

Shadows of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #41

Blessed Are The Merciful

Dec. 3, 2025

While each Beatitude can stand on its own, they aren't merely a collection of unrelated statements. They are linked in an unbroken chain, each one building on the previous truth.

Sequence: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit: My condition: I am spiritually bankrupt.

- It doesn't look to externals...rather it looks to internals.
- Behold the Holiness of God.

Blessed are they that mourn: Contrition: I see what I am, weep over it & repent.

- Examine myself against God's Word.
- My heart is prone to wander. There is a war inside of me.
- I am broken because of my sin, yet I possess joy because of who God is.
- The Holy Spirit comforts my heart.

Blessed are the meek: Submit and yield to the will of God. Have a new master.

- You trust in the Lord rather than trust your own abilities and powers.
- Humble, gentle, not aggressive: trusting and waiting on the Lord to act.
- Content to be a servant of the Lord.
- But the meek person is just humbled that God has had mercy on them.

Meekness: Submit To the Word of God. Receive the Word of God.

Be Continuously Filled with the Spirit of God.

Out of these roots come the shoot of the fourth beatitude—
a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

The Roots Produce The Shoot.

The Shoot Produces Fruit.

Mercy Or Forgiveness

Purity; Pure In Heart

Peacemakers

F. B. Meyer: NOTICE this beatitude follows hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Mercy is the white flower on the stem of a righteous life.

Matt. 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain [receive] mercy.

Merciful > #1655 > eleemon from eleos > mercy: refers to one who is actively compassionate or one who is benevolently merciful involving thought and action.

Eleemon's only other use is Hebrews 2:17. Therefore, it was essential that He had to be made like His brothers [mankind] in every respect, so that He might [by experience] become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things related to God, to make atonement [propitiation] for the people's sins [thereby wiping away the sin, satisfying divine justice, and providing a way of reconciliation between God and mankind].

Mercy, Hebrew 'chesed,' means to get inside someone's skin, to look at where they view life and feel what they are experiencing; to move in and act on behalf of the one whose hurting. That is exactly what Jesus did when He chose to leave the comfort and glory of Heaven to become one of us.

God Became Flesh: John 1:14a And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, Phil. 2:7 but emptied Himself [without renouncing or diminishing His deity, but only temporarily giving up the outward expression of divine equality and His rightful dignity] by assuming the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men [He became completely human but was without sin, being fully God and fully man].

To Experience The Human Condition: By becoming human, Jesus experienced all the challenges and infirmities of human nature, from birth to death, without sin. Heb. 4:12 For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize *and* understand our weaknesses *and* temptations, but One who has been tempted [knowing exactly how it feels to be human] in every respect as *we are*, yet without [committing any] sin.

God's mercy for humanity is an act of undeserved compassion, love and forgiveness that withholds punishment even when justice demands it.

Romans 5:8 But God commendeth [demonstrate; prove] His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

II Cor. 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to *be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Eph. 2:4-5 But God, being 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), [ultimate act of God's mercy]

Grace is when God gives us what we don't deserve.

Mercy is when God doesn't give us what we do deserve. Does this capture the meaning of mercy?

- Too narrow of a definition of mercy. It is just about wrongs we've done.
- It puts all the emphasis on human responsibility.
- It ignores that in this fallen world, that we'll be wronged.
- It is much too passive. It makes mercy only about *not* giving something.
- It doesn't fit with the picture we see in Scripture.

Biblical acts of mercy involve:

1. SEE the need.
2. FEEL compassion for him.
3. DO something to meet the need.

God's Divine Mercy In The Old Testament: Described as His compassion, graciousness, and slowness to anger, which is often shown by withholding full judgment and instead providing rescue, forgiveness, and blessings.

Tower of Babel: Instead of destroying mankind again, God confused their languages, scattering them across the Earth.

This intervention was a response to human pride and ambition to build a tower to the heavens, which God saw as a threat of unlimited, prideful unity. To prevent this unified, self-glorifying project, God confused their languages, creating a communication barrier.

