

# Beatitudes - Part 7

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of mercy in a true Christian life, highlighting its relationship with compassion, pity, and God's love.*

**Duration:** 1:03:46

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:7, Matthew 6:14, Matthew 7:2, Philemon 1:10, Philemon 1:18

**Topics:** "Beatitudes"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a conversation with a woman named Mrs. Crook who shares some distressing news. The speaker emphasizes the importance of obeying God and trusting in His plan for our lives. He uses the example of Daniel, who was promoted by God despite facing opposition. The speaker also discusses the concept of mercy and how showing mercy to others is linked to receiving mercy from God. He concludes by sharing a story about a man carrying a heavy load and how he gradually lightens his burden along the way.

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## Transcript

Matthew chapter 5, down at verse 7, there's a change of style here. Previously we've been thinking of our attitude to God and God's relationship to us, and now we tend to put it into practice, or get out of our bloodstream into action, that the Lord has been teaching us and making possible by His grace. And so in verse 7, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Anybody here not obtain mercy? I was thinking of David's psalm, Psalm 51, he says, Thou desirest not sacrifice, else I will give it. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and a contrite heart. And there is no substitute, if we are unmerciful to others, then the Word of God says that God, in that great day, will be unmerciful to us.

Again, as this amazing sermon says, with what measure you meet, it shall be meted unto you again. This, I was going to say string of commandments, they're hardly that, I wouldn't think they are, but these exhortations to me, they're rather like a string of gems. I remember being down in an island off the, in Keresaar, it's an island which I think was established by the Dutch, it's between, it's just off the coast of Benin and Israelia, or Benin, Israelia, whichever way to pronounce it.

And I remember the main street there was all jewellery shops, because watches and other, very expensive jewels are cheaper there, there isn't a government tax on them. And so I went into a shop, not to buy

anything, but to see how they operated. And it was very, very fascinating to see how people came in to buy different kinds of jewels.

Now, I don't know what your choice would be in these Beatitudes, you know, blessed are the poor, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, there's a whole string of them. And I found in that shop, as I did a little eavesdropping and looked round at these sparkling gems and so forth, it was all them, very immaculately dressed people, and the benches usually, you know, nice black velvet, because that gives the reflection from the lights, and you see everything, every jewel at its best. Well, lady, can I show you some diamonds? No, no, no, I don't want diamonds, emeralds, I'm only interested in emeralds.

And another counter, well, could I show you some emeralds or pearls? Oh, no, no, no, rubies, rubies, all I do is buy rubies. And so everybody seemed to have a pet, even in stones, not pet rocks like they were selling a few years ago, but a favourite stone. And I guess that you could select one of these attitudes and say, this is my favourite, and only which it would be.

Now again, you can't take just one of these attitudes by itself, they've got to be strung together. And it's my conviction that they're in sequence. As I said before, if we began at the end and said, blessed are the pure in heart, if we put that first, we all gasp and say, well, there's not much hope for me.

But it starts at the foundation, instead of saying, blessed are the pure, it says, blessed are the poor. Well, except we have a very inordinate amount of pride in us, I'm sure that we can, again, identify with that, we are poor in spirit. The classical case to me is the psalmist David, where he says over and over again in his psalms, well, as he says, this poor man cried when the Lord heard him.

Or again, he dropped off out of a horrible pit, I was poor, by and by I knew that in Him I am poor and needy. He says that more than once, he recognises that in the sight of God that he is just nothing, he's a kind of a zero. You've got to start off there, that's the only place if you're going to start climbing, if you're going to go, you've got to excavate first, and the excavation is to recognise that we're nothing, and we're undone.

In the sight of God, you may be socially high up, you may be financially well here, you may be intellectually well endowed, but that gives you no start when it comes down to the place of reconciliation to God. After all, I guess there's no greater intellect, at least in my judgement, than the Apostle Paul, and yet he admitted later in his life that he was poor and needy. Now, this beatitude, blessed are the merciful, follows immediately after, blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Filled with what? Well, filled with righteousness. And if they're filled with righteousness, then they're going to be just as a wall, you test the wall with a plumb line, and you see if it's correct or it's incorrect. The plumb line here is the righteousness of God which has been made well in us, and the outflow should be that we're merciful, we have received mercy.

And therefore, though we did not deserve mercy, we received mercy. And therefore we should ourselves give mercy to others. We're taught these days a great deal about disposition.

One of the great classic scholars is a man by the name of Cicero, and he says there's nothing more suited to a great man, an illustrious man, than a merciful disposition. We all live in a world that's really very long on mercy, it's very long on cruelty right now, it's very long on injustice. It lacks mercy because it lacks compassion, it lacks love.

Have you noticed, I'll tell you, anybody mentions the mercy of God, we mention the love of God and sure we should. There are not many humans that have mercy in it, they have love, and God's kindness. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness, temperance, faith.

Well then, there's no mercy in that. Yes, it's all embodied in that one phrase, love. Because I'm quite sure that if we love, as God loved us, then the overflow of that love will be mercy.

Again, the previous gratuities are related to ourselves and to God. This is something going out now to the other fellow. Mercy, in my judgment, is pity in action.

It differs from grace. Grace implies guilt and through the grace of God we receive pardon. Mercy means that there's somebody inferior, there's somebody that we could, you know, work something out over.

