

Blessed Are the Merciful

by Don McClure

The key to a happy life is spiritual ecstasy in God, which is achieved through being drained of ourselves and filled with God's presence, and experiencing God's mercy and forgiveness.

Duration: 50:22

Scripture: Matthew 5:3-8, Romans 7:18

Topics: "Mercy Of God", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the harsh realities of life, such as war, disease, accidents, crimes, and tragedies. He emphasizes that in this life, there may not always be justice or a way to set things right. However, the answer lies in the teachings of Jesus, particularly the Beatitudes. The speaker explains how the first three Beatitudes focus on personal relationship with God, while the fourth Beatitude serves as a transition towards relating with others. The sermon emphasizes the importance of showing mercy and being peacemakers in our interactions with others, as God has shown mercy towards us.

Transcript

Some things to me here in the Beatitudes that we're going to get into tonight, I don't know if these things are helping you much, but I think they're phenomenal. The more and more we get to know what Jesus was saying here in the Beatitudes, when he said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. And blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. And tonight, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Now, once again, just to reflect for a moment, this is the word here, blessed, it means, oh, how happy. Here, Jesus is talking about the key to a happy life, which is really the reason you and I exist, above all else. In the sense of, and not just that we have a fun life, or that we have a pleasurable life, or other ways that we may want to interpret happiness, but that there would be a happiness, that God created man in such a way as that, above all else, that we would have great spiritual ecstasy, essentially, in him.

That we would have an overwhelming joy in who he is. Jesus, in John 15, he says, You know, I'm the vine, you are the branches. He that abides in me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit.

And he goes on, and after he kind of lays out that wonderful illustration there, being the vine and the branches, and he says, These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. There he talks about it, and he looks there, that life would be joyous. That there would be this wonderful happiness in life.

Not something to where, and notice though, it doesn't say in here, oh, how happy are those who seek happiness. Oh, how happy are those who seek pleasure. Oh, how happy are those who seek fun.

Or, oh, how happy are those who are able to avert trials, or chaos, or problems, or burdens. No, this is actually, you know, this is a happiness that's not superficial. It's not something that is just a giddy sort of a thing, or, you know, a soothing sort of a pleasure, oh, isn't this wonderful sort of a thing.

No, this is a happiness that penetrates the very depth of the human soul. Somebody who is totally happy with God. They're happy in their spirit, they're happy in the sense of who they are, and who they found when they know Him, and they know their identity with heaven.

Oh, how happy are those who know how they're right with themselves, they're right with others. That things have occurred within their life, and as we have gone through these beatitudes, the first three, as you may recall, were essentially, as I said, an emptying. They're a draining.

There's where God kind of, it's like He says, I'm going to make you a happy man, but it's almost like the first thing He does with a man when He says, I'm going to make you immensely happy, immensely blessed, but it's like the first thing He does, He goes down to the toe or something, and He pulls the plug out and just drains you. That's what the first three are all about, when He says, oh, how happy are the poor in spirit, oh, how happy are they who mourn, oh, how happy are the meek. These are things essentially, as you may recall, they're things that drain a person, and essentially their own identity, their own self-life, their own right to rule, their own anything of themselves, but Jesus says a man who's truly going to be happy at the core of his being, first of all, there's no confidence in his flesh, he is poor in spirit, he looks at himself and he is utterly spiritually poverty-stricken, and he knows it.

Leave this man, this truly happy man, alone without God, and the man's bankrupt. He's devastated. He is hopeless.

He is destitute to the max, and he says to, but a man that is truly happy is when he is, he's poor in spirit, he knows not to be far away from where the real riches in spiritual life are. He is somebody that he looks there, and that part of his joy and his happiness, because it isn't going to be found in himself, in anything he's going to reach in and pull out of himself, or of his own ID, or identity, or ego, or pride, or self, or there's nothing worth trying to discuss within yourself, to try to find out about yourselves. And I remember one time a psychiatrist, who came to Christ, by the way, through, it's a long story, I won't get into that, but wonderfully, one of the things that he once told me, when he had ended up coming to Christ, because a patient of his had come, who he had been treating for a couple of years for paranoid schizophrenia, had come down, this is when I was down at Calvary in Costa Mesa, but he'd come down there, she'd come down, and had come to the Lord wonderfully, and then she kept on going back, and this doctor soon realized, this woman's absolutely normal.

As he began to talk to her, found out she's happy, she's at peace, her whole life was so transformed, and he wanted to know, what in the world's happened to you? She says, I found Christ. And of course, then he tried to cure her of this religious hang-up, she was trying to get into. And then when he realized, this

tremendous thing that had happened to her, and that it was genuine, he ended up coming down, and the wonderful thing that he had to say to me, that just blessed me no end, he said, you know, as a psychiatrist, I spent my whole life in this, and he says, but you know, I've come to the realization, that the best I can do is a psychiatrist.

The best. Is diagnose. I can't change anybody.

