

12/22-28#4 Blessed Are the Merciful, for They Shall Be Shown Mercy and Receive Mercy: I. "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy'...So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy" (Rom. 9:15a, 16): A Mercy is the most far-reaching of God's attributes, going further than His grace and love: Matt. 9:13 ..."I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. **1** According to our natural condition, we were far removed from God, totally unworthy of His grace; we were eligible only to receive His mercy. Eph. 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us. **2** Our disobedience affords God's mercy an opportunity, and God's mercy brings us to salvation. **3** Our concept is that the one who wills will gain what he wills to obtain and that the one who runs will gain what he runs after: **1** If this were the case, God's selection would be according to our effort and labor. **2** On the contrary, God's selection is of God who shows mercy; we do not need to will or to run, for God has mercy on us. **3** If we know God's mercy, we will neither trust in our effort nor be disappointed by our failures; the hope for our wretched condition is in God's mercy. **4** If we would serve God in His New Testament economy, we need to know that it is wholly a matter of God's sovereign mercy: Rom. 9:15 For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." **1** If we know God's sovereignty, we will thank Him for His mercy: **a** The expression sovereign mercy means that God's mercy is absolutely a matter of God's sovereignty. **b** Being a vessel of mercy is not the result of our choice; it originates with God's sovereignty. Rom. 9:18 So then He has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills. **23** In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory. **c** God's

mercy is in His sovereignty; the only thing we can say to explain God's mercy to us is that in His sovereignty, He has chosen to be merciful to us. **2** In God's sovereign mercy, our hearts are inclined toward Him; because of His mercy to us, we seek Him day by day. **3** The more we see that everything related to us is a matter of God's mercy, the more we will bear our responsibility before the Lord; however, even our willingness to bear responsibility is of God's mercy. **4** Because of God's mercy, we responded to His gospel when others did not, we received a word about Christ as life when others refused to receive it, and we took the way of the Lord's recovery when others drew back from taking this way. **5** Regarding His recovery, God has mercy on whom He will have mercy. **1d** Romans 9 reveals the principle that everything depends on God's mercy: **1** The apostle Paul applies this principle to the Israelites, showing us that everything that happened to them was of God's mercy. **2** There must be at least one time when we see God's mercy and definitely touch His mercy: **a** Concerning this matter, our eyes need to be opened to see that everything depends on God's mercy. **b** Whether we see this all at once, or we realize it through a process, the minute we touch this matter, we touch not a feeling but a fact; this fact is that everything depends on God's mercy. **E** "Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help" (Heb.4:16): 2:17 Hence He should have been made like His brothers in all things that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **1** Both God's mercy and His grace are the expression of His love. **2** When we are in a pitiful condition, first His mercy reaches us and brings us into a state where God is able to favor us with His grace. **3** God's mercy and grace are always available to us; however, we need to receive and find them by exercising our spirit to come

forward to the throne of grace. **F** In His sovereignty God the Father has had mercy on us; therefore, we must praise and worship Him for His sovereign mercy: **1** "Father, we enjoy Thy mercy, / Ever fresh and ever new; / Every morning shed upon us, / It refreshes as the dew. / How we taste it! How we taste it! / Giving Thee the praises due"—Hymns, #26, stanza 5. **2** "Father, Thy mercy with Thy love and grace / Did we obtain; / And in Thy mercy, with Thee face to face, / We'll e'er remain; / And for Thy mercy we would worship Thee / Through all our days and through eternity"—Hymns, #25, stanza 3. **II. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy" (Matt.5:7): A** To be righteous is to give one what he deserves, whereas to be merciful is to give someone better than he deserves. **B** For the kingdom of the heavens, we need to be not only righteous but also merciful. **C** To receive mercy is to receive what we do not deserve. **D** If we are merciful to others, the Lord will give us mercy (2 Tim. 1:16, 18), especially at His judgment seat. **2Tim.1:16** May the Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain; **18** May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord in that day. And in how many things he served *me* in Ephesus, you know best. **E** We must learn to be righteous with ourselves and merciful toward others. **III. "Grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (2 Tim. 1:2): A** Only in 1 and 2 Timothy, among all his Epistles, did the apostle include God's mercy in the opening greeting. **B** God's mercy reaches farther than His grace. **C** In the degraded situation of the churches, God's mercy is needed. **D** This mercy brings in God's rich grace, which is sufficient to deal with any degradation. **IV. "The judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13): 12** So speak and so do as those who are to be judged by the law of freedom. **A** To despise a poor brother is to have no mercy.

**B** Anyone who despises a poor brother in this way will not receive mercy when he appears before the judgment seat of Christ: **1** When we come before the Lord to be judged, He will not show mercy to us, because we have not shown mercy to our brother. **2** We need to show mercy, for mercy triumphs over judgment. **3** If we have mercy on our brother today, we will receive mercy from the Lord at His judgment seat.

**V. We should bow down before the Lord and worship Him for His mercy: A**

The more we worship the Lord for His mercy, the more we will be uplifted. **B** What a mercy that God has selected us, predestinated us, called us, and placed us in His recovery! **C** For the future we trust not in ourselves but in Him and in His marvelous mercy. **D** Our going on with the Lord is a matter not of our willing or running but of God's mercy. **E** God's mercy works in a wonderful way.

**Testimony** I grew up in the church life from childhood and never left the church. I never stood out for the wrong reasons and outwardly lived a serious church life. I had believed that because I was serious and capable, I was able to live the church life, so I had no recognition whatsoever of the Lord's sovereignty and mercy.

However, when deciding my path after high school entrance exams and university graduation, I realized for the first time that I possessed no abilities superior to others, lacked the strength to choose the Lord's way, and even fell short in loving Him. I still often recall how, though I was such a fallen person before the Lord, He continually led me to live the church life through the care of the brothers and sisters. When I sang stanza 2 of Hymn 473 "When such as we the King can choose, to share with Him His throne, 'Tis passing strange that we refuse to be our Lord's alone. O never speak of sacrifice! A privilege untold. Is to be His at any price, in Calv'ry's hosts enrolled."—I recalled His merciful guidance, and moved to tears. I give thanks and praise to the Lord for His mercy that has reached even me!