And God didn't need to have mercy on us. His justice would have been all we needed because after all we were sinners, we were guilty. And yet the outflow of love, because God is love, God is merciful.

And this letter book says, blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. Look at Ephesians, the second chapter. Ephesians 2, let me get this on this page here.

Okay. Verse 3 says, among whom there's, pardon me, there's two. Let's go back to this and get it in reverse.

And you have to equate them to the dead in trespasses and in sin. No, that's you. It doesn't say us, it says you.

You have to equate them to the dead in trespasses and in sin. And in the second verse he says, where in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, according to the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, among whom also we all have. No, it's God himself.

In the second verse it's ye, in the third verse it's we, have our conversation. Now that doesn't mean talk, it means our manner of life. That's the old English translation.

They put the word in there that isn't totally the best, I guess. Among whom also we all have our manner of life in the times past. This was our manner of life, lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and of my nature, the children of wrath, even as others, but God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us when we were dead in trespasses and in sin.

Now again, God did not need to come into our situation. We have transgressed, we have broken every law, I doubt, it could be possible, but I doubt if anybody hears to Jesus Christ the very first time that they heard his name, particularly in a country like this, or England, or somewhere else. In human countries, yes.

In our country, one of the old hymns says, I have long withstood his grace, long provoked him to his face, will not hearken to his call, grieved him by a thousand folds. Depth of mercy, can there be mercy still reserved for me? Can my God his wrath forbear me, the chief of sinners spare? Again, I have long withstood his grace. I had, I was raised in a very fine Christian home, there were Bibles all over the place, there had been Christian literature all over the place.

And yet for years and years, I was saved, and just before I was fifteen, fourteen and a half, to be precise about it. And you see, the mercy of God, I think that this is the most amazing thing to me almost every day, that God puts up with the rebelling of the human race. There's no way you can interpret life anywhere, and anyway you talk about the planet Earth, whatever praising the Lamb and the planet Earth, there's no way you can interpret modern life as getting better and better and better.

They said that I was a little boy. Well, you see, war, this is the first world war, and be very happy about it, it's the last one. There'll never be another world war.

Well, that was 1919, twenty years after 1939, we're back into another world war, more terrible than the first world war. And we've just invented more and more and more diabolical weapons, not of mercy, but suffering. We don't have enough schools to teach mercy.

We have schools to train soldiers, we have science giving hours, they work twenty-four hours a day in the laboratories of the world to find new inventions that are more merciless than ever. Now, you'll hardly remember, but Life magazine showed, before it went out of print, obviously, they showed children being baptized in Vietnam, when we were chasing the enemy, and we sprayed them with a mustard gas that gives a big blister and all their skin comes off, and the children were like little raw tomatoes running around. They had no skin on them.

Now, that wasn't the Russians doing it, we did it. That's Christian people, we did it, so-called Christian nations. That is the inventing diabolical thing.

But God is rich in mercy. Um, let me look at another scripture here. 1 Timothy, excuse me, 1 Timothy 1.13, I believe.

Verse 12 says, I thank Jesus Christ, our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before me a liar, a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy. I think that that thing gripped the heart of the apostle all his life. He obtained mercy.

You can't buy it. It's given by grace, it's given by the graciousness, it's given by love, and if you remember when he stands before a group of that in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, I don't think he's boasting of his wicked career, but he's making a seed, a transforming power of God. He's talking about a man who was, uh, well, Agrippa was the last of the Jewish kings, the first was Saul, the king of Israel, the last one, and then he, you talk about psychology and smartness, remember the twenty-fourth chapter where he's before Festus, then he's before Felix, in the twenty-sixth chapter he says, uh, king Agrippa believed us by the prophets, before he can say yet again, I'm not a bad believer.

Why? Because he'd been raised up in a Jewish home, he'd been raised up where the law was taught. And he can drive down heavily on in there to show him that he was the same breed of person, if you like to use that word, or nation of person, and then he goes through, he says, listen, I was an evil doer. I, I hounded many women to prison.

I, I, I, I chased them into strange cities. In other words, he broke up homes, he broke up lives, he persecuted them, uh, he said that's the right thing to do, and they were stoning Stephen, and yet God has turned that man out. One of the most amazing, perhaps the most amazing conversion in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ.

This man had a volcano for a heart, he didn't know anything about grace, he didn't know anything about mercy, he didn't know anything about gentleness. He was full of revenge and bitterness and strife. Isn't it amazing that a man whose hands were running with blood, a man who had put many people in prison, a man who had driven people into strange cities, out of their homes, out of their cities, into other lands, isn't it fantastic that a man like that could write 1 Corinthians 13? The most beautiful poem ever written, you can talk of Charles Westfield, I like Charles Westfield very much, and Calpo, and Madame Guillaume, and all the rest of them, but nobody has written anything comparable to 1 Corinthians 13.

In fact I was thinking tonight, you'd be very smart if you all memorized it. And if you memorized it, he mocked its translation. He, he, he turns words around a little bit, but he gets them right up to date.

Love suffers long in this time, love endures not, love mourns if not itself, and he says love is never rude, love is never resentful, love is never selfish, love is never glad when others go wrong. Do you like to see somebody stumble because it makes you feel taller? Do you like to see somebody stumble because well, they deserve it anyhow, I mean it was coming. Do you rejoice over the fact that they make a slip, or a slide? Or are you very merciful and say well, they'll die but for the grace of God.