I can only diagnose, but in the sense of getting into the human heart, into the human soul, and actually transforming it, there is no such power to do that within man. And we can only at best diagnose what's wrong. Just like we have an x-ray of the human soul, and we can look at it and say, well, this is wrong, this is wrong, but we have no equipment to get in, and reorganize the human life.

And I thought that was some early wisdom in this guy's life, and he wonderfully came to the Lord, and grew wonderfully. But through this witness and testimony, initially of this gal he was working with. But first he drains a man.

Oh, how happy are the poor in spirit. Then, oh, how happy are they who mourn about it. There is a sadness when they look within their own heart.

God, what is wrong with me? What have I done? And then they realize, as time goes on, maybe it's quick, maybe it's not so quick, but that every human being has committed absolute anarchy against the kingdom of heaven. Absolute, you know, when we think on our own, when we act on our own, when we strut around, the master of our own destiny, charting out our own course, doing what we want, as righteous as we may think it be, it's absolute anarchy against the rights and the privileges of the throne of God that made man in his image to rule and reign sovereignly on the throne of a man. And no matter what he does with his life, as good as it may be, if it's on his own, apart from the fullness of the spirit of God, it's anarchy.

It's rebellion in the worst of senses. And it's a terrible thing. But when somebody begins to mourn over and says, God, why do I live this way? Why do I have to run my own life? Why do I have to be, why do I need to be self-sufficient? Why? And they begin to, and there's a grief over it.

They realize the exceeding sinfulness of man, as the Bible calls it, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. And realize that it is something that has gotten into every human being from cover to core. It's like a cancer.

It has absolutely corrupted a human being beyond any hope of anything within himself to correct it. There's no capacity to put it right. And he begins to mourn over it.

He begins to grieve. Jesus said, this guy's on the road to happiness. Then he says, oh, how happy are the meek.

Now you've got somebody not strutting around, shaking their fist at God, commanding heaven to do something and blaming other people. Now they take full brunt of the accusations that they've ever gave to anyone else. And it falls upon themselves.

And there's a meekness before God. They're broken, and they're broken in a contrite heart. God will not despise, the Bible says.

It's something that God looks at a man and how he loves it when he sees a man or a woman, when they come to the end of themselves. And at the end of themselves, they're hopeless, and they're destitute, and

they're desperate. And their only hope is that somehow another God, not because he owes it to them, because he's indebted to us, because there's any obligation whatsoever.

God owes man nothing, absolutely nothing. Anything he does is out of the love of his own heart, out of something that he has chosen to initiate himself. But it is something, though, that when he gives it, he gives it to a person who knows these first three, to a person where there's a poverty of spirit.

There's a mourning over their own sinfulness and has produced a meekness and a gentleness within them. Now, when they come before God, kind of like the prodigal son, again, when he left, he says, father, make me, or father, give me, give me. But when he came back, he says, father, make me.

Rather than demanding, his head was bowed, and there's a wonderful humility. And he could say, father, make my life, make me what you'd have me to be. That's what God, Jesus, that's going to be a happy person.

That's the person that's on a wonderful road to recovery. The first three, he just kind of pulled the plug, drained somebody. You know, it shows them themselves.

God wants to show us a mirror. Sometimes we can come to Christ, and he can do it rapidly. Sometimes he may take years to begin to really show us the nature that we have.

Like Paul, when he said in Romans 7, 18, I don't think he found that out quickly as a Christian. Perhaps he did. Maybe it was years in Arabia.

But when he came out and he says, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Or as it says in the living Bible, that in so far as my sinful self is concerned, I am rotten to the core. It's a good translation of that, by the way.

He looks there and he says, you take the apostle Paul. He says, you remove anything that God's mercy and love and grace has poured into me and expressed in the person of himself. You remove himself.

And there is corruption from one end of my being to the other. And I am destitute and desperately wicked. Like the Bible says, the human heart is desperately wicked above all things.

Who can know it? And when somebody comes to that realization, first of all, it's going to, it seems devastating to the human, but it is also something that it equally elevates our deep love and appreciation for Christ when we meet him. He was forgiven much love as much the Bible says. If God, if Jesus just forgave me of a little bit.

Well, if I met him, all I was was \$10 in debt and he gave me \$10. Well, that's, thank you. I appreciate that.

I needed it. If I was \$500 in debt and he will, and he gave me \$500. Well, now I appreciate him a little more.

So, well, that's very nice. If there is \$50,000 in debt and he comes and he takes out and he pays 50. If they, but if there's somebody that's \$50 trillion in debt, I mean, they've got a national debt of their own succeeding sinfulness.

That's beyond lifetimes and generations ever dream of paying back. And now he does it. Now the person just humbly bows before his savior and it magnifies him in his life.

His appreciation and his esteem for him grows and grows. Now though, the transition has changed. Now it's come though the first three, he drains a person, then he fills him with himself.

