

The Mercy of God

by Carter Conlon

The mercy of God is His desire to be known as merciful and to provide for and care for those in need, even those who have rebelled against and scoffed at His Word.

Duration: 46:48

Scripture: Psalm 14:1, Psalm 107:1, Psalm 107:12-14, Psalm 107:16-22, Psalm 107:31-32

Topics: "Mercy Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on Psalm 107 and emphasizes the enduring mercy of God. He highlights how God's mercy is shown to those who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, and lonely. The speaker relates this to the experiences of individuals who may feel lost and hopeless, both physically and spiritually. He encourages people to cry out to the Lord in their distress, as God delivers and leads them to a place of habitation. The sermon concludes with a call for all to praise the Lord for His goodness and wonderful works to humanity.

Transcript

Bless the Lord. Psalm 107, please, if you'll turn there in your Bibles. I'm going to speak this morning about the mercy of God.

We're going to be going into a season of prayer and fasting, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. And in that fast, we're going to be asking the Lord to be merciful to our generation. Every facet of our society, every person, everyone.

And I hope today to be able to pull out of the Scriptures something that will give you and I faith as we begin to fast and pray for God's mercy. I realized when I began to really dig through the Scriptures on the mercy of God that there's so much on God's mercy in the Bible that I could easily preach for two years straight on it from this pulpit and probably not even scratch the depth of it. The mercy of God.

Father, I thank you, Lord, for your mercy. I thank you, God Almighty, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. You're the only one, Lord, that takes this word and makes it live.

I'm asking you, God Almighty, to take the words of these pages and let them come and burn like fire within our hearts, O God. I pray that we'd be like those that were traveling on the Emmaus Road when you appeared and spoke to them and their testimony was, did not our hearts burn within us as he spoke? God,

let our hearts burn today. Let there be something of faith arise in us, Lord, that you are longing for in the hour that we're living in.

I ask you for a covering of the Holy Spirit. I ask you, God, to govern my mind and emotions. Govern the thoughts of my heart.

Govern the word that comes out of my mouth. In all things, Lord, let the desire of your heart be realized in this sanctuary today. Lord, we want to hear from you.

God Almighty, I trust that as I yield my body, a vessel to you, that you will speak to every heart. And I praise you for it with everything in me. In Jesus' mighty name.

Psalms 107, verse 1. And then verses 31 and 32, and then we'll get to the rest later. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Forever.

I'm going to start with this verse and going to finish with it in about, hopefully, 35 or 40 minutes. I'm going to finish again with verse 1. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Verses 31 and 32.

Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people and praise him in the assembly of the elders. I think God is saying, if everyone knew, if they fully understood the depth of the mercy of God, there'd be a shout of praise everywhere.

Men would praise him for his goodness and his wonderful works to the children of men. He'd be exalted in the congregation and he would be praised in the assembly of the elders. Mercy.

It's one of the ways that we're clearly shown in Scripture that God wants to be known as merciful in the earth. Now, if you look at this verse of Scripture and if we realize that the Bible is not just a man who decided to put a pen in their hand and write some thoughts about God. That would make it not divinely inspired.

We say the Scripture is inspired of the Holy Spirit, which means that the words on these pages were given by God. And if you truly believe that, then verse 1 of Psalm 107 is God writing about himself. And it's not a boast because God can't boast the way that men can in their fallen condition.

God can only speak the truth about his own character. It's not a boast. And he says, give thanks to the Lord for his good, his mercy endures forever.

It's as if the Lord is saying, I can't write about myself other than what I am. I can't ask you to sing a song that isn't true. And if I wrote it down in the pages of Scripture, you can sing this with the full confidence in your heart that what I'm telling you I am, I really am.

My mercy does really endure forever, and it is a reason to give thanks. And in this mercy, my goodness to mankind is made known. Now in this Psalm 107, from verses 4 to 9, he speaks of his mercy to the hungry, to the thirsty, to the homeless, and to the lonely.

