rich in mercy, and you and I have received that mercy.

It's interesting to see, you know, the first mention of mercy in the New Testament, and the last mention, I want you to look at it, Exodus chapter 25. That's where we come across the first mention of the word mercy, Exodus 25, and verse 17. You know, you won't read all of it.

God told Moses to make a mercy seat of pure gold, and he gave him all the specifications, and two cherubim of pure gold, and he says the cherubim had to be on either end of the mercy seat, with their wings pointing to heaven, but their faces were to be towards the mercy seat. You read that there, and you

should put the mercy seat, verse 21, on top of the ark. In the ark, you shall put the testimony which I shall give to you.

The ark contained the law of commandments. You know, the commandments that God gave Moses, and that was kept in the ark, but on top of the ark. See the significance, on top of the ark, Moses was to put the mercy seat, and this is the word I want you to look at.

He says there, verse 22, there I will meet with you, not inside the ark, but in the mercy seat, on top of the ark, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim, which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you, all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel, and if we can look at everything, all the commandments God has given us, and if we can really meet God here, my brothers and sisters, this is the only place, by the way, that God says he'll meet with us, and that mercy seat, we heard long ago, I remember sharing this word in one meeting, should be in your heart and my heart. There, I will meet with you. There, I will speak to you.

If we don't have that mercy seat, God will not meet with us. He cannot speak to us. Whatever we think, that God is meeting with us, and that God is speaking to us, must be some other voice, but if you and I have that mercy seat in our hearts, apart from all the commandments that we want to obey and keep, that God will meet with us in the mercy seat, and he'll speak to us from there.

That's the first mention. If you turn back now, turn to the last mention in Jude, three times. Then when we read things like this, it's something that the Holy Spirit is wanting to impress something on our hearts.

In Jude, verse 21, he says there, before that, he talks about many things. Jude wrote, he says he wanted to write things to contend for the faith, and then he won't give certain warnings there. He reminds us for the last time, there'll be mockers following after their own ungodly lusts.

Verse 18, the people who cause divisions in the church, in the homes, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit, but you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. We have to wait anxiously. I don't think I'm going to make it in a positive way.

I wait anxiously for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ to attain to eternal life. Paul himself said, I've not come there yet. I have not attained to the resurrection of the dead, but I look forward to it.

I press on. That's what it means to look anxiously for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And then it says, not just for ourselves, have mercy on some.

Verse 22, who are doubting and save others, snatching them out of the fire, and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh. Three times the word mercy is mentioned there, in relation to ourselves and relation to others. And that we don't just think of mercy to ourselves, we have to save others.

We have to snatch them out of the fire, it says. Some we have to have mercy with fear, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, that we don't get contaminated by their sin. And if we do that, verse 24, in him was able to keep you from stumbling and make you stand in the presence of his glory, blameless with great joy.

You see the connection there? God meets with us, my brothers and sisters, when we are merciful, when we have a mercy seat in our hearts, and God speaks to us there. And we are merciful, like I said to those who live with us, 24 by 7, we are becoming merciful. I hope that's happening.

That's why I keep asking God, when I see sometimes how unmerciful I can be, how demanding I can be, and I cry out to God, and sometimes even weep. I'm so hard, so unmerciful, but I thank God that I could say, and I think those who live with me could say, and have said, that is not the same. That's how it must be, my brothers and sisters.

We don't look for testimony from the brothers and sisters, doesn't mean a thing. It's those who live with us who can say, dad is not the same, mom is not the same. We're becoming merciful.

That is the message, that is what right in the very beginning, we wanted to remind ourselves, and I wish that we remind ourselves, as we have already crossed one generation, we have entered into another as we enter the 42nd year, and I want to say that we can never know true grace, if we have not known and showed mercy to others. The mercy seat in the old covenant becomes a throne of grace in the new covenant. Hebrews chapter 4, the last verse, let us come with boldness, with confidence to the throne of grace, that we can receive mercy.

We still need mercy, but we can also find grace to help us in our time of need. That's the difference. They didn't have it in the old covenant.

Mercy, they can get plenty. They repented and confessed. God was willing so many times.