Blow out happy. Are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they should be filled. Here we have somebody now they've been drained.

They've been drained. They've been drained of themselves and has produced an insatiable hunger within them. In them, there's a desire and something to where it just reaches out and there's a hunger in their soul.

There's a hunger in their spirit. Their whole life is starving for spiritual attention through this process and they're hungry. And as Jesus says, oh, I'm happy they'll be filled.

And of course, God only has one thing to fill a man with essentially himself, spirit. God doesn't give things so much essentially to people. He entrusts things to people, but the issue is that when God gives things, he gives himself.

We ask for his peace. We ask for his love. We ask for some attribute of his nature, but he doesn't give attributes.

They don't come that way. When somebody says, God, give me peace. He gives you himself.

Galatians 2.14 says, he is our peace. So when somebody says, God, give me peace. There's actually what God comes to say, well, here I am.

We say, God, I need love. Well, God is love, David said. And it's something that when I'm saying I need love, I'm saying I need the person.

When I say, you know, I need joy. Well, I say he is our joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength, Nehemiah says.

It is something you take every attribute of God and it is nothing other than himself in a specific dimension, but it's indivisible from him. You can't separate it. And so when God fills somebody, it's himself that he wants to pour into us.

His very being. And then though, he now turns us around as we're in tonight. Blessed are the merciful.

And he wants to start living through us. And these are things now that are happening within a person. These are things now when he, you know, he says, blessed are the merciful.

And as he looks at these are things now that a person has become. These are things that we ought to look at and say, God, I want to be this person. I don't want to just carry out the activities of doing them.

I don't want to do them. I want to be them. Being is always much harder than doing it.

You know, always, in a sense, trying to just, you know, you can, I can, I can act kind without being kind. I can, I can act, you know, I can, I can go and act caring without having that all the way through my being. But this is something when he's talking about the Beatitudes that God is wanting to actually put in the fabric of our being by his presence within us.

And he wants to say, I want to make you merciful. I want to begin to so pour myself into you that you will begin to see my mercy coming through you. You, that is, that is something that a Christian ought to long for, not to deeply desire of wanting more and more and more of him in us, but not necessarily.

These are not ways sometimes that we would ask for. These are not kind of the list, but they're things that he wants. And because this is something that he wants wonderfully to pour within somebody of himself.

Because here, as he looks at in this particular issue, he's saying, oh, how happy are the merciful. This is not a human trait either, by the way. It's not a human personality type like we have.

Someday I'm going to have to go read people tell me I'm a cleric or something like that. I thought they were a washing machine, or I've seen cleric, caloric or something. I don't know, melancholies and all these different things.

Immersive, this is not some sort of a natural trait. This isn't some sort of a personality type sort of a thing. And this isn't, you know, a nicer type of person that's a mellower or somebody that just happens to kind of be this sort of a get along type.

No, this isn't that sort of a thing. When he says, oh, how happy are the merciful. This is something of the deepest nature of God being poured in to somebody.

The pastoral epistles, Paul oftentimes used to say, grace, peace, grace, mercy be unto you. It is something that oftentimes grace and mercy, you'll see them in the Bible right next to each other. They're cousins, as some people call them and things.

They go right hand in hand, but they're very different as much as alike and they coincide oftentimes with each other in activity, they're different. Grace is something that essentially deals with men in their sin. It's unmerited favor is what it means.

It's God giving his favor, but mercy, it's different than that. Mercy deals with men in their misery. Mercy is something that it looks at something and it hurts.

Mercy is something that it sees misery. It sees something that is wrong there. And when it's, you know, grace is what helps to fix it, but mercy perceives it and wants to see it fixed.

It's deeper. Mercy is what produces grace. God has been graceful to you and I, because in the deepest sense, he has been merciful to us.

God lifted us gracefully out of our desperate situation because he had pity on us. He looked in there and he saw the men in their misery. He saw a man fallen.

He saw what he was without God. He saw what he was without his presence. He saw what he did to himself.

He saw what he did to one another. And mercy, it sees people in their misery and it hurts for us. Grace lifts it out, but mercy sees in.

And mercy is something that it doesn't measure sin. It doesn't measure even the consequences of it or the righteousness or the, you know, of our misery that we may have it coming full on. We deserved every bit of the misery.

But even then, mercy goes deeper and it says, whether you did it all on your own and you deserve every bit of it. I hurt for you. It is something that it's pity essentially plus a desire to relieve suffering.

It is something that gets within the heart that says, maybe they did it and it was all their fault. They calculatedly, they planned it out. They knew what they were doing to their life and other people's lives.

And it's done. It's all happened and they've got their just due in it. But mercy hurts.

And it says, I want to stop the suffering there. That's essentially what it is that God has had towards us. That's the only reason you and I will ever know any joy at all or ever have known any, not because we found a way to earn it or we found a way to deserve it or we found anything at all.