I'm sorry that happened, but I want to tell you that if our positions were reversed, I'd be very glad for you to come and show some mercy to me. Or do you take side with the crowd as most people do and say well, you deserve it anyhow, you had it coming. You see, that's the very last thing that mercy would do.

Now rethink of the classic case. I suppose it's a classic case in the scripture, and that is of course the case of the good Samaritan. What does it say? It says that the Samaritan went and showed mercy unto him.

Now let's get this simple thing, I think it'd help you today to realize this. You can talk about doctrine, you can't talk about mercy. Mercy is something we do.

Mercy is pity in action. Mercy is compassion. Doctrine is something we stir up in our heads.

I don't know what you've got in your head. If you took an examination I guess I could find out that sometimes. I'm looking around next to somebody and no, no, they may have some little strange quirk of doctrine and they say well, I'll be smart not to say anything while I'm here or in some other group.

This group don't believe in this. But, I will be around you a week before I discover whether you have mercy and compassion. It's something you can't hide.

You can't hide it if you have it, and you sure can't hide it if you don't have it. It's very obvious both ways. And that is the way is it looking for more judgment? Surely it's looking for more mercy.

There's a very incisive word there in James. James is very tactical. Martin Luther said that the epistle of James is an epistle of straw.

I don't know how in the world he got that. I find the epistle of James has really got some teeth in it. Supposing I say now everybody towards you now everybody just take a piece of paper and a pencil and you write the definition of godliness in less than a hundred words.

Now, what is the true Christian life? Well, you might say to be filled with love. It's interesting to find that answer. James puts it down and he says pure religion will only be found before God as well.

You know what he says? It's to love God with all your heart and it's to visit the orphan and the widow and have compassion on those in need. That is a biblical definition of what true religion is. It's not, when I fast twice in the week, godliness and, you know, the man that went up in the temple and he went up to the front and he lifted up his voice and he lifted up all his virtues and he made a very good gentleman.

Well, when he came out of that temple he was ten feet tall and fifty inches round the chest and he felt he was very strong and all. But the man that got God's voice, pardon me, God's will was moving to the man that got compassion from God was the man that snubbed and embarrassed. I don't think he stood up at the front.

I think he got behind the little big pillars in the temple and shamed and embarrassed God for being merciful to me, a sinner. What did he want? He wanted mercy. He knew he needed mercy.

But the man didn't need mercy because he had no consciousness of undoing it, no consciousness of sin. Now again, if you read on into the next chapter of this marvelous sermon on the mount, it says with that measure you meet it should be meted unto again. Okay, look at James chapter 2 here.

James chapter 2 and verse 13. Here's a summary for you. There's no practical summary anywhere else, anywhere near to this.

One of the great fathers in the church, Chris Austin said, Dost thou desire to receive mercy? Then show mercy to thy neighbour. Which is only an echo again of what the scripture says. Look at James chapter 2 and verse 13.

For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy. And mercy rejoiceth against judgment. He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.

Now does that mean just on this level? Does it mean if I'm unmerciful to you that it's just going to go around and come back and bang? When I'm in a state of need, the same mercilessness that I viewed someone else's situation with, the same merciless conversation I gossiped I had about them, it's going to come back to me. And it won't just come back to me, it will come back with a compounded interest. Or does it mean in my attitude to my fellow believer, that as merciless as I am today, there's one day at the end of the journey, God is going to judge me with as little mercy that I have had in judging other people.

Now that's pretty tough, isn't it? He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy. And mercy rejoiceth against judgment. The question is this, what if somebody you've dealt with, you know that okay they've done something wrong, they've defrauded you, they've done some other thing.

And they get into a bottleneck where you have the power to do it. Now what do you say? You say well I'm going to be real just about this, boy I think it's about time this thing was put straight. Or are you going to take a game the other side and say well look we're all fallible, we all make mistakes.

Now it's not that we're going to cover up sin because love is just as well as merciful. But you know it all depends, it's not what you do, it's not what you say, so much it's how you do it that really matters. Think of a classic case, you remember the story where David said he was hunted by Saul like a partridge.

You see these are the things on the roadside that crawl and they don't have much defense, they're certainly not eagles, they don't have great big claws, they don't have big beaks to compare something else. They're pretty helpless things. And David says well I was just a kind of a refugee, I had a handful of

people, Saul had his big armies, Saul had all the power, Saul had all the authority, Saul had sent out his watchmen, everybody's looking behind every rock trying to find me.

And I don't know how smart he was, how he did it, but remember he managed to go into a cave. I think he knew the track, you know there weren't many roads in those days, in fact there hadn't been any, but they were just beaten paths over the mountain and maybe he'd stayed there in that cave before and he goes in the cave and says well we'll have a nice quiet night here. And before long he hears the chanting of feet and he looks out and who comes in but his greatest enemy King Saul.

And Saul got down, I don't know whether he had any score or what in the world he had, but he got down there and before long he was tired out and he went to sleep and his soldiers went to sleep. And all the other guys with David said there you are, you see, I can imagine them saying you see how the Lord delivered him into your hands? This is the night, get rid of him. I said that's what he's going to do to you tomorrow if he catches you and here you've got him asleep, just go up and sleep yourself.

Well what did David do? David was already anointed. The minister of King Saul was passing. He could have rationalized it and said well I guess you're right, I guess I guess because I've already been anointed this is intense, get rid of him and he'll start all over again for the whole kingdom, it'll be better for everybody.