Listen to verse 4, it says, they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary, that means in a lonely way. They found no city to dwell in. Do you remember when that was your testimony? Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

Wondering, God, is there a reason to live? Isn't there more than this? And I'm not talking just about the person who's living in the park, I'm talking about somebody who's living on Park Avenue as well. Looking out the window, can't trust anybody anymore. Friends have failed.

Lonely, solitary, hungry, thirsty, their soul fainted in them. And verse 6 says, then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble. And folks, that cry sometimes is not more than just a groan.

Sometimes it's just looking out the window to heaven and just wondering, is there more? Is there something I'm missing? And He delivered them out of their distresses and He led them forth by the right way that they might go, verse 7, to a city of habitation. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men, for He satisfies the longing soul and fills the hungry soul with goodness. Oh, the psalmist says that men would praise the Lord.

We have praised the Lord in this sanctuary today. Thanks be to God. But I do believe there's a deeper praise even than what we're experiencing today.

Verses 10 to 16 speaks of His mercy towards those who have rebelled against and scoffed at the Word of God. Think about our society. Think about the number of scoffers that are living today, even in New York City.

And verse 10 talks about His mercy. It says, such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and iron. Why? Why are they so bound? Because they rebelled against the words of God and condemned the counsel of the Most High.

They scoffed at God's Word. And if somebody along the way tried to whisper something to them about God, they laughed at it, they sneered at it. And because of it, they're sitting in darkness.

Death is just waiting to swallow them forever. They're bound in a place that no man, no woman in their own strength can ever get out of. Affliction and iron.

And it says, verse 12, Therefore He brought down their heart with labor, and they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and broke their bands and sundered.

Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men. For He's broken the gates of brass, and He's cut the bars of iron and sundered. Talks about, again, the mercy of God towards those, in verses 17 to 22, who are fools.

And according to Psalm 14.1, these are people who say in their hearts, there is no God. The Bible declares them to be fools. I don't know if you can be a bigger fool today than to say in your heart, there is no God.

First of all, if you're saying that, what are you doing here? What are you doing in this place? Why have you even come here? Fools, because of their transgression, verse 17, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhors all manner of meat, and they draw near to the gates of death. In other words, God says, I've tried to feed them.

Testimony of my love and grace, as Paul says in Romans, has been everywhere. From the order of the universe, to various promptings of the Holy Spirit, to things that have come their way to tell them and to

speak to them about the fact there is a God who is merciful. But they've abhorred everything that the hand of God has tried to give them, and they draw near to the gates of death.

And then they cry to the Lord in their trouble, and He saves them out of their distresses. Talk about the mercy of God. He sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions.

Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men. And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing. Verses 23 to 30 speak about God's mercy towards those who thought that commerce and money would satisfy their deepest desires.

God is merciful, folks. If we got what we deserved, David, the psalmist, had this revelation in his heart. He said, Lord, if you marked iniquities, who could stand? If you took account of all of our failings, if you judged us the way we would judge ourselves, were we God, none of us, Lord, would ever stand in your presence.

Talks in verse 23, it says, they go down to the sea in ships, and they do business in great waters. They see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. He commands and raises the stormy wind, which lifts up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heaven. They go down again to the depths. Their soul is melted because of trouble.

Now, folks, this is where we're living today. We're living at a time when commerce is failing. And those who have been merchants from on the seas and as it is all over the world are seeing a storm that is rising.

And it's so perplexing that nobody knows how to handle it now. And Jesus Himself said, men's hearts would fail them for fear because of the things that are going to come upon the earth in the last days. You see them coming up to the heights.

One day saying, oh, there's a glimmer of hope in the future. Then the next day going down again into the depths and talking about endless years of trouble and seeing no way out. They reel to and fro.

Verse 27, stagger like a drunken man and are at their wits end. Then, verse 28, they cry to the Lord in their trouble and He brings them out of their distresses. He makes the storm a calm so that the waves thereof are still.

And then they are glad because they are quiet. And He brings them to their desired haven. God in His mercy says to any generation who thinks that commerce and money satisfies the deepest desire of their heart.

He said, I'm going to remove this from you. I'm going to show you that it doesn't satisfy. And then I'm going to bring you to that place you always wanted to be.