It's only because, if anything, we have found the fact that God looks at us in justice, I mean, in a heart and in a knowledge of justice and knows every one of us deserve all of the world's worst. And we've maybe gotten a measure of it, but God hurt. And he said, I'm going to forget the law for a moment.

I'm going to set aside, you know, essentially righteous judgment, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life sort of a thing. But God looked down and he hurt so much. He was moved with compassion when he saw the tragedy that had happened to mankind.

And he sent his son to pay for all of the injustices. And he just says, pay for it, just pay for it. I hurt for them.

And of course, when Jesus, he was equally into it. He equally wanted to do it. His pity was the same.

But it is something that God, he sent his son to say, find a way to get them right. Yes, they've offended. Yes, they knew.

And yes, there's no good in them at all. But at the same time, I need to set away where this hurt that I have in my heart can be met. And the need in their lives can be met.

The justice of my eternal wisdom can be met. And the debt can be paid. So we just can't forget it just for the sake of forgetting it.

There's got to be a point and a reference point that we can meet there. And justice is absolutely fulfilled. And there is no condemnation that can ever come back from the law.

And yet my heart for man can also be appeased and his need can be met, too. So the law is satisfied. The holiness of God is satisfied.

The longing of my heart is satisfied. And the need of man is satisfied. That was what mercy.

That was its project in a sense. And it sent Jesus to forgive us of our sin. Didn't want to explain our sin or some sort of a thing.

Let's sit down and discuss it. He just says, go forgive it in such a way as that God can look and say, I've completely forgiven you. I completely accept you.

And I completely restore you. That's what mercy does. So much so as this very hour the Bible says about Jesus to everyone that he's done this for is that he's not ashamed to call us his brethren.

He looks at us even though I feel I must bring him tremendous shame. He says, I'm not ashamed of you. That's mercy.

God, how can you say that? Well, I'm very merciful. God can say extremely merciful in your case. But at any rate, it is something that now, though, here what Jesus is saying is this is not only something that God has done towards us, but now he wants to do through us.

For he says, blessed are the merciful, not blessed are those who have received mercy. That's the four previous beatitudes, the receiving of mercy. But now he wants, God wants to embed here in this very first social beatitude, essentially the one that is now the first four really relate just me alone with God.

But now we're taking the Christian life public. And now he's wanting me to relate with you and you to relate with me and all of us with one another. And he's saying, I want to take.

I don't want to just teach you to love. I don't want to just teach you to be kind. I don't want to teach you to be patient or gentle or good.

All those things, of course, he wants to teach us. But God is saying, no, I want to teach you the very deepest part of my heart. What it is that caused me to ever want to fix you.

I want to put the deepest thing of my nature towards you. The deepest thing that all the love, all the mercy, all the grace, all the work of the cross, all the grace that ever happened. It was something that was rooted.

That was what happened on the surface. But the root that went down into God's soul was he. God himself is merciful.

And he says he wants, he says, I want to put this within you. I want it to be something that you not only receive mercy from me. But you're giving it to others.

And it's something that he that he doesn't just simply say, I want to teach you how to pretend to be this way, or I want to teach you how to work at this. No, this is something he's putting within us. And where I wish I had a chalkboard here, what I draw up here on the thing is I take the first three Beatitudes and I would put, oh, happy are the poor in spirit.

Number one. Oh, how happy are they who mourn? And oh, how happy are the meek? One, two and three. Then I would take the middle one.

Oh, how happy are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness? In a sense, that's the transition. And then four, five and six, essentially, I would say, oh, how happy are the merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers. And the amazing thing is, is that you could draw a line from one to four, from two to five.

I don't know if this makes sense. It's probably dumb even to try to pretend there's a chalkboard here. But at any rate, the thing is, is to the measure, to the measure that a person is poor in spirit.

Interestingly enough, will be the measure that they will be merciful. To the measure, and we'll see more of this in future studies, though, that somebody mourns over sin is the measure that they'll be pure in heart. And to the measure that somebody is meek is the measure they'll be a peacemaker.

A person who is not very merciful is only one who has yet to see how much mercy they themselves have received. But to the degree of poverty of spirit that I know of in my life, to the degree that I know the

rotteness of my own humanity, the degree that I know how much God loved me and forgave me, the degree that I know what he has done. Well, you know, when he looked at my spirit, when he looked at my nature, the direct equation of that is going to come out in the degree in which I will express that same thing to another.

If I'm kind of semi-self-righteous, I thought, well, I grew up pretty living a pretty good life. I was never as rotten as some people I know. May look, you know, and look over at somebody else and say they're terrible.

I was never a sinner like they were. It's something to where usually a person like that is not very merciful to others. They're very judgmental.

But when there is something where a person sees their own sinfulness and what God has forgiven them, it becomes very difficult for them to judge another for it. But when a person realizes I am rotten all the way through, God is, you know, the degree, the more and more and more that somebody is poor in spirit and they realize how far God had to reach down to get them. That's how far they will tend to reach to get others.

