

MERCY OF GOD SERIES

**MERCY OF GOD**

**PART THREE**

We are on the subject on the mercy of God.

*Heb.4: 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. It says here let us boldly come into the throne of God that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

So, we see how mercy and grace are related. Grace is an impartation of God into our spirit man that we may be able to stand firm in any circumstances. And when we have grace imparted into our lives, we become people who are able to change our circumstances. Paul prayed to God 3 times asking God to deal with the demonic power, which was the thorn in the flesh, the messenger from Satan. Paul prayed for God to change his circumstances. But instead of changing his circumstances, God changed Paul. God says my grace is sufficient for you. So, when God changed Paul through grace, Paul was able to change his circumstances.

As we pray to God to change our circumstances, so actually we are praying for grace. And unless you change, your circumstances will not change. Your circumstances will change in proportion to the change that takes place inside your spirit man.

Here in order to find grace we must obtain mercy. We must know the approach of God. We must understand what mercy is. And our text is taken from Ps. 119:124 *Deal with thy servant according to thy steadfast love, and teach me thy statutes.* David was speaking to God and said to God, "I like you to deal with me according to your mercy."

There are 2 ways that God can deal with us. God can deal with us according to our works. Or God can deal with us according to His mercy. I will assure that if God deals according to your works, you will only receive that much. But if God deals with you according to His mercy, you can receive above what you sow. This is what David understood by this principle. He says, "Lord deal with me according to your mercy," - implying to God not to deal with him according to his works. This principle is only available to those who have fulfilled their works. In other words, you have done your best to know how. You have learned the law of sowing and reaping. And you want to go above those laws. There is a way by which you could go beyond those laws. That is by the mercy of God.

The mercy of God will enable you to receive from God what you have not even sowed and what you have not deserved. The mercy of God surpasses the law of sowing and reaping. When God deals with you according to His mercy you are going to receive some thing you never sowed. You are going to receive some things unexpectedly that you don't deserved at all. So, mercy is a powerful tool in our spiritual walk with God.

David as a man of God understood mercy. And there was a time in David's life when he made a mistake. The mistake he made was he numbered the Israelites. When he had numbered the Israelites the prophet came to him and said choose between 3 judgments.

*II Sam. 24:13 So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him, Shall three years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or there shall be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide*

*what answer I shall return to him who sent me.*

So, God gave David a choice of 3 judgments. Three years of famine, 3 months of running from his enemies, and 3 days of plague. You know what David did?

*In verse 14 Then David said to Gad, I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man.*

David was actually saying Lord deal with me according to your mercy not according to my works. So David was saying let us fall into the mercy of God and he began to plead for mercy. He came to the throne of grace and he says let us fall into your hand. Here is a wonderful example of what it means to obtain mercy. Mercy is coming to God based on His nature. Mercy is an appeal to the nature of God. Judgment is not a normal attribute of God. When God speaks about judgment God speaks about it as a strange work. In other words, it is some thing necessary for Him to do as the law keeper of the universe. But His true nature is a nature of love, loving kindness and compassion and mercy. Those who understand Him will dare to appeal to that.

And here David appealed to God's nature. He cannot appeal on his own works any more. Some times our attitudes in Christian life are tit for tat. I do this you give me this. I do this you give me that. And we forget the principle that God is a person. He is not just a slot machine where you slot in a coin you get some thing out of it. God is a person whom we relate to. He has created this universe with laws.

One of the major laws is the law of sowing and reaping. Beyond this law is a higher law the law of mercy. David understood that if he came to God based on his own works he would be finished. He deserved to die. He deserved the worst. He deserved to be punished. David was guilty and he pleaded guilty. He says Lord I am guilty but Lord I appeal to your mercy. I appeal to your nature. Deal with me according to your mercy.

The judgment of God started falling. People died by the thousands when the plague started. And as the plague started and people died by the thousands, the angel who was judging was about to take his sword and point to Jerusalem. The bible says God has compassion on Jerusalem and He says to the angel stop. It is all because there was a man who pleaded for God's mercy.

Notice in II Sam. 24 it was not even 3 days. God said three days of pestilence but the pestilence did not even last three days. On that very same day itself, the judgment was stayed. There was a man who understands the nature of God. He says Lord deal with me according to your mercy.

*In verse 15-16 So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time; and there died of the people from Dan to Beer-Sheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched forth his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented of the evil, and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, It is enough; now stay your hand.*

The mercy of God held back the plague. It was His mercy. How powerful is the mercy of God. Deal with me O Lord according to your mercy. When God deals according to His mercy, we can receive things that we normally cannot receive. It's a powerful understanding on this principle. Whether it be in your ministry, be in your business, you claim the promises of God. You understand the mercy of God and say God I thank you for all you blessings. I thank you that you grant me all that I sowed that I harvest. You grant that the windows of heaven open. But God don't deal with me according to my works. Deal with me according to your mercy. Because I know you, Lord and I love you and I know your nature.

God loves those who know Him. God loves those who appeal to His nature. And He will bless you beyond what you are able to. He will grant you grace that you could never earn with a thousand years of work. When His grace is granted onto you, you will be promoted, you will be blessed more abundantly than if you could

have worked 24 hours a day without sleep for a thousand years all because of His mercy.

Moses was another man who understood the mercy of God. See those men who live close with God understand His nature. They understand the nature of God is not to punish. All of us who are parents know that when you bring up your child at times you have to punish them. You have to cane them when they do the wrong thing. But yet, when you cane them you want them to know that, that is not your nature. You don't enjoy caning them. You want your child to know you love them. You discipline because you want them to grow up to be good.

