

God...is rich in mercy

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“God...is rich in mercy.” (Eph. 2:4)

The mercy of God is His pity, lovingkindness and compassion on those who are guilty, failing, distressed or needy. The Scriptures emphasize that God is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4) and plenteous in mercy (Psa. 86:5). His mercy is abundant (1 Pet. 1:3); it is great unto the heavens (Psa. 57:10). “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him” (Psa. 103:11). God is spoken of as “the Father of mercies” (2 Cor. 1:3), One who is “very pitiful and of tender mercy” (Jas. 5:11). He is impartial in bestowing mercy: “for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Mt. 5:45). Men are not saved by works of righteousness (Tit. 3:5) but by His sovereign mercy (Ex. 33:19; Rom. 9:15). His mercy endures forever to those who fear Him (Psa. 136:1; Lu. 1:50), but for the impenitent it is for this life only.

There is a difference between grace and mercy. Grace means that God showers me with blessings which I do not deserve. Mercy means that He does not give me the punishment that I do deserve.

Every doctrine of the Scripture has duty attached. The mercies of God require, first of all, that we should present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God (Rom. 12:1). It is the most reasonable, rational, sane, sensible thing we can do.

Then, too, God would have us to be merciful to one another. A special reward is promised to the merciful: “they shall obtain mercy” (Mt. 5:7). The Lord would rather have mercy than sacrifice (Mt. 9:13), that is, great acts of sacrifice are unacceptable if they are divorced from personal godliness.

The good Samaritan is the one who shows mercy to his neighbor. We show mercy when we feed the hungry, clothe the poor, nurse the sick, visit the widows and orphans, and weep with those who weep.

We are merciful when we refuse the opportunity to take vengeance on someone who has wronged us, or when we show compassion on those who have failed.

Remembering what we are, we should pray for mercy for ourselves (Heb. 4:16) and for others (Gal. 6:16; 1 Tim. 1:2).

Finally the mercies of God should tune our hearts to sing His praise.

When all thy mercies, O my God, My rising soul surveys, Transported with the view I'm lost, In wonder,
love, and praise.

Joseph Addison

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