No, no, what did he do? Well the king wore a tunic. So he goes up and gets hold of the tunic and he cuts a nice piece off it. I'm sure he cut enough off to notice he'd missed it, he would miss it.

And in the morning he was up there with a number across the valley and they hollered and hollered and hollered and somebody came out and said your majesty the man that we're after is not far away, there he is, he's hollering with the rest of his men. Come out, come out and bring your bodyguard with you. Now look, who is this? Do you remember the scripture says that they put purple, a robe of purple on Jesus? It says there were two men, a rich man and a poor man.

The poor man died and was carried, I like that. The rich man died and was buried. They knew a difference.

But the rich man lived in purple and fine linen every day. You know I think sometimes you read the Bible as though it says that this man changed his coat and he kind of jumped on his camel and went to see his robot to see what was in store. Or this woman made a garment or something.

Do you ever realize you know the length of the tabernacle in the wilderness, it had walls say, I don't know the exact height, say six feet. And they were made of linen. And every thread was put in by hand, ever thought of that? There's no machinery.

They made frames and they put that stuff in, it must have taken years and years. The same was true when you bought a piece of cloth. And only wealthy people had cloth that was dyed.

I remember being in North England once and I wanted to go in Nepal just to say I'd been in. So we crossed the bridge, if it was a bridge. It was kind of shaky and looked like old railroad ties and rushing river underneath.

You know you kept your head up and walked like this, you kept looking down and up. But we went in, as we went in there was a man, he counted in more than about five feet. And he had a sack on his back which was about three feet above his head.

And he had a band around his head and the sack was fitted like this into his back, right into the pit of his back like this and it was leaning back on this strap that bound his forehead onto the sack. And he was coming down with a strap in his hand. And the man that with me said, well there's a fellow that has a real beard, doesn't he? I said, yes he has.

How far would he have carried that? Oh, I should say, let's see, a hundred and twenty, a hundred and fifty miles. A hundred and fifty miles? How much would it weigh? Oh, I think a hundred and twenty pounds maybe. Well the man doesn't weigh a hundred and twenty pounds.

How does he carry it up? Why is the sack so big? Because it's filled with a kind of lichen. It's a flower that grows on the rocks way up on the hills and he has to strangle on his hands and knees like going on those peaks and he takes off all the different coloured flowers and he presses them into that sack. They dry and he puts them into the sack and then he has a hundred and twenty miles to walk.

Do you know where he starts off? He starts off sitting on a rock. A fellow helps him to put this thing into the pit of his back. He puts a rope around with a band here.

He doesn't hold it with his hands and just before he gets up they put a rock on top of this huge hundred and twenty pounds that he has. They put another rock weighing forty or fifty pounds and then they help the man to stand up. And then they let him walk, you know, they see he walks alright for a while and he goes for a while and then when his legs begin to ache he shakes like that and loses the load off, another fifty pounds and he doesn't have anything on his back.

He changes over to another set of muscles. And he walks all that way. This is the only way they know how to dye things.

Now they must have known that in the scripture because in India it was a seller of purple. For each man that died he had purple. It was a distinctive sign.

They had class distinctions then as they have now. But again, you see, when it comes down to the nitty gritty, you can really bear burdens. I don't care if it's ten times bigger than that man had in the spiritual sense.

The thing that eats us up, I don't think it's mental problems so much, it's where are we in our spiritual relationship. If you have no inward thoughts, if you find it's very easy now, it used to be easy to get irritated, it used to be easy to show anger, it used to be easy to show opposition, but now you find there's a tremendous reversal of that and you just find it's as easy to be forgiving, it's as easy to be gentle, it's as easy to be kind. Now Saul had a garment on that I'm sure was well dyed.

And as a man stood at the other side of the valley in the morning in the light and he said, hey whose is this? Whose is this? Oh, mercy, King Saul. Well shouldn't that man be put to death that fell asleep watching the King? You're supposed to be guarding the most amazing man in the world, the man with the most power. Look, I came into your bedroom last night, I came into your sleeping quarters, you see my sword, I could have put it through your heart, I could have slit your throat.

You delivered into my hands, but I showed mercy. Well that's already a kind of mercy isn't it? What about the other case? You know there are two perfect characters in the Old Testament as far as I understand it. One is Daniel.

I think it's beautiful to read the story of Daniel, have a read it later if you haven't read it. Well even the God, the man who had a heathen God and he lived like the devil, and so did his wife, and she saw him in trouble, you know when they couldn't solve the mystery of the writing on the wall, when the King was having nightmares. Oh, she said there is a man in the nation in whom the Spirit of the Holy God lives.

Isn't that something? That in a heathen court they recognized there was a man with the Holy Spirit of God inside of him. Well that ought to be true of us. I remember a place called Doncaster in England and we were out cycling out there when we were not too old, and here was a bank and we said what's inside of that place? And we climbed up and there was a kind of a muddy hole or a pond, something like that, you know the pond when you go down 16 past Dave Richardson's and on the right there is a lake, it's only two or three feet deep.

And just now the water literally, the pads are coming up. And soon you'll have those big white flowers on top of all that scum, phew, horrible. And yet they show their beauty better because they're framed in all that rottenness, all that corruption, all that water that looks as black as ink.