You were looking for security. You had a deep inner desire but misguidedly thought that money was going to bring you to that place. And the Lord says, you can't serve God and money.

You can't serve them both with equal passion. You can't give your life to both. So He said, I'm going to take away that what can be shaken will be shaken.

That only that which cannot be shaken might remain. And thanks be to God when all of it's over, when all the waves have done what they're supposed to do, Christ is still standing there above the waves, above

the storm, above the fire, above the trial. Thanks be to God that in Jesus Christ everyone will find in His mercy who chooses to receive His mercy.

Everything they've been looking for. In Exodus chapter 25, please don't turn there, I'll just share it with you. When God gave the instruction to Moses to establish the ark, which represented in effect His presence in the earth to that generation.

That's the closest to God being with them that they understood. It was a box, it was carried by the priesthood with poles that went through rings on the side of it. Inside of the box was the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

There was a pot of manna and there was Aaron's rod that budded. And then above all of this, there was a seat called the mercy seat. And He said there in verse 22 of Exodus 25, He said, you put the mercy seat in verse 21 above the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I will give you.

And verse 22 He says, and there I will meet with you, and I will commune with you from above the mercy seat. Now here's what you could say. In the tabernacle was the law.

And Paul says in Romans 3 and verse 24 that the law was a schoolmaster. The law was given by God to prove that all are under sin. That nobody in their own strength and their own righteousness could ever attain to what we're called to be in God.

Without the law, there's no knowledge of sin. The law is a mirror. In effect, it shows us the standard of the holiness of God.

And as we look into it, we begin to realize if there's any intelligence in our hearts, that we can't attain to it in our own strength. It's impossible. Some of the apostles called it a yoke.

It was an impossibility to attain to this type of righteousness that was reflected in the law. It was a schoolmaster, Paul said. And the law brought us to the knowledge that we needed a savior.

That we couldn't get out of our condition in our own strength. And so the law was in the tabernacle. The manna was also there.

And the manna was representative of the daily provision found in the word of God. God provides for us daily in his word. Give us this day our daily bread is what he told us to pray in the New Testament.

And every day in this book we find truth and sustenance to get us through the day. Also in this tabernacle was the rod. Now it was Aaron's rod.

And it's just a dry dead stick that suddenly by God's supernatural touch budded. And produced flowers and produced fruit. And it's the promise of life coming from death.

That is the promise of the covenant. That is the promise of God. That's what it was all leading to.

That's why we're here. We're not here to learn how in our own strength to obey the law. We're not here just to read the Bible but not understand what it's leading to.

Where it's guiding us to. There's a promise of life coming from death. To you and to me.

And thanks be to God. That's what has changed my life and carried me all these years. It's this daily promise of God that out of your death I'm going to bring life.

The old things are going to be put away. And behold all things are going to become new. And I'm going to live inside of you.

And I'm going to establish a testimony of my life inside of you. That all men may know that I live. Praise be to God.

But above it all. These things were in the box. Above it all was the mercy seat.

And God said it's from there that all the glory of the living God would be manifested. There's a kind of glory of God appeared above the mercy seat. And he said, I don't know how to explain it to you other than to say, It's in mercy that we finally realize the fullness of what God intended to do among men.

Mercy. God said, I didn't come. Christ said, I didn't come to condemn the world, but that the world through me might be saved.

Yes, there's a just judgment coming on all of the world. And it's just, and I'll tell you why it's just. Because God has extended his hand of mercy on all of society and all of the world.

And that's why Paul says clearly in Romans, all men are without excuse. And once we have understood, once we've known about this mercy of God, and have chosen freely to reject it, then judgment is just. That's why every tongue will be silenced other than to say Jesus Christ is Lord, when they stand before the throne of God.

His evidences of mercy are fully revealed in scriptural history. The story of Paul in Acts 27, boarding a ship, a type of the world, I guess, in its direction, its pursuits. Paul is a type in the story of the word of God that is sent to a self-willed, stubborn generation.

And suddenly, ignoring the word of God, they head out thinking they're going to get to their desired end, as we started out reading in Psalm 107. And suddenly a storm comes. A storm such as they've never seen.