It's amazing the way these work. That's why, to me, I mean, they grow through life. Somebody oftentimes comes to Christ.

Well, I'm a little bit of a sinner. As the years go by, they'll grow in the rareness of their sin. And the more they realize they're a sinner, the more gracious they'll be to other people and the more merciful they'll be to other people.

And they'll find themselves looking at other people in a different light and in a different sort of a way. And as I think I mentioned in one of the previous studies, whether mourn over sin, I think is what it was, is that as far as reality is concerned, just to make it theologically clear once again. Every single one of us are equal as far as sinfulness is concerned, biblically, theologically in the eyes of heaven.

It may be, you know, some people are only more aware of it. It may be something that I look and there may be somebody here. You may have murdered somebody.

Maybe we got a murderer here. If I said, is there anybody if there's a if there's anybody who's ever murdered somebody, there may be somebody that, yes, did. And others maybe look over and say, well, maybe kind of clear a little less space for them, you know, and stuff.

And the thing in it, it may be that I go around and say, anybody here ever been unfaithful to your mate, you've committed adultery. And we're not I'm not getting don't don't don't worry, folks, we're not. But the thing is, is maybe some would reluctantly if all if there was some mechanical thing that forced us all to be honest, you know, or, you know, then maybe others and we look over and say, oh, boy, that's terrible.

And we may look over. Is there anybody here that's robbed, you know, or something? And but the thing is, is in the economy of heaven, Jesus says that if I hate my brother, I've committed murder. I did it.

I maybe had nobody had a gun in my hand at the time and I didn't have a way, you know, and so maybe I actually stopped the act. But in my heart, in my spirit, maybe there was some occasion that that caused it not to occur. I was afraid to get caught or I didn't know what to do with your body or something like that sort of a thing.

But something stopped me from doing it, you know, or whatever. But if I thought it in my heart. Jesus said I did it.

If it is something that right on down the list of things and that if we tend to look over, it's me and sometimes a person has to actually do something before they will accept guilt of it. But it ought to be that. And unfortunately, a lot of people actually do have to.

But then once the guilt comes now, the real cleansing, the real awareness, God, I'm really this bad, aren't I? God says, yes, I think a lot of people can save themselves a lot of trouble if they'll just accept the Bible's condemnation essentially of their flesh nature and say, God, I am this bad. I've robbed. I've seen, you know, I mean, I mean, I, I stole Buckingham Palace as far as the Bible is concerned.

I walked through the place. I've been there and went through it. I sat in the throne room.

I went all through it. It says, well, I acted like I was King Tut or something. I guess he never rained there.

But at any rate, or, but I can, boy, and I've been through and, and seen the crown jewels and imagined all of that. Well, I'm a thief in a sense of there. Maybe I never took the goods or I never did it.

But in the sense of envy or jealousy, those things take the human soul and cause the soul to grab it as if they have the possession of it, whether they actually literally did it or not, as far as evidence concerns, it's immaterial. And when a person realizes this, and you can save yourself having to go through things to come to a realization. If you can look, maybe, hopefully, I mean, it'd be wonderful if there's not a person here that ever committed adultery.

But if you're one that wants to say, I'm not, I'm not, I'm not capable of that. Well, that's the one I want to move away from, kind of, because they may have to fall into it to come to a realization. But by God's mercy and grace, we shouldn't have to.

And the thing is, is that when, when, when mercy is really happening, when it's beginning, when, when a person is understood, God has forgiven me of all of these things. And he has taken me and drawn me to himself. And in spite of all of the things that I'm capable of thinking or dreaming or desiring and all of the other things that caused me to run away from heaven and to rebel, steal my own heart, life, my own mind.

You know, one of the worst things that you'll ever steal is your mind from heaven. When God wants to take the human heart and fill it every day with worship and with love and adoration. And he wants to take the human mind where he says whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are just, if there be any virtue, any praise or a good report, think on these things.

When I use my mind to think on something else, I've stolen my mind from the hand of God. I've stolen it out of heaven. I've robbed God of his time and fellowship and communion with me that is more precious to him than any man's money.

And when I can look and say, God, I'm a sinner. I've stolen my life. I've committed spiritual adultery against you day in and day out.

Taken my life and flirted with the world and the thoughts of it and not given a thought about you for hours on end, days on end. I'm an adulterer. God forgive me.

Then God wonderfully comes and he applies his mercy. But then he also wants to turn and he wants to put that heart within us where he can say, I'll make you merciful to others and that when others would fail you, when others would sin against you, that now you can do the same for them without a merciful spirit. If you don't have this beatitude, personally, I think you're in deep trouble.

And I mean that whether if I'm talking, you know, I mean, I met a lot of Christians that personally, I think an awful lot in honesty of mental health and mental disturbances that people have as directly as a Christian, oftentimes related to these type of things. Many people, they have a root of bitterness within them. There is something that happened to them in their life and, you know, by something or somebody that offended them that was unjust, it was wrong.

