

MERCY

That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves; the disposition that tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant. In this sense, there is perhaps no word in our language precisely synonymous with mercy. That which comes nearest to it is grace. It implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity or compassion, and clemency, but exercised only towards offenders. Mercy is a distinguishing attribute of the Supreme Being. (From an old Webster's Dictionary that often quotes Scripture)

GADSBY'S CATECHISM – William Gadsby about 1800

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

Question LXXX. Can you give a proof of the gospel as a rule in the church?

Answer. Yes; as it is written, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." "As God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches." "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." "Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." "Let all things be done decently and in order." "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."

Matt. 23.8-10; 1 Cor. 7.17 & 11.2 & 14.40; Eph. 6.9; Heb. 10.24-25; 1 Pet. 3.8-11 & 5.1-5.

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

55 Avenue A

P. O. Box 628

Richwood, WV 26261

B. H. Seacrist, Jr., Pastor

Phone 304 846 6406

Email: branthsj@msn.com

Website: www.riversidebaptistchurchwv.com

Services:

Sunday Morning 11:00 AM

Sunday Evening 6:00 PM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

Volume 6, No. 43

October 27, 2013

THE DESIRE OF THE LORD

For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Hosea 6:6

Seeing a text applied is a wonderful way to be brought an understanding of it. Such is the case here in that our Lord quoted it twice in His confrontation with the Pharisees. In both instances He contrasted the kindness and mercy of God with their cold and rigid misapplication of the Law. They had neither experienced the mercy of the Lord nor could they be forgiving in that they believed that outward compliance to selected standards of God was the way to eternal life. In no way had they complied with what the Lord desired.

The plea of the prophet in the first verse of this chapter was for a return to the Lord. In making the plea he described their condition – torn and smitten. This had left them dysfunctional and unresponsive to the demands of the God of Israel. They were charged and judged in that it was the Lord that had torn and smitten. Furthermore the ability to heal and to bind up was the Lord’s alone. That which God sovereignly administers, only He can dismiss.

They had been given the means to attain unto this deliverance. In the third verse they are told they will know if they follow on to know the Lord. When men are directed to repent and return, it is always to the Lord. Methods and formulae do not stand in the sight of God. He will be served and worshiped first of all. Where there is no knowledge of (acquaintance with) God there will be no mercy. That is, such people will not have a sense of being forgiven nor will they be able to forgive.

The question may be asked, were not

sacrifices required under the Mosaic economy? Certainly they were and we have record that they were accepted of God. But, such acceptance was not because of mere compliance with the form. Those accepted of God were offered in faith and attended with humility before God. They were an acknowledgment that forgiveness was from the Lord and they had to have it from the One they had offended. To the true Old Testament believer that sacrifice was a picture of the substitute that would ultimately be accepted of God. All true sacrifice pictures Christ. It was not that sacrifice was not an important part of the true worship of God; it was that their sacrifices were unacceptable to God. That which is offered in the absence of true worship, true praise, prayer, faith and a view to the “redeemer God” (which is Christ) is meaningless before God. They are simply the works of men and contaminated with sin. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Isaiah 1:18*

How many today cling to the form of worship and have no evidence of either being the product of mercy or cry out to God for His mercy. They are therefore incapable of the kindness and compassion which is of the sort which Christ our Lord displayed. *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7.*

Jesus Christ our Lord gave most vivid

illustrations to these words. The first of these occurred after the call of Matthew who was a publican (hated tax collector). Following the call of Matthew there was a supper given to which many publicans (perhaps Matthew's friends) were invited. This angered the Pharisees and the charge was made that Jesus was eating with sinners. To them such a thing could not be true of the Messiah. The answer of Jesus is expressed here. *But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Matthew 9:13.* He was eating with the people that needed Him and knew that they did. The Pharisees were referred to as those thinking themselves to be righteous and so they rejected Him.

In a second instance, *But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. Matthew 12:7.* They would condemn an innocent act of the disciples in which they picked some corns of wheat on the Sabbath because they were hungry. In fact, had they known the Lord and His mercy they would have offered provision to the hungry disciples. The idea of displaying kindness and mercy in this way was foreign to them because of their lack of the second part – The knowledge of God.