And the whole of that ship is perplexed now. And they're throwing anchors out of the stern. They're throwing out their own tackling.

Tell me, is it not a type of where we're living right now? Are you not seeing this fulfilled in our generation? If you're following the news, do you not see this story being played out again in our time? A generation that has ignored the warnings. They've ignored the word of God. They've ignored the peril of charting a course through this world without giving heed to the word of the living God.

But in the midst of it all is an apostle called Paul. He's in the belly of that ship, waiting for an appointed season by God. And when all hope is lost, and when the ship is coming apart, they're doing everything they know how.

They've built this thing with their own hands, but they can't contain it now. They can't control it. It's leaking on every side.

It was like the Titanic of their generation, spilling over from compartment to compartment. You can see it happening inside the ship, and the panic that's going on in that ship. Finally, in the middle of the storm, a

man of God stands out.

What is his message? It's mercy. I've been with God. I'm going on a journey.

And I tell you, Paul says, to be of good cheer, because God said, You're going where I've sent you to go, and I've given you all that sailed with you. Now, folks, this was a mercy call to these people. It didn't mean they were spiritually saved.

They were physically saved from drowning in an ocean. But they were at least given another chance, even though the ship was lost. The people were given a chance to hear about the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

No wonder when they landed on the shore, and Paul was gathering sticks. No wonder Satan tried to bite that hand. He hates the hand of mercy.

He hates the hand that expresses and extends the mercy of God, because once people see this and understand it, especially in a season of distress like we're in today, the devil himself knows that many will come to the saving knowledge of Christ. James, in chapter 2, verse 13, says this, Mercy rejoices against judgment. Yes, judgment will come.

Judgment will be severe. Judgment will be thorough. Judgment will be just.

Judgment is running around the racetrack as it is, heading to the finish line. And it looks like judgment is going to win. But, folks, if you can follow me in this, suddenly another runner comes around the corner on the inside track and starts making ground.

You can hear the announcers, the commentators saying, Who is this that's just come around the corner and seems to be gaining ground on judgment? And when they get to the finish line, there's mercy thrust his chest out and crosses the line before judgment and rejoices against judgment. If you can follow the thought, judgment comes, but mercy rejoices against judgment. Praise be to God.

Praise be to God. The journey was judged. The pall was drawn.

The ship was judged. The tackling was judged. The arrogance was judged.

The ignorance was judged. It was all judged because it all came apart. But the men and women on it were spared for a season and given a chance to know God.

There's nowhere else I've found in Scripture where you see the mercy of God more than in Exodus chapter 32. In Exodus chapter 32, the people of Israel had come out. They'd been delivered by a strong hand of God.

Moses had brought them to the mountain. He was in the mountain receiving the law of God. And while he was there, the people made a golden calf and said, These be thy gods.

Aaron said, These be thy gods that brought you out of out of Egypt. And when they came down from the mountain, the Lord spoke to Moses these incredible words. He said, Now therefore, in verse 10 of Exodus 32, Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them and that I may consume them and I'll make of thee a great nation.

I'm stunned by this. God says to a man, Now listen, I'm determining to get angry. They've done something that is worthy of judgment.

And I'm going to go down and I'm going to consume them in a moment. Now let me alone. Can you imagine God saying to a man, Now just let me alone.

Don't stand between my judgment and the people. And Moses stood there. And Moses said now, verses 11 to 14.

He said, Lord, I want you to remember the honor of your name. What will Egypt say about you? They'll say that you brought them out from captivity to do the mischief in the wilderness. And it will bring dishonor to your name to do this.

And bring your own name to reproach. And then he appeals to mercy. He says, God, remember your promise to Abraham, to Isaac and to Israel.

How you promised to bless him. How you promised to make his seed mighty and send it out as a blessing in all of the earth. And the scripture says the Lord changed his mind.

Can you imagine? Now, my question to you is, do we not have the same power with God? As the church of Jesus Christ. Can we not stand between the judgment of God and its society that is worthy of it. And say, Lord, for the honor of your name.