And maybe it happened here. And then they have a few of those things kind of come in a lot of mental burdens, a lot of stress, a lot of anxieties that people have, you know, have within their life is because something, sometimes, somewhere, somebody abused them in one way or another and they can't get over it. They don't know what to do with it.

And a lot of people, though we know we're human, though we may know we were sinners, we don't know who everyone else is or they're all people and all people are fallen people and all fallen people hurt other people. Unavoidably, it is something that this side of heaven, if you exist on this planet and you are a social human being and you have anyone else around your life, you will be hurt. You will be offended.

In countless times, oftentimes through life, sometimes it'll be through direct calculated sin against you. It may be through some iniquity, some rebellion against your person that was intended that way. Sometimes it was just through ignorance.

Sometimes some people are hurt because of a direct offense, sometimes just by neglect of other human beings that ought to love, ought to care, ought to be there, ought to give a certain amount of attention, don't know how or don't care how or have their own priorities in their life because they're fallen. And as a result, I'm hurt. I'm offended.

Some of them, it's because other people around us, they're carnal people. They're immature. Sometimes we're offended and we're hurt by other people and we're abused by people because of envy or strife or jealousy, any list of things.

But if I'm going to exist on this planet, I and I'm going to exist around people and going to continue to exist around people, I'm going to be hurt. I'm going to be offended because people hurt people to the measure that we're dealing with fallen people and we're dealing with it with one another on the way to heaven. Even ourselves, I mean, Christians hurt Christians and it is something we hurt each other spiritually and people are hurt mentally and emotionally and physically and financially and socially in all sorts of ways.

Just by existing on this planet, a person is going to be hurt. And when they're hurt, they can become bitter. They can become angry.

They can they can call for justice. They can look at what was happened against them, the rebellion against them or whatever it did to offend or to hurt or abuse them in one way or another. And there's something within us when that happens that we all of a sudden, you know, begin to call up more spontaneously within us this call for justice, this call for righteous justice, this in judgment, this call for an eye for an eye.

But here, Jesus said, you won't be happy. Because if a person is going to get happy in this life before God, the first four, as I said, they're just between me and God. But now the fifth one, I've now come out with people and he says, by the way, if you want to stay happy, if you want to have a true happiness that can remain, you better become merciful.

It better be something that within your heart and life, there is this capacity to look and realize that you live in a society, even in the body of Christ or wherever you go, that you will be to varying degrees through your lifetime. You will be offended. You will be hurt.

You will be abused. You will be taken advantage of. But a person who is going to have happiness and maintain it has found a blessed way to deal with it.

They forgive it. They're just looking and they're merciful. They're like somebody like Jonathan Edwards when he came to the man at the gallows and somebody asked him what he thought of it.

And he says there for the grace of God. He looked there and he had no capacity to judge another person, even if something was taken against, you know, oneself to be able to look there and to say, you know, that essentially I'm no different and to be able to turn and to forgive them. That person can go on.

I think of Joseph. You look at this young man, Joseph, growing up in a happy home, kind of a lot of brothers beating on each other, but that's typical. I grew up in a home with three brothers.

And one time it was wonderful to me when my kids, we beat each other to death a lot of times growing up. It was fun. But the I won a few lost most, but it was something that that's just the way it was.

My mother one time found a verse in the Bible says brothers are made for adversity. And she says, you guys at least fulfill one scripture. But the the thing is, is that Joseph, he grew up here in this home.

And the next thing you know, though, there's some strife and jealousy and things that happens in many a family. So much so, though, his brothers wanted to murder him. They wanted him out of there.

And they took him out to kill him, but then thought better of it, a little consciousness, perhaps also some fear of their father if he found out. But the next thing you know, they decided, let's just sell him. So they did.

And here is they and they sold him into slavery down to Egypt. And you know the story only too well. But you watch this man for years as his life completely uprooted from his family, sent into slavery, into Potiphar's house, unjustly accused, into prison, forgotten in prison, rotting away there.

And then ultimately, one day he's finally reunited with his brothers. He had a struggle going on in his heart at that time. I'm sure you remember reading that.

He wanted, he didn't know what to set him up, didn't know what to do with him for a time there. But the wonderful thing is, is that he was able to look at him and even his brothers say, you maybe meant it for evil. God meant it for good.

God's working in my life. Through all the things that happened, God allowed these things. And then he was able to weep and embrace his brothers rather than a lot of people, if they had let a root of bitterness when they were offended and their brothers did this, and they could go down to Egypt and rot.

They could turn into miserable human beings themselves. David or John or whoever the guy was, Joseph, never, you know, he didn't defile himself. He remained pure and God was with him and his heart was right.

And it was wonderful in the sense while he's there, rather than just building up, thinking when he's going through and he's in prison. And why am I here for my brothers? You know, and finally you would think again, if a guy let that boy, the day he laid eyes on them and he sat on the throne in power, like he did, he could look at him and say, guys, you ruined my life. You uprooted me and you took me away from my father.

