

Overflowing with Mercy

Intro

- The Kingdom Storyline...

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." (Matthew 5:7)

- What does Jesus mean by *mercy* here?

"Mercy relieves the consequences of sin in the lives of others (both sinners and those sinned against)." –**Sinclair Ferguson**, *The Sermon on the Mount: Kingdom Life in a Fallen World*, 31

- Mercy locates people in another Storyline.
- Mercy internalizes God's work of redemption and restoration. It interrupts the normal trajectory of "sin and misery."

"What is meant by mercifulness? I answer, it is a melting disposition whereby we lay to heart the miseries of others and are ready on all occasions to be instrumental for their good."

–**Thomas Watson**, *The Beatitudes*, 110

- When mercy comes into contact with offenses in fallen relationships, it looks like *forgiveness*. When mercy comes into contact with needs in a fallen world, it looks like *compassion and provision*.

Luke 10:25-37

Mercy vs. Self-Justification (v. 25-29)

- "Who is my neighbor?" = "Who is *deserving* of my love?"
- The lawyer was seeking to *limit* the extent of God's commandments to manageable proportions.

"Judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy" (James 2:13)

- If we are *restricted* and *stingy* in our mercy toward others, it may reveal that we do not know the mercy of God. It's something that we don't believe we need!

A Radical Story of Mercy (v. 30-37)

1. Mercy Values People Over Scruples & Convenience (v. 31-32)

➤ *Princeton Theological Seminary study*

- The Priest & The Levite

"Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'" (Matt. 6:13)

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others." (Matt. 23:23)

- The Pharisees' religious energy and devotion extended only as far as their pet topics and self-serving practices.

2. Mercy is an Attitude (Compassion) & An Action (Care) (v. 33-34)

- "He saw him..." (v. 33)
- "He had compassion..." (v. 33)
- "He went to him..." (v. 34)

3. Mercy Embraces Generosity & Sacrifice (v. 35)

"The one who showed mercy (the Samaritan) risked his safety, destroyed his schedule, and became dirty and bloody through personal involvement with a needy person of another race and social class. Are we as Christians obeying this command personally? Are we as a church obeying this command corporately?"

-Timothy Keller, *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road*, 11

4. Mercy Seeks the Undeserving & Unlovable (v. 36-37)

- Jesus reverses his question from "Who is my neighbor?" to "Who was a neighbor to the man in need?"

- *The "Good" Samaritan??!*

"If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."
(Luke 6:31-36)

- Paul Miller & Bob in *A Praying Life*

- Toward whom are you restricted in your mercy? Whom are you wanting to leave out of your definition of "neighbor"?

Overflowing with Mercy (v. 37)

"And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."" (v. 37)

- How are you involved in ministries of compassion for hurting people in our world?

"Blessed is the one who considers the poor" (Ps. 41:1)

- Consider that this could have been you.
 - Consider what life feels like for them.
 - Consider how God is calling you to help relieve suffering.
 - **Sacrificial giving**
 - **Serving in works of mercy**
- Like all of the Beatitudes, this one comes with a *reward*. And these rewards are all over the Bible:

"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed" (Prov. 19:17)

- Remember your place in the Gospel Story of Mercy...
- God is "full of mercy" and spilling over. His mercy has filled our lives, and he calls us to overflow to others.

Discussion Guide

- When Evan said that *mercy* "interrupts the normal trajectories of a fallen world," what does that mean? How do our individual acts of mercy serve as living parables of God's redemptive work in the world?
- Toward what kinds of people do you struggle to be sympathetic? What does that reveal about your heart?
- The Priest and the Levite probably had their own excuses and rationalizations for why they chose not to get involved. What are some of the excuses that can enter our minds when we fail to help those in need?
- How has God led you to show mercy to the needy? What are some tangible ways that you have given and served in order to bring relief to those in suffering or poverty?
- In what ways are you freshly aware of God's mercy toward you?