You look at the decline many times, right towards the end, the book of Malachi. God is trying to woo his people back to him, but they kept questioning him. God is merciful, but they prostituted God's mercy.

In the new covenant, it doesn't mean that now everything is on my plate. I receive mercy. I still need to go to the throne of grace.

There God meets with me. I can receive mercy and find grace to help in my time of need. I don't need to go on in this merry-go-round, asking all the time mercy for the same sin.

Maybe a few times, thousand times also, but I can get grace to help in my time of need. That is why Jesus had to tell the Pharisees, go and learn what this means. Matthew chapter 9 verse 11 to 13, go and learn what this means.

When he ate with tax collectors and sinners and they were criticizing him, why is your teacher eating with tax collectors and sinners? He says, go and learn what this means. I desire compassion and not a sacrifice. Again in Matthew chapter 12, when they were picking at the disciples because they were plucking the grains of wheat because they were hungry and he had to rebuke them.

He said, you don't remember what David did when he was hungry? How the priests gave to him the bread which only the priests were supposed to eat? He says, if you had known what this means, earlier he said, go and learn what this means. I desire compassion and not a sacrifice. And now he says, if you had known what this means, I desire compassion and not a sacrifice, you would not condemn the innocent.

And that's something that we need to learn, my brothers and sisters, in our early in life. When we come and meet with God for the first time at the mercy seat and repent of our sins and by faith we believe that

Jesus took our place on the cross and his blood cleanses us from all sin. That's the first encounter we have of God.

We meet him there, he meets us there and he speaks to us there. It should never end there. I should not look back 48 years.

I must always be going back. That mercy seat is in my heart now. I don't come on Sunday, the mercy seat is not here.

Under the old covenant, it was in the temple and only the priest could enter it. But now you and I can enter in because Jesus has rent the veil. We can enter into the holy place.

So that holy place can be in my heart and God meets with me and speaks to me there. I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, is there a mercy seat in your heart since you've come to CFC? Since you've come to know the truth? Or you know everything, you know the doctrine, you can even teach it and preach it to others. But how is it? Are we merciful to those who live with us? This is the only place God says that he will meet with us through the blood of Jesus.

He met with a high priest who went in once a year with blood. It was not without blood. If he didn't go on with blood or if something was wrong, he would die there.

But Jesus has rent the veil for us. You and I can go right into the holy place, the most holy place and meet with God. Not once a year, but 365 days, 24 by 7, we can meet with God and he will speak to us.

I thank God for that. We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus. It's by the blood of Jesus, not by how many sins I have victory over, how many meetings I attend, how much of my Bible I know, how much time I spend in prayer.

It's by the blood of Jesus I enter the holy place by a new and living way which he made for us the veil that is his flesh. So I hope and pray that God will impress that on our hearts because this is where God meets with us, this is where God speaks with us. And the second thing I want you to see is that if we always live here, not just once a year or once a week or you know in the morning when I have my quiet time, if you have a quiet time, whatever you call it, or at the night before you go to bed, but 24 by 7, if I live here, I will become like our Father in heaven.

I said this word means become merciful. Jesus said, become merciful just as your Father is merciful. How do we become merciful? You don't have to look far.

If you look at Luke chapter 6, Luke chapter 6 and all the things mentioned there, you don't have time to read them all, but Luke chapter 6 and verse 36, I want to focus your attention. Before that, treat others, 31, the same way you want them to treat you. I want to know how to become merciful.

All that is written there. Before that, you know Jesus says many things. Love your enemies, verse 27, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, curse you, pray for those who mistreat you, and so on.

Give to everyone who asks of you. Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

Many things there. He says in verse 35, love your enemies, do good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great and you will be sons of the Most High, for he himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.

Then he says, become merciful just as your Father is merciful. So if I want others to be good to me, treat them. Jesus said treat them the same way you want them to treat you.

You want them to be good, be good to them. You don't want them to speak evil of you, don't speak evil of them. You want them to be kind, you be kind.

You want them to love you. People say, you know, nobody loves me, I don't, you know, nobody knows what I'm going through. I should know what others are going through.

I should love others. Treat others the same way that you want them to treat you, and then you will become merciful. That is the golden rule, my brothers and sisters.

Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. Bring it down, like I said, to the home. I treat my wife the same way I want her to treat me.

Treat your husband the same way you want your husband to treat you. Treat your children the same way you want them to treat you. Somebody was saying, my wife doesn't submit to me.

She's a bad example. I had to write to this person and say, you love her. You know, we can say, no, she's not submitting to me, but what about the rest of it? What does Peter say? Many things that he says to husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, and love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

What about that? So if I do my part, I will not have to force or impose submission on her. Automatically, she'll respect me and submit. It is so simple, my brothers and sisters.

It's we who make things complicated. So we can learn that. I trust we've been learning it.

If you've been coming here to CFC, even if it's just for a couple of months, that you learn to treat others the way you want them to treat you. You want others to care for you, you care for them. That is how we build fellowship.

That is how we can contribute to the spirit in the church. And Jesus has much to say in Luke chapter 10. Luke chapter 10, when that lawyer came to him and asked, what should I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus asked him in verse 26.

What is written in the law? How does it read to you? Good question, isn't it? He wants to know how to get eternal life. Jesus said, what is written in your law, in your Bible? How does it read to you? Good question to ask ourselves. How does it read to me? How does it read for my wife, for my children? How does it read to you? And he says, love God with all your heart, with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength and love your neighbors yourself.

And Jesus said to him, you have answered correctly. Do this and you will live. But it says there, he wishing to justify himself asked, and who is my neighbor? He had certain people in his mind.

Who is my neighbor? And Jesus then told the story of the man who was mugged and robbed, going down to Jericho. We don't have time to look at it. The priest passed by, the leaver passed by.

He had to go for a meeting. He had his duties in the temple. But a Samaritan on a journey, it says, saw him and had compassion on him.

That makes the difference. The priest and the leaver went by. They had to go and fulfill their duties.

But the Samaritan saw him and felt compassion for him and he did, you know, what he what he felt he should do for him. And Jesus asked this man, which of the, which of the three do you think proved neighbor to him? And this man said, the one who showed mercy toward him. And Jesus said to him, go and do the same.

Go and do the same. Show mercy to others. Don't have your select few to whom you think you can show mercy to.

The ones that you who are despised, the Samaritans were despised. They had nothing to do with the Samaritans, the Jews. Go and do the same.

Show mercy. You look at Matthew chapter 18. You know the story.

We don't have time to look at it. Matthew 18, verse 29. The man was forgiven a great debt and yet he was forgiven so much, a huge debt.

But a fellow slave owed him a paltry amount and he went to him and caught him by the throat and said, pay me what you what you owe me. And this fellow slave said, have patience with me and I will pay you everything. But he refused to hear that.

The same word that he asked to be forgiven that great debt, have patience. And his Lord forgave him the great debt. But he forgot the words that he said and caught him and wanted to kill him.

He caught him by the throat. And that's how an unforgiving, unmerciful attitude can be, my brothers and sisters. We can end up wanting to kill somebody, maybe literally, but with words, with an attitude.

A lot of people, you know, with an unforgiving spirit, with bitterness in their hearts and they think they can make it into heaven. They're thoroughly deceived and they think that God is with them. They go for the meetings and all, but they cannot forgive somebody because of some small little thing.

Husbands and wives sometimes in the home, they will not talk to each other for days on end. They have bitterness, they have grudges, they have resentment in their heart. And it says here that when his master, this Lord heard about it, said to him, should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave in the same way that I had mercy on you? Shouldn't you have had mercy like I had mercy on you? I forgave you such a great debt.

And the Lord says to you and me, I've forgiven you so much. There are a lot of things in your life that even others don't know about and I've forgiven you and cleansed it in my blood and nobody even knows about it. But yet we can hold petty grudges and resentment in our hearts towards others and worse still if it's towards our own life partner or towards those who live with us, a member of the family, whoever it may be, mother-in-law, father-in-law, any in-law.

And we don't think anything about it. I've always thought about it. It says the Lord moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.

And Jesus said this, listen to this, verse 35, My Heavenly Father will also do the same to you if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart. Forgive from the heart, not just saying I don't have anything against you. No, you've got to have something.

Your heart must be filled with the love of God. We've heard this through the years. It's bad to say I don't have anything in my heart against this person or that person.

