# The Mercy of God

Grace is defined as the eternal and absolute free favour of God manifested in the spiritual and eternal blessings towards the guilty race of mankind who is utterly unworthy of all His works.

Mercy is grace manifested to an unworthy people out of the Holiness of God, so as to bestow compassion upon a doomed people.

"*I will trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.*" Psalm. 52:8

### Definition

- Websters Dictionary defines mercy as: “The compassionate treatment of an enemy”
- The attribute of God where He pities and relieves the misery of man
- Mercy is a disposition to pardon the guilty. Its exercise consists in arresting and setting aside the penalty of law, when that penalty has been incurred by transgression.
- Mercy is directly opposed to justice
- Mercy is exercised only where there is guilt. It always pre-supposes guilt.

## Aspects of Mercy

1. The General Mercy of God, extended not only to all men, believers and unbelievers alike, but also to the entire creation: "*His tender mercies are over all his works*" (Ps. 145:9); "*He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*" (Acts 17:25).

   God has pity upon His creation and its needs, and supplies it with suitable provisions.

2. The Special Mercy of God, which is exercised toward the children of men, helping and supplying them, notwithstanding their sins. To them He also communicates all the necessities of life: "*for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust*" (Matthew 5:45).

3. The Sovereign Mercy reserved for the Heirs of Salvation, is communicated to them in a covenantal way, through Jesus Christ and the work of the atonement.

## The Holiness of God and Mercy

- Since God is Holy the only requirement He has is to maintain His Holiness. Meaning there is no obligation by the Lord to forgive man outside of the covenant promises that He made through Jesus Christ.

- Holiness demands separation from all that is unholy. Therefore, in the truest sense of the understanding of God's holiness, mercy does not play a role. God is obligated to punish all that is unholy in order to be just. However, the Lord's attribute of mercy finds its fullness in the eternal plan of the sovereign God to provide atonement for his people.
- God as a Sovereign being has the authority and right to reveal mercy on whom ever He wishes. This is due to the fact that no one deserves to receive His mercy. As a Sovereign God the Scriptures reveal His distribution of Mercy.

"*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*" Exodus 33:19

*"Why should any living man complain when punished for his sins?"* Lamentations 3:39

"*I will punish you as your deeds deserve, declares the Lord.*" Jeremiah 21:14

"*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*" Romans 9:15

## Aspects of the Mercy of God

### 1 The Extent of God's Mercy

a. Great (1 Kings 3:6)

b. Plenteous (Psalm 86:5)

c. Tender (Luke 1:78)

d. Abundant (1 Peter 1:3)

e. Rich (Ephesians 2:4)

f. Everlasting (Psalm 103:17)

### 2 Old Testament Mercy Revealed

- The Mercy Seat was the name given for the lid on Ark of the Covenant. It is where the Lord met with the people of Israel, where the blood of a Lamb was sprinkled allowing access to God and where God spoke to Moses. (Leviticus 16:2, Numbers 7:89, 1 Samuel 4:4)

### 3 New Testament Mercy revealed

In Christ the Lamb of God (John 1:29), His sinless blood provides perfect mercy, for the sinner to have communion with God. Paul uses the words "propitiation by His blood" in Romans 3:23-26. It is also translated "mercy seat" (Hebrews 9:5).

## 4 What is implied in the Mercy of God?

A conviction of guilt. No one can properly be said to trust in the mercy of God unless they have committed crimes and are conscious of those crimes. Justice protects the innocent and they may safely appeal to it for defense. For the guilty nothing remains but to trust in mercy. Trusting in mercy always implies a deep heartfelt conviction of personal guilt.

a. Trusting in mercy always implies that we have no hope in justice. If we had anything to expect from justice, we should not look to mercy.

b. To trust in mercy implies a just apprehension of what mercy is. Mercy, goodness, and grace are often confused for one another. Mercy is often wrongly considered as favor to the undeserving. We never trust in mercy until we really understand what it is…pardon for the crimes of the guilty.

c. Trust in God's mercy implies a belief that He is merciful. We could not trust him if we had no such belief.

d. Trusting in the mercy of God forever implies a conviction of deserving endless punishment. When the Psalmist trusts in the mercy of God forever, he renounces all hope of being ever received to favor on the score of justice.

e. Trusting in mercy implies an end from all excuses and excuse making. The moment you trust in mercy, you give up all apologies and excuses at once and entirely; for these imply reliance upon God's justice. An excuse or apology is nothing neither more nor less than an appeal to justice; a plea designed to justify our conduct. Trusting in mercy forever implies that we have ceased from all excuses forever.

## 5 The Conditions of the Mercy of God

a. The first condition is that we must repent. Certainly no sinner has the least ground to hope for mercy until he repents. Will God pardon the sinner while yet in his rebellion? Never

b. We must confess our sins. "He that confesseth," and he only, "shall find mercy." In God's the moral nature He cannot forgive without the sinner's confession. He must have the sinner's testimony against himself and in favor of law and obedience.

> Before we can trust in the mercy of God, we must really repent and make our confession as public as we have made our crime

*"He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy."* Proverbs 28:13

c. We must really make restitution so far as lies in our power.

d. Another condition is that you really reform, or change your ways. Mercy is not granted to the insincere, or the false repentant.

e. A sincere and fearful approach to the plan of salvation. This plan is based on the assumption that we deserve everlasting death and must be saved, if ever, by sovereign grace and

mercy. Nothing can save but mercy--mercy which meets the sinner in the dust, prostrate, without an excuse or an apology, giving to God all the glory and taking to himself all the guilt and shame. There is hope for the, sinner, who embraces this plan with all the heart.

## Mistaken Ideas Regarding God's Mercy

- Many really trust in justice and not in mercy. They say, "God is just--God will do me no injustice--I mean to do as well as I can, and then I can safely leave myself in the hands of a just God." True, God will do you no injustice. You never need fear that. But how terrible if God should do you strict justice! How fearful if you get no mercy! If God does not show you infinite mercy, you are forever lost, as surely as you are a sinner!
- Many trust professedly in the mercy of God without fulfilling the conditions on which only, mercy can be shown. They may hold on in such trusting till they die--but no longer.
- Sinners do not consider that God cannot remove the conditions for mercy. If God were to set aside these conditions and forgive a sinner while unhumbled, impenitent, and unbelieving, He would upset his throne, convulse the moral universe, and kindle another hell in his own bosom.
- Many are defeating their own walk with God by self-justification. Since the world began it has not been known that a sinner has found mercy in this state.
- Some are covering up their sins, yet dream of going to heaven. Do they think they can hide those sins from the All Knowing God? Do they think to cover their sins and yet it "prosper?

### Applications for Our Lives

- Mercy has kept us from receiving the wrath of God
- Mercy is the basis of our daily walk with the Lord
- Mercy has been revealed in the blood of Christ that keeps us in Him
- Mercy is the basis of true humility