For the promise that we were to be a blessing in the earth. And through the seed of Abraham, which is the church ultimately of Jesus Christ. That life would come and blessing would come.

Lord, can we not stand? Do we not have power to stand and ask you? You know, we've always seen this, you know, where the scripture says, God said, I look for a man to stand in the gap. And we quite often see that as standing, you know, between people who are deserving of death and the devil. Have you ever thought that the greater terror is the justice of God? It's the judgment of God.

It's standing in the gap as Moses did. And saying, Lord, I know the society is worthy of death. But I'm asking you, as you've had mercy on me, God almighty have mercy on them.

Moses stood before the Lord and said, Lord, if you're going to judge them, then you have to blot my name out of your book too as well. And the Lord said, no, I'm not going to do this. He said, but I'll tell you what, I'm going to send an angel with you.

And the angel is going to go with you into the place of promise. He said, because if I go with you, there's a strong chance that my anger is going to rise and I'm going to consume the people. And Moses again stands and says, well, if you don't go with us, I don't want to go.

He said, what difference? If you don't go with us, what makes us any different from the people of the world? All we will be is a people with a message and an opinion. The only thing that makes a difference is that you are with us and you are going with us. And again, the scripture says the Lord changed his mind and said, I'll go with you.

It was at that point in Exodus. I want you to turn to this Exodus chapter 33 and verse 18. It was at this point that Moses says, show me your glory.

He says, I want to know you. This is the context of the word glory in the Old Testament. He said, I want to know you.

I want to see your full splendor of your person. I want to understand the weighty treasure of your character. Moses was saying, God, there are things in you that I don't understand.

I understood the judgment of Egypt. I saw you send plagues and I saw you slay the firstborn of those who they thought could stand against you. I saw you part the sea.

I saw you drown Pharaoh's army. But I'm seeing something here. I'm seeing something in your character.

I'm seeing God that I can stand in your presence and change your mind. I want to know what it is that is in your heart that allows me to do this. And folks, it's essential for us today because otherwise our prayers will be just empty repetition.

We won't really believe that we have any power with God. But folks, the scripture commands us to pray. But we've got to pray with understanding.

We've got to pray with hearts of faith. We've got to pray believing that what we ask God for, He will actually do. We're not praying for New York City to consume it on our loss.

We're not praying so we can be the biggest church in the city. We're praying so that men, women, and children don't have to go to hell, but may find the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Show me your glory.

Show me your glory. And the Lord, He says, I'll make all my goodness in chapter 33 verse 19 pass before you, and I'll proclaim my name before you. And I'll be gracious to whom I'll be gracious, and I'll show mercy to whom I'll show mercy.

In chapter 34 and verse 6, it says, And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed. Now here's God defining Himself. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon the children's children unto the third and the fourth generation.

Now here's how I see this. God passes by and says, This is who I am. Mercy, mercy, mercy, judgment.

Mercy, mercy, mercy, judgment. In other words, those who reject my mercy face a certain and a just judgment. But folks, you and I have to pray.

This must be our cry. God, before your judgment comes, your mercy must be known again. You've got to send your mercy into the streets of New York City.

You've got to touch Wall Street with mercy. You've got to go to our colleges with mercy. You have to touch our boroughs with mercy.

You have to touch the rich, the poor, the middle class, all race, every tongue, every language, every color. You've got to touch the city with your mercy. And if the people choose to reject your mercy, your judgment then is just.

Not that it would be unjust in any event anyway. But God, send your mercy. Send your mercy.

Let mercy come around that corner. Let mercy triumph one more time. Yes, the city may not be here as we've known it.

Things may so radically and most likely will change in our generation. But it's not about sandcastles and brick buildings and sisters of Congress. Folks, the whole mission of Christ is about people.

It's about souls. It's about men and women born in the image of God who lost that image because of sin. And God sent His Son to a cross to pay the price for that sin, to break the chains of hell, and to give everyone a chance to come home to God, not just for time, but for eternity.

We must pray for mercy. We must cry out for mercy. This mercy is clearly revealed in Jesus Christ and the cross.