Now isn't that why God put us in this world? Isn't it that God wants to show his grace through us in the same way? Daniel is a character that's referred to twice at least by the heathen queen as a man in whom the Holy God lives, the spirit of the Holy God. And the other perfect character is Joseph. Joseph lives up here, his father sends him down to Dothan to his brothers with some food, and they take him and put him down in a pit.

And the Ishmaelites take him down into Egypt, and when he gets down into Egypt they put him down in a pit, and when he gets down in the pit the bottom falls out of the pit and leaves him. He prayed for his companions to get up, the baker and the butcher, and they got up and left the man of God in jail. You'll never find a word of complaint in the life of the young father.

I think he was about 17 years of age when he was dragged out of his home, when he was assaulted by the Ishmaelites. And again, isn't it easy to sit in these nice chairs and say, yeah, he was a slave, poor guy. I could just take a coke right now.

All in one bed. A slave, what do you think they did, put him in an air conditioned camel outfit? They possibly tied him to a camel. He had to tread every inch of that road, picking up dust, spitting out the dust.

He didn't know, it wasn't normal, and he has not, there's no word of complaint ever in the life, just as there's no word of complaint in the life of Jesus. He's the most perfect example, I think, of Jesus in the Old Testament. And so he goes into prison.

It's down, down, down, down into Dalton, down into a pit, down into Egypt, down into prison, down, the other guys get up, he's left there and he says nothing about it. And then there comes a time of crisis, and God begins to put him up, and up, and up, and up, until when the king goes out of town, he says, well here you are, here are the keys of the kingdom, you just look after the place. Put a chain of gold round his neck.

Look, here's a simple lesson, if you can learn it, it should help you for the next 60 years if you're going to live, well just Daniel's been there 60 more years, but Daniel, but anyhow, however long it was, 60 days, or 60 hours, or 60 what? Do you know what? You don't have to do one thing in your life to promote yourself. All you have to do is obey God. If God wants you on the top run of the ladder, you'll get there if all hell opposes you.

And if God doesn't want you there, you'll get to the top and you'll fall over the top. Neither men nor devils can keep you if the key is obedient. Now I figure that he was 14 years of age, when he was taken away from her, 17 years of age, and he was 30 years of age when he came into power.

So was Jesus, so was John the Baptist. Again in the Old Testament, a man could not be a high priest, he could be a priest at 25, he could not be a high priest until he was 30 years of age. Now what happened? They all heard the little boy that went through all the hardship and all the trial, he lived as a slave, he was forgotten, and suddenly he gets into power, and then there's a strange situation.

He has wisdom, he says, you know what I think? We're getting some bumper crops, why don't we pull down our barns and build greater? Which is right, if God tells you, but not if you do it like the man in the New Testament. And so they built great storehouses. He said he had 10 years, oh boy, he had vision, hadn't he? He had interpretation, he had foreknowledge.

Those little boys had a lot of dreams, I don't know what they dreamt before they went to bed, but always dreaming those things in the Old Testament. Come over here Joseph, I want to tell you something. I was dreaming the other night, there were some cows, my cows were going down to the water edge, and my cows were lean, very, very, very thin, and there were some fat cows there, and my cows not only drank water and grass, they went and ate up the other cows.

And you know what? When they'd eaten them up, they were all happier than when they started. What's the interpretation? So he gives the interpretation. And because of his wisdom, he was promoted up and up and up and up and up.

And he grew a beard, and because he was a deputy for the king, he wore a kingly garment, and his brothers came up one day, and he said, well these men, just bring them in here, and I want to see them privately. I think you're spies. Oh no, no, Your Excellency, we're not spies.

Well, how many are there of you? Oh, and he gives a number, was it twelve? And, oh, you've got twelve brothers altogether at home? No, one of them is missing. Oh, we have a younger brother, Benjamin. Oh, yes, uh-huh.

And your father must be an old man. Yes, is he alive? Yes, how is he? He's fine, Your Excellency. We're not spies, Your Excellency, we've just come down to buy food so we won't die.

All right? Get away with it. And the second time I think it was, I didn't check the story tonight, but remember that they were going around the second time, and Joseph says, put every bag of money in the mouth of the sack. And let them get away for half a day, and then chase after them and say, the king's here, money's missing, and some of you have stolen it.

Boy, they had made a lot of tricks up their sleeve in those days, didn't they? And they went and they found out the money. They leave the younger brother all alone. Then they're offered to be a ransom, to finish the story, and then finally they go to the king.

And they think to the king, and he orders everybody out of the room, he says, every one of you, my bodyguard, disappear. And they thought, oh no, they're going to be executed. Can you imagine how their tummies had more than butterfly, they thought there were a herd of elephants inside, they were feeling so bad.

You know why this has happened? Remember when we treated our brothers so badly, and we didn't show any mercy, and now when are we going to get mercy? Because we didn't show mercy, we won't get mercy. Then the king, as they said, took his crown off and took his coat, and he came and revealed that he was their brother. I guess they all thought, oh, he's going to put us in prison.

We put him in jail, and there was nothing against him. And we lied about him to our daddy, we told daddy that he was devoured by a wild beast, and we showed him that fancy coat, and we've got the whole thing, and the whole thing is going to be revealed now. And again we see the mercy of Joseph, he had everybody under his control, what did he do? Did he exercise his authority with terror? He could have sent them all to jail, he could have put them all to death.