Exodus 3:7-10 And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Mercy is not simply feeling compassion but exists when something is done to alleviate distress. This is illustrated in the OT by the "mercy seat" in the holy of holies. This was the place where the Lord God accepted the propitiatory (satisfactory) sacrifice to atone for the nation's sins, once each year on the "Day of Atonement" [Lev 16:2,13-15]. At the mercy seat God was moved with pity and compassion for the sinful people and took action to reconcile them to Himself through accepting the blood of a goat in their stead.

Manasseh: As king, Manasseh was responsible for extreme idolatry, including practicing black magic and offering his own sons as sacrifices. He also shed a great deal of innocent blood.

Divine judgment: Because of his evil deeds, God allowed the Assyrian army to capture him.

Repentance in Distress: While imprisoned in Babylon, Manasseh was brought to his senses and prayed earnestly to God for mercy.

He "humbled himself greatly" before the God of his fathers.

God's Merciful Response: God heard Manasseh's prayer and saw his humility.

He responded to Manasseh's plea, which led to his release and restoration to his throne.

Transformative Reforms: After his restoration, he enacted radical reforms. He removed all idols from Jerusalem, rebuilt the altar of the Lord and commanded Judah to serve God.

Manasseh's story is recorded as a powerful example that no sin is too great for God to forgive when there is true repentance. His life after his imprisonment showed that repentance can lead to transformation and a complete change of heart and actions.

Luke 10:25-29 One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?"

²⁷ The man answered, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

²⁸ "Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"

²⁹ The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus responds with this snapshot of what a follower of the one true God looks like.

Luke 10:30-37 Defines MERCY The Good Samaritan

A man was beaten and left half dead on the Jericho road.

A priest and a Levite [good Jews] both passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:33-34 "But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he SAW him, he FELT COMPASSION and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him."

➤ He DID SOMETHING to take care of the man's needs.

V.36 "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man?"

V.37 "The one who SHOWED MERCY toward him."

Biblical acts of mercy involve:

1. SEE the need.
2. FEEL compassion for him.
3. DO something to meet the need.

Mercy is the Good Samaritan stopping to help the Jewish man who had been beaten and stripped by robbers. Mercy stops and stoops toward one who has nothing to offer the giver and has never shown favor to the giver.

Grace is the Good Samaritan's action that brought restoration to the man.

Grace lifts the beaten man upon his own donkey and carries him to the inn for complete recovery, paying the complete price on the pitiful man's behalf.

Sinclair Ferguson describes mercy: "Getting down on your hands and knees and doing what you can to restore dignity to someone whose life has been broken by sin."

JESUS EXEMPLIFIES MERCY: Jesus lived out the definition of mercy.

Compassion in action: Jesus saw individuals in their need—

the blind, the lame, and those with leprosy—and showed compassion.

His actions demonstrate a deep concern for people's physical and spiritual well-being.

Matt. 9:36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them.

➤ 10:1 He sent out His disciples to minister to them: cast out evil spirits & heal diseases.

Matt. 14:14 And when He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them, and healed their sick.

Mark 6:34 He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

Mark 10:21 And looking at him [Rich Young Ruler] Jesus felt a love for him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack ... come follow Me.

Luke 7:13-15 And when the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, 'Do not weep' and He came up and touched the coffin ... and raised her son from the dead.
Luke 15 When the Prodigal son returned home, the father saw him, and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. The father had mercy on him -

➤ by seeing him, feeling compassion for him, and receiving him back with joy!

Matt. 20:29-34: As Jesus and his disciples were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!' The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!' Jesus stopped and called them. 'What do you want me to do for you?' he asked. 'Lord,' they answered, 'Lord, that our eyes may be opened.' Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed Him."

Charles Stanley: The blind men associated mercy not with a feeling but with an action. Their physical problem was that they couldn't see. The act of mercy was Christ's intervention to restore their sight. Mercy is more than a feeling; it is always followed by an action.

Dane Ortlund "The posture most natural to [Jesus] is not a pointed finger but open arms." After the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 8 alone, we see Jesus cleansing a leper, healing a paralyzed man, raising a dying woman, and freeing two men of demons.