And it must be known one more time in our generation. And it can only be revealed through a people who have themselves come to freedom through the mercy of God. You've got to know this thing before you pray it.

You have to experience it before you can preach it. You've got to be a partaker of this. You've got to know that you're standing today by mercy.

I'll tell you, if the holiness of God came into this sanctuary, we'd be on our faces and there'd only be one word in our mouth, mercy, oh God, mercy, oh God. Those who have trusted in Christ, we would find out that we've been standing in mercy. The mercy of God has been our covering.

The mercy of God was expressed in Jesus Christ when He became a man. God came to the earth, took on a human body, and in His mercy, in His mercy, let men spit in His face. In His mercy, let His back be whipped.

In His mercy, endured the scorn of the ignorant when with a word He could have destroyed the whole of creation. In His mercy, went to a cross. In His mercy, breathed His last.

In His mercy, pardoned a thief. In His mercy, in His mercy, said, Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing. And in His mercy, said, it is finished.

It's finished. I have made a way for all men to come home to God. Hallelujah! Glory to God! Now, how do we do this? Just give me a second.

And when the people of God were sent out of captivity to rebuild the temple, the temple of the original glory built by Solomon was destroyed. The people were taken into captivity. We might be seeing this repeated also in our generation.

There was a Pentecost. There was a season of power that seemingly crumbled under our feet. And much of the testimony of Christ has gone into captivity.

But God suddenly called and made a way, and people began to come home. And He promised that the second temple would have a greater glory than the first. Now, we know that was fulfilled, because Jesus Christ walked into that second temple.

It was a type of Christ in the presence of God in the Old Testament, but it was Christ Himself walked into the temple that was rebuilt. The people came back, and they started to try to build this temple. You see,

there's another temple.

There was a first, there was a second, but there's a third temple. And that third temple is not a physical temple about to be built someday in Jerusalem. The third temple is you.

It's me. It's the body of Jesus Christ. It's where Christ has come to dwell.

It's not made with human hands. It's made by the hand of God. It's God's choice to dwell within us as His body on the earth.

The people came back, and from the leaders down, they were so discouraged. There was opposition to the rebuilding of this temple. And Satan will oppose this thing with everything he's got, because he knows when the glory comes, what happens to his kingdom, when the weightiness of God comes, when the character of God comes to the temple.

He's already lived through it. He's already experienced it. He knows what it does to his kingdom.

He will oppose it with everything that he has in his wicked arsenal in past and in present generations. But a prophet rose up called Zechariah among others, and he told the people who are trying to rebuild, the leaders who are trying to rebuild, the rank and file who are trying to rebuild. He told them, listen, the help of God is going to come to you.

What God has called you to do can be done. Don't buy the lie that you can't get free today. Don't buy the lie that you can't know the mercy of God in the deepest area of struggle in your heart and in your life.

Don't buy the lie that there's too much rubbish, and too much rubble, and too much opposition. That is a lie. If it were not possible for you to have the freedom that Christ bought for you on Calvary, then you would not be facing the opposition of the enemy.

If it were not possible, the devil would move on to something else. He said it's not by might nor by power that this thing is going to happen. In Zechariah 4, 6, he said it's by the Holy Spirit of God, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

In verse 7, he says, who is this mountain that stands before you that I've called to rebuild the temple? He says, before Zerubbabel, who is the type of the leadership, it will become a plain. You'll speak to this mountain, and this mountain will be removed. Not because we have more faith than anyone else, but because we understand that God's mercy has called us home to rebuild, that His glory may come again into His house.

And in verse 8, he says the temple is going to be finished, and when the last stone is put in place, you're going to stand back, and he says you're going to shout grace, grace to it. When it's finally finished, the last stones that are going to be put into the temple of God called the church of Jesus Christ, the last generation, the last people, the last ones to come in, the last stones that will be put in are going to step back, and they're going to shout grace. It's all by grace.

And when you look at this word in the original text, it's spoken in the context of the strong and the weak in negotiation. God being the strong, and you and I being the weak. And a derivative of the word that is used in the Hebrew text is mercy.