You must have something in your heart. Otherwise you become an empty house like that man from whom you know seven demons were cast out of him and he just kept it all clean and furnished and he was worse. More demons entered into him and his state was, his last state was worse than the first.

This must not be empty, my brothers and sisters, our heart. There must be a mercy seat there. God will meet with you and me.

God will speak to us and fill our hearts with mercy towards others. Otherwise we'll be handed over to the torturers. Not on that day, but you know I really got understanding on this word that it happens in this life.

I've seen it. People are handed over to the torturers. What are the torturers? They're mine.

They're constant and they lie on bed at night. They can't sleep. They're always thinking of that.

That person who has spoken against me or spoken against my family or said something about my children and all these things. We lie awake at night at the dining table. We are thinking about it and we can't help but talk about it.

They are the torturers. Are you being tortured that way? You can't get it out of your mind. You're all the time thinking of some small petty thing.

Oh I never want. I said Lord, I want my heart to be full of mercy. I never want to be handed over to the torturers.

My dear brothers and sisters, it is so important that we become merciful just as God has been merciful to us. As we seek to become more like Jesus, as we seek to walk like he walked, as we seek to get victory over sin, let us never forget this is the only place that God will meet with you and me. The other thing I wanted to see that everything, everything we receive and all that we become is only by the mercies of God.

1 Timothy in chapter 12 verse 16, Paul's testimony. We don't have time to read it on but I would encourage you to read that. This is Paul's testimony.

It is often spoken to me. 1 Timothy chapter 1 a word we have heard often here. He says in verse 12, I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has strengthened me because he considered me faithful, putting me into service or putting me into the ministry.

Even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and violent aggressor, yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. The grace of our Lord was more than abundant. And then he says it's a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save

sinner among whom I am the foremost.

I'm number one. The foremost of all. And he writes these words at the end of his life by the way.

Once he said he was the least of the apostles. Once he said he was the least of all the saints. Now he says I'm the worst sinner.

I'm number one. Make a list of all the sinners in the world. I am right on top.

And I like this in verse 16. Yet for this reason I found mercy so that in me as a foremost Jesus Christ might demonstrate his perfect patience as an example for those who will believe in him for eternal life. For this reason I found mercy.

Do we see ourselves there my brothers and sisters? Oh I think no no you know I'm a little better. We'll never find mercy. For this reason because I was number one I found mercy.

That's Paul's testimony and many things there. He found mercy to be put into the ministry. He found mercy.

We read there he considered me faithful putting me into the ministry. To even be faithful it has to be God's mercy. I hope you realize all of us who do things for the church it's God's mercy.

Not because I'm intelligent and I have abilities. Maybe you do. But it's the mercy of God that you can do something and serve the church.

I see that. Not because of anything special. The mercy of God that I can serve the church.

And I hope that all of us who do that will understand that. And to be faithful we need to be you know 1 Corinthians 7 25 you can see you know Paul says there you can look at it if you like. There's something they wanted to see.

He says concerning virgins I have no command of the Lord but I give an opinion. Even in giving an opinion he says as one who by the mercy of the Lord is trustworthy is faithful. Paul was such a humble man even in giving his opinion.

And he says I think I can give an opinion and he said as one who by the mercy of the Lord has been faithful. And so let's really think of that my brothers and sisters as we enter our 42nd year as a church. One more thing that he says in in 2nd Corinthians and 4 chapter 1 he says therefore since we have this ministry you know in the previous chapter he speaks there about we all with unveiled face verse 18 chapter 3 2nd Corinthians 3 verse 18 we all without unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as from the Lord the Spirit.

Therefore since we have this ministry to be able to sit under this ministry to be able to sit under the ministry of the Holy Spirit and CFC for 41 years as we receive mercy. I hope we recognize that to be here it's the mercy of God and I see that in the 41 years that I have been here it is the mercy of God. I don't take any credit for it and neither should you no matter how long and we do not lose heart.

Finally what should I do when I think of all God's mercy to me like Paul says Romans chapter 12 verse 1 I beseech you brethren I urge you brethren present your bodies a living and a holy sacrifice acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship. Worship God with your body. I'm reading to you in the J.B.