Parable of the Unmerciful Servant. Matthew 18:21-35

Jesus paints a powerful picture of forgiveness.

Peter's question. "Jesus, how many times do I need to forgive?"

Jesus responds, "Not seven times. More like 70 times seven." [unlimited]

Matt. 18:23 Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

A servant owes the rich king an insurmountable debt—10,000 talents—an amount so vast it could never be repaid in a lifetime.

The ruler ordered that money be collected, but then the debtor came and begged for mercy.

The king, moved by compassion, canceled the debt entirely.

Yet, this same servant, freshly forgiven, refuses to extend mercy to a fellow servant who owes him a fraction of what he owed the king.

The ruler then judges that ungrateful servant. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?"

³⁴ And his master, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he would repay all that was owed him.

Key: Receiving forgiveness carries a responsibility to extend it to others.

Failing to do so invites God's judgment.

Believers need to make no mistake about the truth: God is compassionate and forgiving.

He is also just. A persistent heart attitude of unforgiveness can result in divine discipline.

Torturers #930 Basanistés Jailors assigned to torture a prisoner. one who elicits the truth by the use of the rack, an inquisitor, torturer, [only use in Bible]

Warren Wiersbe: Keep in mind this has nothing to do with salvation. Do not read eternal judgment into v. 34. God will certainly deal with a believer who harbors an unforgiving spirit.

Warren Wiersbe: The world's worst prison is the prison of an unforgiving heart.
If we refuse to forgive others, we are only imprisoning ourselves and causing our own torment.

Chuck Swindoll: Jesus pointed out that without forgiveness there cannot be freedom. The man who would not forgive was called back before the king, who "handed him over to the torturers." Torturers mean "inquisitors," conveying the idea of personal torment . . . internal torture. Jesus added: "So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart." [Forgiveness is required.]

Timothy Lane: Forgiveness is costly. Regardless of how big or small the offense, canceling a debt and absorbing the cost is going to hurt. But the parable shows us that not forgiving also has a price. It is higher than the price forgiveness demands.

The High Cost of Unforgiveness:

It blocks the release of God's forgiveness in your own life.	Mark 11:25-26
It puts you in a prison of torment.	Matt.5:25-26; 18:32-35
It gives Satan an advantage over you.	II Corinthians 2:10-11
➤ Satan, the one who seduces, sifts, beguiles, oppresses, deceives, torments, entices, tempts, hinders, confuses, binds, afflicts, buffets, blinds, devours, lies, vexes, takes captive, possesses, deceives, is given an advantage.	
➤ Unforgiveness is a satanic device.	
It reduces your spiritual walk to a carnal one.	I Corinthians 3:1-3
Unforgiveness, <u>because it is sin</u> , hinders prayer.	Psalms 66:18
Hinders your giving	I Corinthians 13:3
Hinders whatever you offer to God in worship.	Matthew 5:24

Toxic Unforgiveness: Unforgiveness is choosing to stay trapped in a jail cell of bitterness, serving time for someone else's crime.

Truth: Unforgiveness is like drinking a cup of poison, hoping it hurts the other person.

Burying the Hatchet: Old Joe was dying. For years he had been at odds with Bill, formerly one of his best friends. Wanting to straighten things out, he sent word for Bill to come see him. When Bill arrived, Joe told him that he was afraid to go into eternity with such a bad feeling between them. Then, very reluctantly and with great effort, Joe apologized for things he had said and done. He also assured Bill that he forgave him for his offenses. Everything seemed fine until Bill turned to go. As he walked out of the room, Joe called out after him, "But, remember, if I get better, this doesn't count!"

Do not be deceived by your fallen flesh which will tell you that you can speak the words "I forgive" saying you bury the hatchet while your fallen flesh says just be sure to leave the handle exposed in case they hurt you again.