God, Your mercy enabled me to be free, enabled this temple to represent something where the glory of God could come and abide again. It's Your mercy, Lord. That will be the message of the last day church.

Mercy, mercy, mercy, mercy, mercy. We'll shout it. We'll sing it.

We'll preach it. We'll proclaim it. We'll live it.

The mercy of God, the character of God, the glory of God. In 2 Chronicles 5, verses 13 and 14, the ark was brought into the temple. After Solomon had finished constructing the temple, they brought in the ark.

Now remember, there's a procession coming in here, priests carrying. They weren't going to be sung about. A box representing, in a sense, where God was dwelling and what God had done among people.

The commandments were not going to be sung about. The manor wasn't going to be sung about. Aaron's staff was not going to be sung about.

God said, I want you to sing this song. When I come into the temple, this is the song that I want you to sing. And the scripture says, they said, Praise the Lord, for He is good, and for His mercy endures forever.

And the scripture says, when they were of all of one voice, one accord. Does it not remind you of Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, says they were with one accord and in one place. And everyone in that room knew they stood by mercy.

Most all had fled in cowardice. Most all had failed. They had the most clear, profound, prophetic, godly teaching of any generation.

They had Jesus Himself for three years, listening to His teaching, and they had failed in their own strength. And so they went into the upper room. What was their song? The song wasn't about any of these other things.

It was about the mercy of God. And they were gathered together, just as in Solomon's temple. And the focus was on the mercy of God.

Praise the Lord. They said, for He is good, and His mercy endures forever. You know, I asked myself a question when I was preparing this.

Why does God's mercy have to endure forever? You don't need mercy in heaven. So why? Why does it endure forever? Why didn't they say, praise the Lord, He is good, His mercy endures for time, for a season, upon the earth. Why was it forever? What makes His mercy endure forever? Well, there's two things.

Firstly, that's who He is. So He has to endure. He can't change His character.

He didn't develop like a little side to His character just for the season, where the earth, as we know it, has been left to exist. He is, and that's why it will endure. But there's a second reason that I believe.

You see, there's a certain choir that's going to heaven, and this choir is going to have a song that will never die. I could see myself preparing this, and I don't know how to explain it. I'm not trying to be light with you.

I don't know how to explain this, but I could see myself walking out of my mansion and going over to Pastor Neil's house and say, hey, come on, we're going to go sing, and Pastor Teresa, the Bible says we won't be married in heaven, but we'll have a duplex. I have that. I'm going to go get Pastor William.

I'm going to go get the elders. And you see, Christmas never ends in heaven, so we'll be singing all the time. And we say, let's go caroling.

What do you think our song is going to be? What do you think we're going to be singing about in heaven for all of eternity? His mercy endures forever. I don't know how big heaven is. I don't understand the expanse of it, but I do know that forever, forever my song will be about the mercy of God, because one day you and I are going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, not to be judged for our sin, but it's a different judgment for the church.

But we will see Him in His holiness, and we will then understand the infinite distance between a holy God and fallen men. We'll see a gulf so wide that nothing but the mercy of God could ever have bridged it. We'll be stunned that God would ever come to us.

It'll be dumbfounding to our minds. And if there is such a thing as a crown on our heads, no wonder we will take it off and throw it at His feet. Immediate response.

Oh God, I don't deserve this. This all belongs to You. You took the initiative.

It was Your power, Your grace, Your mercy that came and gave me the ability to even be here. It was all Your initiative. And even my response most of the time was feeble and not deserving of the grace that's in my heart and in my life.

One million years from this day, I will still be traveling throughout heaven. And that would be my only song. I don't know if there are created beings out there that may not know the history of the earth.

But if they don't, we're going to get it to them. We're going to go and say it's mercy. His mercy endures forever.

We want to praise the Lord for He is good, for His mercy endures forever. And when they sang this song, the glory of the Lord filled the temple. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit now.

And when they sang this song, when they understood how merciful God is, when they understood it's all His initiative, all He requires of me is an honest response of my heart. When He says, get out of this place, all He requires of me is a response that says, Lord, I will get out. And then He says, I'll give you the strength to get out.