What is mercy? It must be defined in terms of what God has shown to His people. We often read, *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Romans 9:18*, in defense of the sovereignty of God and well we should. But we should be aware of the first part: "Therefore hath He mercy." This is the hope of every true believer. They know themselves to be without hope apart from it. True believers reflect the very nature of the One who suffered and died for them and are as result to show mercy as they have received it – unconditionally. They know God in Christ! *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. John 17:3.*

Their sacrifices are attended with the proper things to make them acceptable. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Hebrews 13:15-16.* Furthermore they delight to have it so: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12:1.* This is the mercy and knowledge of God He desires. *bhs*

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

"On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldlings, no truth of which they have made such a football, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on his throne. They will allow him to be in his workshop to fashion worlds and to make stars. They will allow him to be in his almonry to dispense his alms and bestow his bounties. They will allow him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends his throne, his creatures then gnash their teeth; and when we proclaim an enthroned God, and his right to do as he wills with his own, to dispose of his creatures as he thinks well, without consulting them in the matter, then it is that we are hissed and execrated, and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on his throne is not the God they love. They love him anywhere better than they do when he sits with his sceptre in his hand and his crown upon his head. But it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon his throne whom we trust."

C. H. Spurgeon

“Many are Called” --Matthew 22:14

There is a personal, particular, irresistible call of grace, which goes forth from the Spirit of God to God's elect alone (John 10:3). This call of the Spirit always produces faith in Christ. It is always effectual. It always results in the salvation of the one who is called. Were it not for this effectual call of the Spirit, no one would ever be saved (John 6:44-45). But when our Lord says, “Many are called,” He is speaking of the earnest proclamation of the Gospel by His servants.

Gospel Call

Every time a true servant of God preaches the Gospel of God's electing love, redeeming mercy, and saving grace sinners are called to faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20). This call is universal in its scope. In Divine providence even this call is limited to those who are privileged to hear the Gospel. But we preach the Gospel indiscriminately to all men, urging all to come to Christ and be saved. This Gospel call is sincere and earnest (Romans 10:1-4). It is an unconditional call to salvation by Christ and peace with God. The Gospel preacher is God's ambassador, sent to proclaim the good news of redemption accomplished and salvation full and free in Christ Jesus. He calls sinners, by Divine authority, to be reconciled to God. Every sinner who obeys this call and trusts the Lord Jesus Christ is saved by God's free grace and possesses everlasting life in Christ (John 3:36; 5:24). Those who refuse to obey the Gospel call will perish without excuse.

Irresistible Grace

However, because man is spiritually dead, he has neither the will nor the ability in himself to obey the call of the Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel will never produce faith in Christ until the sinner is regenerated and called by the irresistible power and grace of the Holy Spirit. All reject the Gospel call as it comes forth from men; but none reject that call when it comes forth in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Why is it that many hear the Gospel and perish, while others hear the same Gospel from the lips of the same preacher, and are saved? The answer is very plain: “*Many are called, but few are chosen.*” And those few who are chosen, having been redeemed by Christ, at God's appointed time are called by the effectual, irresistible power of God the Holy Spirit. Thank God! He has chosen some, and they shall be saved!

The Difference

The difference between those who believe and those who believe not is the eternal purpose and choice of God's electing love. — “*Many are called, but few are chosen.*” Here are some men and women in this world whom God has chosen to save. The rest are left in their sins, to perish in their willful unbelief. God has done them no injustice. He does not violate their will. He does not force them to do what they choose not to do. He simply leaves them to themselves! And if God leaves a man to himself, if God leaves a man to his own free-will, that man will never believe on Christ and be saved (John 6:37-40; 10:16, 26; Acts 13:46-48).

All who believe rejoice and give thanks to God that He did not leave us to ourselves. And there is yet a remnant according to the election of grace. God has chosen to save some. There is an elect people in this world, a people whom God has predestinated to eternal life, a people He has determined to save, a people of whom He says, “*I will be their God and they shall be My people.*” How our souls rejoice in the fact that God the Holy Spirit would not take “no” for an answer from us! He would not allow us to resist His call. *You sweetly forced us into Your arms, blessed Lord Jesus, making us willing in the day of Your power.* Don Fortner