Instead of that, he showed mercy, where he had not even received mercy, at least not from them. And again with what measure you meet, the next chapter says with what measure you meet, it should be meted unto you again. Look in Philemon, that's a book we don't use too often, isn't it? Have you heard a sermon on Philemon? Have you heard it for a long while? It's a short book, I'm sure you've not read the second chapter, because there isn't one.

There's only one chapter. And what does it say? In verse 10, I beseech thee for my son and messengers. Aren't you glad your father didn't call you that name? Eh? Why wouldn't he have called you for a nickname, or a short name? Hmm? He called a fella Albert, he called him Albert, we could have everybody's name done, I don't know why he'd give us, why do they give us names, do you? Because if you have a name you only use it with your pet name, stupid name Now a nickname, what would he have called a Messimas? Ony? A Messimas, I begot me my bonds, okay.

Look what it says in the 18th verse. If he hath wrong thee, or oaf thee oafed, put that on my account. Now if that isn't showing mercy and showing compassion and showing grace, what is? Mercy never takes advantage of anybody else's misery.

Mercy never comes with an accusing finger. Mercy is a contradiction again, I believe it's an outflow of love. Love is a main attribute, mercy is an outflow of that love.

Compassion, tenderness. Well you can talk all that you like about culture but there's not much tenderness around, there's not much mercy around, there's not much compassion around, there's not much tenderness around. And again as we've said this, these attributes are actual, they're like the, well let's call it the new body, they're like the very foundation of the life of Jesus Christ himself.

Everything that's revealed in the relationship of man to man and man to God, was all condensed in the Lord Jesus Christ himself. We're never in a situation where somebody could really have given you a whipping, or they could have done like an uninstituted, right, you owe me what? You owe me \$10 and I tell you what, I'm going to remind you every day you live that you're going to pay that \$10 back, not \$9.98 or \$0.99, \$10. As a matter of fact, thinking you don't know it's going to be \$11 because of inflation.

Or somebody who says, oh look, I don't really need that money now, I'm in a happy situation, I'd be quite willing to forget it. I remember once when Dr. Fawcett who was a senior pastor in the church where I was, in Oldham, in Dalton, England, and he told me he was going away for the weekend. Well I hadn't done much preaching at that time, it was 1932 I guess, late 1932.

And we had a crowded church, he was maybe the most loquacious man that is, he was a great orator, one of the greatest preachers I've ever heard. And I knew the church would be packed, it was always packed. No matter who preached, the church was always packed.

And you see, I had not just to get a Sunday morning meeting, I think I had to get a Sunday night meeting, twice, on a guy that wasn't used to preaching. Well he got through the Sunday morning all right. Sunday night I remember I preached on it once, never preached on it again.

Not because I had a bad time, I thought I had a pretty good time that night. I preached on, if he will not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive you your trespasses. And by the way a few people came forward for prayer at the end of the meeting.

So the girl, she had her hand in everybody, which was our custom. And a lady who was the best known lady in the area, she read it for me, she weighed about 300 pounds to drive the missile. And she was furious.

Her face was red. And I put my hand out and said, well good night, and she said, it's not good night. I want to talk to you.

I said all right, help me. Oh no, no, not here she said, not here. In the church office.

I said well then you'll have to wait till I've seen all the congregation. So we waited, all the congregation went away, and I said let's go in the church office. I walked down through the church, opened the door, and she came.

I said take a chair. No. Okay, I'm going to sit down.

I sat down and she sat down. And I said go ahead now, what's the problem? What's the trouble? What's the trouble? You don't know, eh? I said no, I haven't the slightest idea. What? She said you held me up like that for ridicule in front of the congregation tonight.

Now you don't know. Her name was Crook by the way. I said Mrs. Crook, I never thought of you.

Oh now don't lie about it. What did you say about drunken? Everybody knew you meant me, I was the only drunkard in the place. What did you say about hurting people? What did you say about sin? Oh boy, she memorized more of the sermon than I had, she put more into it.

I said I wasn't thinking, oh yes you are, yes you are. Well I did want to tell you this. I haven't spoken to my neighbor on this side of the house for five years and I'll go to hell before I speak to her again.

And I haven't spoken to my neighbor at this side, I had a fight with her three years ago. And this woman hasn't spoken for five years and this for three years, I'll tell you again I'll go to hell before I speak to either of them. I said well you go to hell, I'm going to bed.

She said what? I said you go to hell, I'm going home to bed. I said I didn't write the book, that's what God says, if you won't forgive you can't be forgiven, there's no way. If you won't show mercy you can't have mercy.

And just because you show mercy, because a bad person shows mercy to another doesn't mean that they'll inherit eternal life, it means that when this is worked out in our lives, when we've humbled ourselves

before God and cried God be merciful to me, I'm poor and needy. And then I've mourned over my sin and when I've been evidenced that I'm thirsting for righteousness, it's not some emotional thing I'm doing, it's that God has wrought his spirit, God is rich in mercy, as Paul says. It's evidenced in that mercy me, I do not struggle to live the Christian, I'm not here to control the Christian life in me, the Christian life in me should control me, it should control my actions, control my speech, it should be an automatic outflow.

Well, I said Mrs. Crook if you won't forgive then, God won't forgive you. Again she said I've got a hair before I'll forgive, I said well Mrs. Crook would you please let me go home. Well she didn't move and you can guess I wasn't going to try and shift her.