D. L. Moody Those who say they will forgive but can't forget,
simply bury the hatchet but leave the handle out for immediate use.
We like to "bury the hatchet" with the handle sticking out.
That way we can easily pick it up again and use it to our advantage.
How different is the forgiveness Jesus talked about!
If our sinless Lord is willing to forgive us--with all our faults--how can we withhold pardon from those who have sinned against us? True Christlike forgiveness buries the hatchet completely.

We are to forgive from the heart because our heart is the heart of our problem,
the seat and seed of our unforgiving spirit.
You can say "I forgive" with your lips, but the seed of unforgiveness remains planted in your heart! Just as seeds of crabgrass can be difficult to eradicate, seeds of unforgiveness in the soil of our heart can be very difficult to remove.
Unforgiveness can hinder our spiritual growth and relationship with God,
necessitating regular self-examination. [Ps. 139:23-24]
For believers to hold onto unforgiveness and/or grudges can lead to spiritual & emotional torment. The only key out of that "dungeon:"

Grant forgiveness to those who have offended you!

Enabled only by the Holy Spirit can we take the measures necessary to remove the "crabgrass-like" seeds of unforgiveness and bitterness from the soil of our hearts.

Being merciful is a characteristic that demands of us a disposition of heart and life that is contrary to human nature. Jesus said a merciful heart is a characteristic of a citizen of the Kingdom, one who has received a supernatural "heart transplant."

- To be merciful is to actively show kindness, forgiveness, & help to those in need, reflecting God's own merciful nature.
- Result of Indwelling Holy Spirit: Meek Hunger & Thirst After Righteousness

Spurgeon: Lord, make me of a meek, forgiving spirit!

May my heart be as ready to pardon offenses as it is to beat!

A Call to Compassion: We are the servant forgiven of an immeasurable debt. Our sin against God is far greater than any wrong others could commit against us. Yet, through Christ, God cancels our debt entirely, not by diminishing its weight but by absorbing the cost Himself.

The parable warns us of the spiritual danger in refusing to forgive:

By doing so, we fail to reflect the mercy we've been shown.

1. Recognize Your Forgiveness: Reflect on the magnitude of God's forgiveness in your life. We must understand the breadth and length and height and depth of God's forgiveness in Christ on the Cross,

Ps. 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 44:22 "I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

Micah 7:18-19 "Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

2. Extend Grace Freely When others wrong you, remember the mercy God has shown you. Forgiveness isn't about condoning the offense; it's about releasing the offender and entrusting justice to God.
3. Forgiveness as Worship When we forgive, we honor God. It's an act of obedience that mirrors His love and demonstrates trust in His justice and grace.

Truth: We who have been forgiven so much have no right to withhold forgiveness from others. Keep forgiving, keep showing mercy. Don't stop, until you stop needing mercy which is never.

The Beauty Of God's Limitless Mercy:

Lam. 3:22-23 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,

because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is Your faithfulness.

Ps. 136:26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever.

Eph. 2:4a But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,...

As God gives you a fresh start each new day, so should you reach beyond the pain and give to those who have hurt you a fresh start through your forgiveness. Mercy is forgiveness soaked in the love of God. Every day, when you forgive, the anger, bitterness, resentment and pain that you feel from the wrong suffered at the hands of another is weakened. It's only through the giving of mercy that your emotional wounds will be healed. If you do not show mercy and forgive the unforgivable, you may never find total healing for your spirit, mind and body.

The Basis Of Mercy: Truth. There can be no mercy without truth.

Ps. 85:10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

To show mercy is not to minimize sin. There can be no mercy without truth.

The justice of God says our sins must be punished.

- Judgment is needed and expected. Mercy is the withholding of judgment.

United Mercy with Truth: His message balanced mercy with a demand for holiness.

He told the woman caught in adultery, "go and sin no more."

Extend Mercy To Those Who Have Harmed You.

- Involves a conscious choice to forgive and withhold punishment, which can lead to personal healing.
- A way to reflect the grace shown to us.
- It is not about condoning the behavior but about releasing the need for retaliation, even if boundaries are still necessary

It requires compassion and grace: Mercy involves choosing compassion over condemnation and extending grace, which is the undeserved reward of forgiveness.

