

Study on the Holy Spirit

Study 23

Mercy

This week we will look at the gift of mercy.

- **Romans 12:8** *he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

The definition of Mercy is:

Greek Word: *eleeo*

Part of Speech: Verb

"To feel sympathy with the misery of another," and especially sympathy manifested in act, "to have pity or mercy on, to show mercy"

To feel sympathy with the misery of another, esp. such sympathy as manifests itself in act, less freq. in word

Notice the last phrase "*manifests itself in act*". In other words, it's an action word (a verb). It's not just the feeling of compassion for someone, but doing for that someone to help relieve his or her pain, whether physical or emotional.

Let's start out by looking at an example that Jesus gave of mercy.

In this example Jesus is talking about how He will judge the nations, and one of the judgments will be if you had mercy for others.

Remember Jesus said in the Beatitudes:

- **Matt 5:7** *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*

So how do you show mercy? Look in:

- **Matt 25:35-36** *'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'*

Here Jesus is saying to show mercy, is to do for those who can't do for themselves.

Notice they are all action words, *gave, took, clothed, visited, and came.*

It's great to pray for someone, but even greater to back up your prayers with action.

- **James 2:15-17 (NLT)** *Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, and you say, "Well, good-bye and God bless you; stay warm and eat well"--but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is no faith at all--it is dead and useless.*

Going back to **Matt 25:35-36**

Jesus did the same for each one of us:

- We were hungry for the truth, and Jesus fed us with His word!
- We were thirsty for everlasting life, and Jesus died so that we may live and never thirst again!
- We are strangers in a strange land, and Jesus will take us home!
- We were naked exposing our sins to the world; Jesus clothed us with His love, forgiveness, and mercy!
- We were imprisoned in Satan's prison, Jesus set us free!

Jesus would not ask us to do something that He Himself would not do.

- **Eph 2:4-5** *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

And the results of all this is in:

- **Matt 25:34 (NLT)** *Then the King will say to those on the right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'*

So who do we do show mercy to?

- **Luke 6:32-36** *But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*

It's so easy for us to do for other brothers and sisters, especially if we like them.

What about someone you may not even like, or someone who's not a believer?

Being loving and having mercy are not as easy as they sound, especially if you are to love or show mercy as Jesus did.

Jesus even loved Judas, even when He knew that Judas was going to betray Him.

Who has betrayed you that you need to show love to?

This is very difficult, I now personally. There are people that I just do not like; to even talk to them after a while just makes me upset or mad. But Jesus said that I should love them and do for them. If they needed help, would I do it? I pray that I would.

Look at Romans 12:8 again:

- **Romans 12:8** *he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Notice it says to: *show mercy, with cheerfulness.*

- **Micah 6:8** *He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?*

God has shown us mercy, and requires us to do the same. It says here that showing mercy is good, and to do what God says is good should make you happy.

To humble yourself is to be like the tax collector in the following verses, but how many times are we like the Pharisee?

- **Luke 18:9-14 (NLT)** *Then Jesus told this story to some who had great self-confidence and scorned everyone else: "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a dishonest tax collector. The proud Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else, especially like that tax collector over there! For I never cheat, I don't sin, I don't commit adultery, I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.' "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For the proud will be humbled, but the humble will be honored."*

Mercy is not saying you're better than someone else, it's caring and loving that someone else. But what if you don't have much yourself, and you have that desire to show mercy to someone? Remember that GOD ALWAYS will make a way, especially when you are showing a desire to show mercy to someone.

Let's look at two verses in Proverbs:

- **Prov 11:17** *The merciful man does good for his own soul, But he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.*
- **Prov 3:1-6** *My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.* (underlined for emphasis)

We all know or have heard verse 6, and even claim it as one of our favorites. But read it in its context; look right before it in verse 3 it says: *Let not mercy and truth forsake you.*

So *acknowledge Him* by showing mercy to others, who you would never think of giving mercy to. *Trust in the LORD with all your heart* that He will help you to show mercy to those you don't want to. *And He shall direct your paths* to those who need mercy, whoever they are.

- **James 2:13** *For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

Don't judge any more on whom you should show mercy to.

- **Micah 7:18** *Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.*

God delights in mercy. How could you delight in mercy?

Have you ever seen a homeless person and felt that you should give them some money or food? When you did give to him or her, were they thankful. Weren't you at that time thankful that the Lord provided for you, so that you could help someone in need?

Did it feel good to show mercy to someone you didn't even know?

God is **not** happy with those who are not merciful.

- **Prov 21:13** *Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be heard.*
- **Matt 25:42-43** *for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.*

The results of not showing mercy are in:

- **Matt 25:45-46 (NLT)** *And he will answer, 'I assure you, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.*

We need to be merciful just as the Lord is merciful to us.

How has the Lord been merciful to you?

- **Matt 18:23-35 (NLT)** *"For this reason, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn't pay, so the king ordered that he, his wife, his children, and everything he had be sold to pay the debt. But the man fell down before the king and begged him, 'Oh, sir, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' Then the king was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a*

few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient and I will pay it,' he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and jailed until the debt could be paid in full. When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him what had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' Then the angry king sent the man to prison until he had paid every penny. That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters in your heart.'

- **Matt 18:21-22** *Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*

Are you a Peter thinking that you should show mercy only 7 times?

Or are you the example that Jesus gave to forgive 70 x 7, in other words, quick to forgive and forget.

- **2 Sam 24:13-14** *So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me." And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."*

Even David knew that it was better to be in the hands of the Lord than to be in the hands of unforgiving unmerciful man.