She stood with her back to the door and she was bleeding, her face was red with anger. I said Mrs. Crook I came to the prayer meeting in the church at 7 o'clock this morning, I preached at 11 o'clock, I came back and I took the men's meeting at 3 o'clock and I preached tonight and I really am tired, I would like to go home. But she didn't budge, she just stood there.

Well I said alright, so I stretched my legs out in awe and I just put my hand down like this and I didn't know whether she'd crown me or kick me or pick me up and break me in two or what, I didn't know what she was going to do. And then I had some effect like that and I looked and there this monstrous woman was at the side of me on her knees, she had a big hand back and she started treating it out. I thought what a place.

Late Sunday night in church, dearly old day, she put out cigarettes, she put out matches, she put out lipsticks, she put out, you used to buy tickets for the movie house, you bought a whole bunch of them, ten at a time and got them with you and she put those out and she put everything out. I said Mrs Croke, it's late Sunday night, what are you doing? I hadn't noticed the sobbing but I'd finished them all away. And as we got her answer she said, Preacher, if I'm coming to Christ, I'm coming clean.

I don't want cigarettes, I don't want lipsticks, I don't want movie tickets, I don't want all this junk. I want to be a real Christian. I want to show mercy to others.

She went home and told her husband what she's been saying. Oh mercy. She might as well have told him she found a cube of gold, you know, ten feet long by ten feet by ten feet.

What? You've been up to the tabernacle, eh? Yeah. Oh. Well you know, instead of being a mouse that got kicked around, he became a lion.

He started getting, you know, about ten years of race he was going to get it back. I mean, he, she never showed mercy. He wasn't going to show it.

He started punching her and giving her five pounds. About three months after that, she went home one night and she said about two o'clock in the morning, she said, oh I was crying. And he woke up and said, honey, are you crying? Yes.

Well he'd never seen her cry. He didn't believe she could, you know, he thought she'd have to take lessons. She never cried for anything or anybody.

What are you crying about? Oh Ravenhill preached to get, oh yeah Ravenhill, tabernacle, eh? Yeah. Dr. Fossett was a Ravenhill preacher. He preached on hell.

He did? Yeah. And he said that the wicked should be turned into hell and people that have never taken Christ in their lives will go to hell. And amongst other things, hell is a place where there's no mercy, there's no love, there's no gentleness, there's no peace.

It's the very opposite of heaven. Oh well, go to sleep then, see. You're going to heaven, aren't you? Yeah.

Well go to sleep. No I can't. Why can't you sleep? You're going to heaven, everything's alright.

Because you're going to hell. I don't know how she ended up, she explained this, she said, you know, we've had a pretty happy marriage, that's the last thing I'd have thought about their marriage, but anyhow, she said, I, I, I, I. And he said, will you go to sleep? And she said an hour after he woke again and said, are you still crying? Yeah. Well what are you crying about? I'm alright.

No you're not alright. We're going to part, can't we? I'm going up into God's presence, you're going to be lost forever and ever. There's no hope.

Ah, he's got to sleep. Forget all about that. Well he's too stern.

The third time he woke up. The third time he probably was shocked. She was at our house the next morning at nine o'clock.

There was no bus there, and there was a big heavy lady, and when I got to the door, her face was red as beetroot, she was all perspiring, Mr. Haney, I need to talk to you. I said, well Mrs., come in, come in Mrs., what was the name of the truck? I said, take this easy chair, let me make you a cup of tea, Mr. Fawcett's heartless, let me make you a cup of tea. No, I just want to say, I guess you didn't hear the news.

No, no. And then she told me what I just told you. But she said the fourth time, instead of me waking him up, he woke me up.

And she said I didn't know that he even knew that he left. She said all I felt was a whiff, and you know they slept in a cold room, and there's that many blankets on, they threw the blankets over, and she said he jumped right over the end of the bed and fell down in the corner and raised his hands and started crying and telling us, God be merciful to me, a sinner, be merciful to me, a sinner, be merciful to me, a sinner. I said, well that's wonderful.

Well, she said, you know I thought of the night when I argued with you, and if I hadn't asked God to have mercy on me, he wouldn't be asking God to have mercy on him. I'd still be fighting, I'd be beating him up, I'd be the biggest drunkard, I'm not a cop out in the tavern. And when the tavern keeper came in, I stood behind the door, and he says, where's that business for Mrs Crook, and he says, you know, like that, and there were two of them laid out.

That was a hobby, knocking people out. I'd still be doing that, but the fact that night, that John had mercy, and his hands were crying, God be merciful to me, a sinner. I can't believe it.

Well, they lived happily ever after, which was about 2 months. She was at the door again one morning, 9 o'clock, just after Monday morning. She was yelling down the stairs, oh please come in, and I said, what, what, you didn't hear the news? No.

Well, you know, John, he went to the coal mine last night, and you know what they do in coal mines, they put props like railroad ties to hold the roof up. They started using steel props, because they were stronger,

and the miners wouldn't have them. You know why? Because once that roof starts to sink like that, the props they're leaning on begin to creak.

They go like this. Steel won't do that. It's safer.

No, it's not safer. There's no warning with steel. He was digging coal.

He was to be out of the coal mine at 6 in the morning. At 10 minutes to 6, that roof came in and scratched him like that, into pulp. And she said they had to scrape him up, and they brought him in a sack, and put the sack in a casket, and sealed it up.