Merciful actually describes a person who shows leniency and forgiveness towards somebody who has offended them. It is the Ultimate Death To Self.

By God's grace, hymn writer Fanny Crosby was able not only to forgive the doctor who ruined her vision, but she was also able to thank God for her blindness. She wrote this little prayer:

- "I am praying, Blessed Savior, to be more and more like Thee.
I am praying that Thy Spirit like a dove may rest on me."

When Forgiveness Seems Impossible: Corrie ten Boom, author of The Hiding Place, was taken captive and spent time in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. After the war, God sent Corrie on a mission of mercy through the war-torn cities to encourage residents to choose forgiveness over bitterness. After a speaking engagement, a man approached her. She recognized him and remembered him as a particularly cruel guard in one of the concentration camps. He approached Corrie and said...
Fraulein, you don't know me, but I was a guard in one of those camps.

After the war, God saved me. I wish I could go back and undo those years. I can't. I've been prompted by God to come tonight and ask you, would you please forgive me? The flashbacks in her mind replayed the atrocities, the death of her sister, the abuse. Then God's Spirit said to her, Corrie, what have you been telling everyone else to do? As an act of your will, will you choose to forgive?
I reached out my hand, and I put it in his, and I said, 'You're forgiven.'
At that moment, it was like a dam broke loose, all the bitterness & resentment. God set me free
"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and to discover the prisoner was you."
"Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hatred. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness."

On a particular Sunday in January 1956, Elizabeth Elliot waited with other missionary wives to hear if her husband and his team had made contact with an Ecuadorian tribe they were attempting to reach with the Gospel. Hours passed and the radio remained silent. A search party went to look for the team. A grim report followed. They found they team who had been speared to death by the tribe they were attempting to reach with the Gospel. Elizabeth Elliot was left without her husband, and her infant daughter was left without a father. She could have taken her grief back to the US and abandoned God's call on her life. However, she not only stayed in Ecuador, but she worked to reach the Auca tribe that had killed her husband. For 2 years she chose to live among the tribe. She met two Auca women who taught her and Rachel Saint [sister of Nate Saint] the language of the Auca people. They were invited to live among the tribe. Elizabeth, showing compassion, forgiveness and mercy, began teaching them the Bible. They witnessed many of the Auca come to Christ which led to a lasting peace and the eventual conversion to Christianity, including some of the men who had killed the 5 missionaries.

Steve Saint: One of the men who speared my Dad was saved and adopted me as his own. Two years later two of the men who helped speared my dad baptized me in the same river where he died. Only God could write this story.

Jesus' teaching is meant to lodge itself into our hearts so that we consider what it means to offer mercy in situations. It's not going to feel fair.

The one who extends grace always absorbs some type of cost.

How do we absorb that cost when everything in us feels like we don't want to?

- Remember our own brokenness.
- Remember how Jesus absorbed the cost for us on the cross and extended mercy.

We're not giving away something that originated with us, something we created or invented.

We're simply showing off the gift of mercy we've received first in Christ.

We're just re-gifting what we've already been given. God's mercy is bottomless.

The mercy we give away has already been promised back. [Matt. 5:7]

Jesus says, *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*

How is it possible to show mercy and forgiveness like God showed us mercy?

Col. 1:27a Christ in us. By the "Spirit of Christ." The Spirit-controlled person has access to His power to love [Gal 5:22-23] the offender and demonstrate mercy.

Things that are in no way natural are produced in us by the Spirit of God.

There is a progression. As we see ourselves grow, becoming hungry and thirsty for His righteousness, we'll see ourselves become more and more *"merciful"* to those around us.

Truth: We who have been forgiven so much have no right to withhold forgiveness from others.

Keep forgiving, keep showing mercy. Don't stop, until you stop needing mercy which is never.

It is easier to look at someone who is poor or in a tough spot and reach out to help them, but what about someone who has deeply hurt you or taken the life of someone you love?

Each of us will come to the intersection of bitterness and forgiveness. Which way will you turn?