And the joy of growing up in a home, those years are robbed out of my life. They're gone. They can never be replaced.

And you guys stole them from me. You robbed me of time. You robbed me of my family.

You robbed me of precious memories. And I've gone through this and this and this because of you. But he looked there and he was merciful.

He was somebody there that Joseph had found the key to happiness in his life. And he wasn't going to let bitterness towards other people take it away. And essentially, that's the message of, you know, of a truly happy person.

In a sense, a happy person is somebody that has found a way to get happy, discovered true happiness, and they've discovered a way to maintain it. And essentially, let me tell you what the Beatitudes say. If I can shorten it up and kind of paraphrase it into my own Bible, almost.

The Beatitudes say essentially that no matter what it is that has ever happened to you in your entire lifetime, no matter who has abused you, no matter who, you know, robbed or hurt or maimed, no matter who did anything to you, no matter how many did it to you or to what degrees or how often, no matter how terrible it was and how deep it was. Essentially, the Beatitudes have a way to me of saying the cross of Jesus Christ is so powerful. It is so phenomenal.

It outweighs every injustice that has ever occurred to anyone. And that when I understand the cross in my life and realize that God sent his son, Jesus Christ, to love me and to forgive me, and no one will ever offend me as much as I've offended heaven. As much as somebody can steal something from me, God looks at me and says, hey, I have a son.

I made this body and I created it. There's somebody that belonged to me. We never even had a conversation with one another until you were 20 years old.

You were off in rebellion, growing up being a, you know, just a rebellious little kid. You brought havoc into your own family at times. You brought pain into people's lives.

You did all sorts of things. You abused and caroused and did all sorts of stuff you didn't need to do. And then finally you come to me and yet still you go off day in, day out, steal your own heart, steal your life, steal your time, commit all sorts of things against heaven.

And if I honestly understand what I've done against heaven, nobody will ever do to me what I've done to God. And yet God's forgiven me in a moment of it all. That's what his mercy did.

God's mercy says, I don't care what you've done. I forgive you. I hurt.

And it is something that is so overwhelming that if I, so often we spend a lot of time looking back, you know, on our lives, looking back on who did it and why they did it and what provoked him. And I didn't do it and I didn't understand why. And all of these other things.

And I was not guilty. And why was this terrible offense happened to me? I did nothing wrong. And these things happen.

And we focus in on those, trying to work those things through. That's a tough job. But if I can just go in a sense before Jesus and sit here in the Beatitudes, because what he simply says to me there is when anything would come up that would infringe on my mental health, infringe on my happiness, infringe on my peace, if something out of there, he simply looks there and he says, oh, I'm happy.

But the poor in spirit, those who mourn over their own sinfulness, those who are meek before me, hungry and thirsty for me. And oh, how happy are the merciful. God says, oh, how happy are you when you're just forgiving when you're somebody that you can look at somebody else, no matter what they've done to you and say, I don't know whether you did in full rebellion.

I don't know whether you calculatedly did it. I don't know whether you did it for ignorance. I don't know whether you did it to me out of neglect.

I don't know. And I don't care. I forgive you.

I forgive you. I don't know why I did all the things I did. But the thing is, is that to me, maybe there's some of us even here tonight that you need, there's somebody you need to forgive for your own mental health, not necessarily for them, but just for your own happiness.

Because if you're not forgiving, we have these file cabinets, we build them up and we may even literally have them. I'm talking mentally, you know, that under a file of somebody and we open up the file under their name and we pull that thing out and immediately, you know, we, you know, so often people have all these things and they keep these files. Now he did this and she did this and all this and we could open it up and then you get to where you already know it's in the file without even opening the cabinet.

And the next thing you know, you start carrying that cabinet around with you and through a lifetime, you're going to get angry and you're going to get tired and you're going to get bitter and you're going to be blaming on somebody who may have been dead for 50 years. And for your mental health, forgive them. Be able to come and just say, God, I don't know why they did it.

If they knew you, they wouldn't have. If they really knew you the way that they ought to know you, they wouldn't have. And even if then they may have done it, they'd have come back with a sorry spirit and said, please forgive me.

But it is something that for your own happiness, forgive them. It's something that may, I am sure, there's no question to me in my mind that there are a number here, you've been abused as children, terribly abused. I mean, some of the most wicked injustices that humanity can do to humanity.

Maybe you were neglected as a child. Maybe you were hurt in a marriage. You've been hurt in business.

You went in in full trust and absolutely ripped and conned. You've been hurt in the body of Christ or in the church. Maybe some of you, you've been wounded in the house of your friends and it was not your doing.

Jesus says, if you want to be happy, oh, how happy are the merciful. I'm not saying you have to subject yourself to them again. Not saying that necessarily at all.