We keep walking. We know the longer you walk with God, folks, the more you know it's mercy. The more you become aware you've stood by mercy, the more mercy becomes your song.

That's why older people who have walked with God become tender, because they know it's been mercy. They know how good God has been. And when you and I begin to sing that song, for He is good and His mercy endures forever, that's when the glory, and the glory is the character of God.

It is the person of God in Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost comes, takes up residence in that temple. No flesh can minister there. Nobody can even come into that presence.

Nothing can interfere with it, because the glory of God has come into the house again. Praise be to God. Praise be to God.

Praise be to God. His mercy. Now you have to know it before you can sing it.

You have to know it before you can pray it. And so therefore, I'm speaking to everybody who's struggling with besetting sin. Those that are behind walls of panic and fear.

Those that are tormented in their mind by past memories. Did Jesus not say, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me to unlock prisons, to set the bruised and heart free, to let the captive go, preach the gospel to the poor, to tell you this is the acceptable year of the Lord. He was speaking of mercy.

We've not earned it. We've not deserved it. It's according to His mercy He saved us, not according to our own works of righteousness.

And He says, if you want to know me, I'm willing to be merciful, but you've got to get up. You've got to get up and get out of these places. You've got to move away from what is robbing you of the glory of God.

You've got to get out of the ways of a perishing society. You can't be among those that are leading over the edge of the ship, wringing your hands, hoping for some way out. The way out is the way in to the presence of God and the mercy of God.

If you're struggling with besetting sin, no matter what it is, you've got to bring it to God and you've got to experience His mercy. And once you've experienced that mercy, your prayers will take on a power like Moses when he stood. He knew the mercy of God.

That's why he could stand there. He knew he didn't deserve to be there. He knew he'd made mistakes along the way, but he knew God had been merciful to him.

And that's why he had power to stand and move the heart of God. We're not going to gather Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and just pray useless prayers. We've got to believe God.

In order to believe it, Paul said to Timothy, the husbandman that labors must be the first partaker of the fruits. If you and I are going to pray for mercy, we've got to be the recipients of mercy. We've got to know that God is willing to give us those things we're praying and be revealed to others.

Praise be to God. We're going to stand and worship for 20 minutes or so. And as we do, I'm going to ask everyone that the Holy Spirit is speaking to, and you are willing to walk away from what you need to walk away from and walk into the mercy of God.

You want this glory of Christ in your physical temple, and God will give it to you. I do believe with all my heart that the last temple is going to have the greatest glory of all. The last moment.

The last temple, of course, is the church from the day of Pentecost till the day Christ comes. But Jesus Christ is not going to let His church go out captivated, whimpering, confused. No, no, no.

No, there's going to be a church that knows Him, that can pray and shake hell with their prayers. There's going to be a church that's free, and the evidence of freedom is the glory of God is in the temple. The glory is in the temple.

Praise be to God. Would you please stand? If the Lord is speaking to your heart, come to this altar in the annex step between the screens, and we're going to pray, and we're going to believe God. I've got to believe God for the miraculous today.

Praise God. Praise God. Your children are backslidden? Get down here.

Let the glory of God come into the temple. I mean that with all my heart. God will be faithful to you and to your family.

Bless the Lord. Bless the Lord. Thank you, Jesus.

Praise God. Now, those who are at this altar this morning and responding, and I know the question is, well, how do I respond? What do I do now? Psalm 107 says, Oh, give thanks to the Lord for His good, for His mercy endures forever. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men, let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assemblies of the elders.

Oh, that men would praise God. Oh, that we would just open our hearts and receive what God speaks, that we would just simply walk into the freedom, walk away from sin, walk away from unbelief, walk away from spiritual poverty, walk away from wringing our hands and living in fear, that we would just walk away, and praise Him in the congregation of the saints, that the elders would praise Him, that the leaders would praise Him, that the people would praise Him, that we would praise Him, that we would give Him glory, that we would give Him honor. Oh, God, let Your glory come again into the temple, Lord.

Let God arise, our enemies be scattered. Let God arise, and our enemies be scattered. Glory.

Glory. Glory.

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