Phillips.

It's so very powerful. It says there in Romans 12:1 this is with eyes wide open to the mercies of God I beg you my brothers as an act of intelligent worship to give him your bodies as a living sacrifice consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold but let God remold your minds from within so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good meets all his demands and moves toward the goal of true maturity with eyes wide open to the mercies of God.

I hope God opens our eyes this morning to all his mercies everything whatever we are whatever we have become whatever we receive it's only because of mercy therefore let us become merciful even as our Father is merciful. Let's really make that our desire our longing and if that mercy seat has disappeared from your life I encourage you this morning ask the Lord to replace it replace it in your heart Lord help me to be merciful to others just as you've been merciful to me. Amen.

Yeah it is so very true that when we were all thinking the Lord came and lifted each one of us but for his mercy I don't think we would be here this morning none of us would be here but for his mercy we were all lost and were deserving his righteous judgment but as we read God who is rich in mercy he forgave us a multitude of sins cleansed us and washed us and not only just called us to himself he made us his children he didn't just you know cleanse and then okay you're welcome to come not like that this was spoke to me when brother Ian was reading from Ephesians Ephesians 2 we read verse for God being rich in mercy you see the Lord owns the whole universe he runs the whole universe but nowhere in the Bible says that he is rich because he has so much of gold or diamond or you know rubies

or other things like that but it says here God is rich in mercy it says it doesn't speak about his richness in material things but in his character he is rich in mercy because of that what did he do he didn't just forgive our sins and said okay come in no he says here he made us alive together with Christ and raised us up with him with Christ verse 6 and seated us with Christ in the heavenly places not just at the feet of Jesus or at the at the before the throne of God but it says here that he raised up raised us up together with Christ and made us sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus along with him Jesus Christ we know now today sits at the right hand of the Father and he has made us sit along with him what a what a God we have does that move your heart when you think about it

about God's mercy and kindness we read about Paul in 1 Timothy 1:16 he said I was a violent aggressor and a persecutor of the church he was a murderer breathing threats to decimate completely the you know this new so called sect which was Christianity that time against Judaism I wanted to finish them off but for God he says in verse 16 I mean yeah chapter 1 verse 16 in 1 Timothy he says because of God's great mercy it was rich towards me and he found me who was the worst of sinners I was the foremost of sinners he says such one received mercy we read of a king called Ahab in the Old Testament in one Kings we read about him when among all the kings he was one of the most wicked kings that ever lived in the Old Covenant in Israel and when God pronounced judgment on him and his wife Zezebel

by the mouth of the Prophet Elijah you know he humbled himself maybe we can read that in one Kings 21 we think God's mercy is only for those who deserve it and those who you know behave themselves but here is a king who is he says that he was sold out completely to the devil to do wicked to do wickedly you go home and read about that in verse 29 it says when Elijah pronounced judgment over him it says about the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite saying do you see how Ahab has humbled himself before me it is God saying you know what did Ahab do he heard these words in verse 27 he tore his clothes and

put on sackcloth and fasted and lay in sackcloth and went about despondently when this external act was done God accepted that if it were to be you and me we would have said no this

is just acting or something like that this is not genuine from the heart but God just saw the outward action and then he said do you see how Ahab humbled himself before me because he has humbled himself before me I will not bring this evil upon I mean in his days but I'll bring this later on see how merciful the Lord has been this is how God wants us to be merciful to others we read about that in Matthew 18 about that king who forgave his servants so much of money that he owed him he could not have repaid in his entire lifetime such a great debt he forgave and then this man went out and caught somebody by the throat who just owed him some paltry amount and told him to pay up and then he put him in prison and there the king says you should have had mercy upon him just like I had mercy upon

you this is very relevant in that context be merciful to others just as you have God has been merciful to you yeah I hear a commandment like this and then you know I still have a few people here and there I think about this fellow that fellow who has harmed me and you know I always want to be little cold towards them but you know what the Bible says and maybe you can read that verse in Romans 12 Romans 12 verse 8 it says about different graces and gifts that God gives and how to serve in the church it says in verse 8 last part he who shows mercy let him show mercy with cheerfulness not grudgingly not not with little reservation in my heart towards that particular fellow who did me the most harm no it says here and do it cheerfully gladly do we do that this way or we just say okay I