Particularly and especially if they're unrepentant in a sense about or they haven't changed that you should go. But to me at the same time, though, when somebody is able to for their own heart, say, God, I forgive them. I give me a give me a pity for them.

Give me a pity. Spiritually, what happens when somebody grows? I believe we begin to start seeing human beings in the spirit like we see human beings in the flesh in a sense. And what I mean by that is that if there was somebody that maybe came along and they were in a wheelchair.

You wouldn't dream if you saw that for some reason their legs had been immobilized and they couldn't. You wouldn't dream of looking to get up and walk. Get out of my way or or, you know, I mean, just in terms of saying here, you know, and just you would look at them and there would be a certain amount of natural visible.

I mean, your eyes would connect with your soul and there would be a just amount essentially of mercy to say, well, obviously, I wouldn't dare ask them to do something that they physically can't do. Well, there's a lot of people spiritually, mentally, emotionally. They haven't the faculties to do right.

They haven't a capacity for justice. They haven't a capacity within them, you know, to to understand morality or to understand things. And they will be immoral and they'll be unjust and they will be corrupt.

But if somebody looks at them and saw the inability of it because of the darkness of their own soul, because of the the contamination of their life, if we could look at them that way and say, well, I. I was an heir to expect anything better and we'd have mercy. But the thing is, is that one of the things I can guarantee you, there's a lot of things in this life, a lot of offenses, a lot of things that have happened to many here that they'll never be put right this side of heaven. Never.

There's many people, I'm sure here you've been, you were abused, neglected, molested. Things that the word is just painful even to think of, you know, hurt in a marriage, hurt in business. You know, when you look at this life, I mean, there's war going on, people, you know, mutilated and annihilated.

And when you want to see the terrible things that can happen to people, diseases come in and absolutely wrack a human life and accidents can occur. Crimes happen just, you know, and tragedies immeasurable on what they can do to the human soul and things that can happen to our loved ones that we look at and things of which they will never be set right in this life. There's not going to be anyone really to go to or any way to set it right.

Even if you could chase them down and find it and even get justice, it will still wouldn't be right. And the answer isn't trying to go back before all of these people. As much as the answer where Jesus simply says, then say, chase down people when they're unjust to you.

Go back and figure it all out. He says, oh, how happy are the merciful that somebody that can just look and say, God, for my mental health, I forgive them. I forgive them.

And that there's something within us where we can begin to take those file cabinets and burn them. God, I want to take all these things. You know, there's one thing I guarantee you that in this life, there's only been one perfect father.

There's only been one perfect son. And just to make it clear, some of you may think you're talking about me. I can assure you I'm not.

It hasn't been one perfect mother. I don't want to get into that. I'll be in trouble.

I don't know why I said that one. I didn't mean that. Forgive me.

But the thing is, is that people hurt people. By living on this planet, you will be hurt and you will be hurt terribly. There may be some here that you've had very few offenses in your life ever happened to you.

Well, that's wonderful. And I don't wish any on you, of course, but know this, that your true spiritual happiness has yet to be tested to a great degree. Your true blessedness.

There may be some of you that were your real spiritual life. You have to look at some things and for the real work of the spirit of God to occur within somebody where you can confront these things and realize there is no way ever to put it right. Other than the word mercy.

And where you can look at them. Or whatever it may be. And say, I forgive.

That's the test of spiritual life. So often socially and the and it's something to where to when somebody is truly happy in a sense where they can allow themselves to go through life. Yes, I'll be, you know, rejected or despised or abused and I'll have been neglected.

I'll have all sorts of things through all of this life. But that's all right. God will take care of me.

That's what he wants to put within us. He wants to teach us a lot more in the Beatitudes. But the one with the thing that is so wonderful about this one is God wants by his Holy Spirit to put in you a merciful heart.

And as we close tonight, I want us to have a little bit of worship. But I also want to do something. I'm not one that's in psychology and philosophy or all this other stuff.

I'm not interested in going back into people's past. I'm not interested in big discussions about it. But I would like to make available a time while Chuck would lead us in some worship.

For maybe there's some that just need some prayer. You got a file captain on somebody or something. And it's weighing you down.

And you need just to come to the cross and say, Jesus, I have got to drop this. And I have got to forgive them. They may be dead.

But for my mental health, I want a merciful heart. And I want to lay on all of these things and be done with them. The wonderful thing that Jesus has done with my sin and yours, if you've come to him, the Bible says he takes our sin, removes as far as the east is from the west.

If you're around me long, you'll memorize these verses. Bible says another place he hides them behind his back. Another place, you know, that he buries them in the depths of the sea.

You know, we are able to discover things on planets, billions of light years away. We can't even get to the depths of the sea. I'm glad he didn't say he hides them on Mars.

We'd have found them by then. We don't know how to get to the depths of the sea. But it's something he buries in the depths of the sea, hides them behind his back.

And he says, behold, I'll remember them no more. Why does he do it? He has a merciful heart. And maybe some of you, you just need to say, God, give me this.

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