

The Secret to Happiness
“Happiness Through Showing Mercy”
Matthew 5:7
Pastor John Miller

Introduction: We come today in our series on “The Secret to Happiness,” to the fifth of our Lord’s Beatitudes.

- It’s found in the seventh verse of Matthew 5.
- (v. 7) “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.
- “Blessed,” “how happy,” or “God’s approval”

*** Jesus spoke these words to a world that did not admire mercy.**

- The Roman world in Jesus’ day admired justice, judgement and power (no mercy or compassion).
- The Greek philosophers called mercy “a disease of the soul.”
- It is much the same in our world today!

*** Jesus makes it clear that all those who live in the Kingdom of Heaven are marked by mercy.**

*** Note the progression of the Beatitudes that leads to being “merciful.”**

- (v.v. 3-6) Inward
- (v. 7) Outward

I. What Does it Mean to be Merciful?

*** The basic idea of the Greek word for “merciful” is “to have mercy on,” “to give help to the wretched,” or “to help relieve the miserable.”**

- Mercy is “compassion for people in need.”
- “Grace” answer to the undeserving; “Mercy” answers to the miserable.

*** Jesus is saying we are “blessed” or “happy” when we are compassionate and gentle toward the miserable and helpless.**

*** The word “merciful” is closely related to the word “sympathize”—“to experience with or suffer with;” “To get inside the other’s skin.”**

*** God is merciful!**

- Its one of His essential attributes

- 2 Corinthians 1:3- “Blessed be God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”

II. What Are the Marks of the Merciful?

A. It compassion for others in need

1. Illustration- Luke 10- The Parable of the Good Samaritan
2. Illustration- Jesus was merciful
 - a. He gave sight to the blind Bartimaeus (Luke 18)
 - b. He raised the widow on Nain’s son (Luke 7)
 - i. “When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her ‘do not weep.’”
 - c. He had compassion on the hungry crowd and fed them (Matthew 15:32)
3. Ask yourself—Do I show mercy and compassion toward those who are miserable and distressed? Those who are in need?
 - a. 1 John 3:17- “But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?”

B. The be “merciful” means I am kind in my judgment of others

1. Illustration- Jesus said in Matthew 7:1-5- “The merciful man looks for the best in others instead of the worst. He is slow to condemn and quick to commend.”
2. Ask yourself—Do I show mercy toward others who have fallen, or am I judgmental, faultfinding, censorious or critical?
 - a. Remember- “Blessed are the merciful”

C. The merciful person is forgiving toward others

1. Illustration- The story of Joseph
2. Nothing demonstrates more that you have experienced God’s love, grace, mercy and forgiveness than when you show love, grace, mercy and forgiveness toward others!
3. Illustration- Jesus and the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Matthew 18)
4. This fifth Beatitude is the perfect corrective for all those who are caught in bitterness and un-forgiveness!
 - a. Ask yourself—Do I forgive others?

D. When I am merciful, I am acting like God

1. Micah 7:18- “Who is a God like you...you pardoneth iniquity....you delighteth in mercy”
2. The Bible says God’s mercies are:
 - a. Great (1 Kings 3:6)

- b. Plenteous (Psalm 86:5)
- c. Tender (Luke 1:78)
- d. Abundant (1 Peter 1:3)
- e. Higher than the heavens (Psalm 103:10-14- “He hath not dealt with us after our sins (mercy); nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.”)
- f. From everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 103:17)
- g. New every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23- “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.”)

III. What is the Promise to the Merciful?

- * (v. 7) “...for they shall obtain mercy”
- * “They” is emphatic—so “they only”
 - It does not mean we merit God’s mercy.
- * We show mercy because we have received mercy.

CONCLUSION

*** How can God show us “mercy” when we are sinners deserving of God’s just punishment?**

- **Answer- The cross of Christ!**
- **God’s love, grace, mercy and righteousness!**
- **Titus 3:5- “Not by works of righteousness...”**