forgive you like I read a story of a man who was terminally ill and the doctors had given up hope and said you have just a few days to live and that man called his friends whom he had to forgive and he asked their forgiveness and when when they were going away he called them back and said just in case I get well I withdraw my forgiveness do we have that kind of attitude you forgive it's forgiven forever God forgives God doesn't forget God says I will not remember your inequities anymore it's an act of the will on God's part he says I will not remember I will not bring it to my mind again let us follow in his footsteps and be like him to others just as he has been merciful to us praise God for what we heard I was thinking of how we can clearly see you aspects of God's wonderful mercy in

what brother Ian was sharing in one is that he's slow to anger that he forgives us and you know even though we make make the same mistake again and again or we've done some terrible things that God is willing to forgive us in his mercy but also that God's mercy is full of compassion it's not just about forgiving us but it's really about you know seeing our need and our wretched condition and embracing us and making us his family and saying yes you're mine and you know come up and I will and we see that so clearly you know in the in the picture of the Good Samaritan I was just thinking you know both of these aspects how how I think in terms of our personality we may be stronger on one side on the other side right and the real need for mercy starts at home I was just thinking you know think

of a husband and wife okay so let's say the husband comes home one day and his wife has had a really hard day she's really upset about something maybe you know children something's happened at school or sickness or some anxiety or something like that and the husband can you know say okay she's not in a very good mood let me go and do my own work I forgive her you know I'll be good to her I forgive her but that's exactly the attitude you know that the Levite and the you know the we see the the priest had they said okay I mean let me let me pass on the other side of the road and go home and that that is not God's mercy that's like just exactly the opposite of God's mercy and then there are some of us who you know okay let's say the husband's come back from home he's had a hard day the wife

is finding out what happened what happened okay she's concerned that's good and she says but why do you make the same mistake you know again and again you know and you can imagine it's like the Good Samaritan he said you know while he's pouring in the oil and the wine he's saying you know how expensive this is that you know I have to do this for you or you know why is it that you know somehow you're always the one falling up and I'm always the one lifting you you know so like we heard just now to show mercy with cheerfulness brothers and sisters I and I just when I think about both these aspects of mercy being slow to anger being willing to forgive quick to forgive and at the same time full of compassion that you know I I embrace the person and lift them up and I share their struggles as

my own I'm saying whatever it takes if it costs more I will pay that that's okay I'm doing it and I'm doing it cheerfully this is the sort of love that God has showed us brothers and sisters this is the way he's calling us he's saying be merciful oh yeah I was really also really encouraged by the you know this placard if I just think of this placard being at the back and this pulpit being in the front and all this placard that says be merciful as God has been merciful to me that's the foundation that's the basis for everything that I do and because of that I want to press on to perfection to be really merciful in terms of you know being full of compassion like like the Lord is and being very ready to forgive one thing I noticed you know when all of these all of these passages when they

talk about mercy okay so there are three of them and I'll leave it to you to look at it for yourself but Jude 24 one of them which we saw where he's talking about mercy and then 1 Timothy 1 17 where Paul is talking about himself as God you know showed him mercy as being the foremost example of how wonderful he is and lastly Romans chapter 11 verse 36 in all of these we find like a glorious passage where the person you know Paul in two cases Jude in another case just cannot help but give glory to God and praise him and says wisdom and power and glory and thanksgiving belongs to God and he is the one who did it he's the one who did it from beginning to end in response to his mercy I had no choice but to give myself you know I could do nothing else but respond to his mercy how great it was

how wonderful it was yeah we can just read Romans chapter 11 verse 12 it says the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and unfathomable are his ways to him be the glory forever brothers and sisters that is it you know that's the sort of service that God you know when we think about his mercy and goodness and that you know is behind us then I must press on to perfection how can I do anything less than that he's been so good to me he's been so good to me I must be good to others brothers and sisters by the mercy of God offer yourselves as a sacrifice be willing to give yourself for others thank God for what we've heard and I believe that God we will as we meditate on God's mercy God will help us to become merciful as he is

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