They wouldn't even let me see him. And she said, you know, I have such a strange feeling. She said, one minute, I think, well, hey, I remember we don't have three children to raise.

The next minute, she said, I feel I'm way up there, a million miles in the sky, and he's walking with the redeemed in heaven. He's saved. All because I set out to show mercy.

Because, you see, I told her, when she got up, I said, now listen, God is giving you mercy. You've got to go next door and tell the woman. I said, go next door.

She came to the midweek, we had a holiness meeting. We used to preach just on holiness, one night a week. She said, I went to my neighbor, and she wasn't in.

So she said, well, I did my duty. It's my fault, I came and she wasn't in. And I went to my other neighbor, and she wasn't in either.

And she said, they still do the same. And they see me go, they call the kitchen. Come on, she's coming, come on.

I can hear them knocking the door when I go past. I said, it won't do. God won't take any substitutes.

You've got to face that situation. And you know, she went back later in the week. Knocked on the door.

The woman must not have seen it go past the window. She would never have opened it. She'd just about as much as me to drag him.

And she said, excuse me please, but I'll put it in the door. I want to tell you something. I want to tell you something.

I'm not the same woman. I went to the tabernacle. Well, everybody knew the tabernacle.

We'd have a revival in the place where Finney used to be. Nobody had been in that area for, I mean, he took a tank. Nobody knew us.

Packed it out. The girls go to work in the morning. They have what they call clogs, like those saddles that they wear, you know, those wooden clogs that they wear up in Holland there, New Holland, and Michigan, and in Holland.

And these clogs of wood, they're turned up, and then around the edge, they have about a quarter of an inch of iron, so that they're working on the iron instead of working on the sole of the, the wood doesn't wear out. And, you know, those girls would come down the street. Oh, we weren't usually up at that time,

six o'clock in the morning.

We were going to bed at half to twelve o'clock, and we were still working on the building we were erecting. And, you know, those girls would come trippity-clop, trippity-clop down the street, six o'clock in the morning, and they'd be singing, you know, some great old chorus. So the newspapers took it up.

National newspapers took it up. What, what happened in the community where everybody goes singing to work at six o'clock in the morning when it's raining or snowing, and it's dark, and everybody's as happy as can be. So they sent another investigation.

You know, that woman became an outstanding character. All based on the first fact that God offered her mercy, she in turn got compassion. She never had any compassion for the husband, all she had were bad words and punches and all the rest of it.

But having received the mercy and the grace of God, she wanted it to manifest in her life, and as a result of her submission and gentleness, she not only won her husband, she won her children for her. That whole neighborhood talked. Do you remember what it says in the eleventh chapter, I think of John, where it says, people came not to see Jesus, but to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

You know, one of the most attractive things in the world is to see people totally redeemed by the grace of God. Totally transformed. When everybody else gives up, that benevolence of God, that mercy of God, that compassion of God.

And if the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, we are going to have compassion, whether people deserve it or not, they may be the most ugly, bruteful, wretched, reprobates in the world. But someone inside of you says, you know, to use an old cliché, there go I but for the grace of God. You know, there's not a sin in the world you're not capable of committing if God doesn't restrain your life, including murder, rape, any devilish thing you like.

The possibilities are there. But you know, when God has cleansed us, when this begins to become our natural life, when the outflow of Christ is gentleness and meekness and goodness and temperance of faith, then you don't have to look at somebody, you know, that ideal man you have in your life, you read his life story or something, and you say, well there he is, the tallest man I've ever seen, and I can't aspire to that. Yes you can.

Yes you can. Didn't have a bigger Bible than you have? Didn't have a bigger Savior than you have? Didn't have a bigger Holy Spirit than you have? But there has to be the input before there comes the output. I've obtained mercy says Paul.

Did he ever, was a life ever more invested for God than his? How he worked it out, in season and out of season, in prisons, in wilderness, in fasting. He just challenged all the powers of darkness. He just said, well try all you can to break me if you like.

They never broke his spirit, they never broke his faith, they never broke his love. There's no other way in the whole world that we can transform this wicked age in which we live, except this redemptive work of God is made real in us by the Holy Spirit. The possibilities of grace are the same for every one of us.

Well I won't be here next week, I guess we're going off tomorrow, and we'll be away for, we'll be back, let me say when we come back, I know it's on paper, it was the 10th of June. This weekend I'll be preaching

to some preachers and a lot of students in Fort Lauderdale, and then on Monday we'll hop over to the Bahamas and have some rest and do some nighting as well. Shall we? Fine.

Our Father, we're so glad that this fabulous experience of being redeemed and cleansed and filled with the Spirit is not for an isolated few, it's not for those who have had a good background and always walked clean and upright, always kind of loved the things that are pure, but it's for those twisted, tormented, defeated, broken lives that you can put together, no one else can put them together, lives that the blood can cleanse and nothing else can He bless you for the power of the Gospel, and ask you Lord that since you've been so merciful to us that mercy may flow from us, you've been so patient with us, may we have patience with others, you've been so forgiving, may we find it easy to forgive, you've been so loving, help us to be strangers to hatred and bitterness, and that your love may be shed abroad from our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Keep your good hand upon us, we pray for the magazine or the newsletters it goes out, the new one, that Lord your blessing and anointing will be upon it, and that Jesus will be glorified in all our lives, and we give you praise in his name.

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