God is the same although judgment comes because He is the law keeper of the universe. What He wants us to understand that in the very beginning He is love. And the seat that He causes the Israelites to build for Him called the ark where His presence can dwell was known as the mercy seat. When you approach the Holy of holies, your approach is based on His mercy. Not just on your works. And those who learn to approach Him based on His mercy could draw more than those who approach Him basing upon what they can reap.

A million years' work will not earn you the one act of mercy can give you. You have been doing all you can, working all you can and claiming the promises of God. Keep on doing it but learn the mercy of God. One thing the mercy of God does is that it humbles you. We realize Lord we don't deserve any thing. Lord let your mercy be today. God loves people who humble themselves before Him. He loves to grant them grace, mercy, and blessing.

Here is Moses in the book of Numbers talking to God. When the Israelites refused to enter into the Promised Land, Numbers 14:11-14 *And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people despise Me. And how long will they not believe in Me, in spite of all the signs which I have wrought among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."* But Moses said to the Lord, *"Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for thou didst bring up this people in thy might from among them, and they tell the inhabitants of this land that you killed these*

people.

And in verse 17 and 18 *And now I pray thee, let the power of the Lord be great as thou hast promised, saying, the Lord is slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression.*

If God dealt with the Israelites according to their works and according to the law not a single one of them would have lived even those 40 years in the wilderness. They would have died on the spot.

They wouldn't even have those 40 years to complain. But God has some one who stood in the gap. The man named Moses who understood the mercy of God. He stood between God and the people and he said, "Lord I appeal to your mercy. You have the right to destroy them. They deserved it; they reap what they sow."

But Moses did not come based on the works. "But God deal with them according to your mercy." God dealt with them according to His mercy and allowed them to continue living. Great is the mercy of God. They continued receiving food in the wilderness because God dealt with them according to His mercy.

When you understand the mercy of God, you become a great prayer warrior. You become some one who learns to stand in the gap of people. Some times when you stand in the gap of people you know that they are reaping what they sow. You know they deserved it. If it is just an ordinary prayer and does not based on the mercy you say God give it to them according to their works. But because you understand the nature of God, you say God show mercy. We plead for mercy. Mercy is given when you deserved the punishment. If you understand the mercy of God, it will bring you to great heights.

King David understood this and he put it in the Psalms. There are many Psalms that talked about the mercy of God. One of those is that *I will sing of the mercy of the Lord forever*. Or songs like *Thy loving kindness is better than life*. What is he talking about *Thy loving kindness is better than life*. Now loving-kindness is the same root

word as mercy. Thy mercy is better than life. What does the bible speak about?

We know what life is. How come thy loving kindness and the mercy of God is greater than life? If you live life without God, you can do your best; you know how the people are in the world. They do all they can, they reap what they sow, and they reap from their hard work. They can only reap according to a certain measure. That is life as the world shows it.

King David was saying that when I have the mercy of God is better than all that life can offer me. Thy loving kindness is better than all that I can achieve in life. When God bless you richly because of His mercy, you can go beyond the realm that you can press into with ordinary diligence. The mercy of God should not be a replacement for diligence.

You understand what is the law of sowing and reaping; the law of diligence; the law of grace and you want to press further on deeper into God. If you understand about the mercy of God, it benefits you. But for those who are lazy if they take it out of context they will say well the mercy of God; Lord have mercy on me and be lazy they missed the point.

Here we are talking about people who work hard for God; people who are obedient to God; people who are righteous in God; they want a bonus. Do you know in a working place a bonus is given to you when you have worked hard? In the same manner, we have kept the laws of God. We have been righteous for God. We consecrate our spirit, soul and body to serve Him. Then we want to reach into the bonus of God, that bonus is reached by understanding the mercy of God.

You are saying, "God I appreciate what you have done. I appreciate your blessings. I appreciate you have always brought back what I have sowed. And I have kept all the laws as far as I know how. And God I ask you to continue to deal with me according to your mercy. Lord, I want you to bless me not according to my work. I want you to bless me according to your mercy. Deal with me according to your

mercy." That will bring great blessing to you. God loves to do that when you understand His mercy.

One of the reasons that apostle Paul's life was dramatically transformed was because of mercy. The apostle Paul grew up in a religious home. Some how he got into the wrong religious group. When he heard about this group called the Christians, he started persecuting them in the book of Acts 9. He took many of them to prison. When they were stoning Stephen, he was the mastermind. He was encouraging people to stone them, to kill them, such a cruel man he was. He said that he obtained mercy from God. God showed him mercy when Stephen was being stoned. He said, "Lord forgive their sin. Don't lay this charge on them." What was Stephen doing? Stephen was saying, "Lord they deserve what they reap but Lord have mercy - don't bring it back to them. Instead bring mercy to them." And mercy came forth.

Paul said in the book of I Tim. 1:13 *Though I formerly blasphemed and persecuted and insulted him; but I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief.* He obtained mercy because somebody forgave him. Forgiveness is when others have done wrong things against you. You could release judgment on them. But when you release forgiveness, the mercy of God shines on them. And their lives are beginning to change. Think about it very carefully. Deep in the depths of your heart, you never want evil to fall on another person. The only way for you to change people's life is to release forgiveness to them. When Stephen said, "Lay not this charge on them" the mercy of God started coming upon Paul.

If God had dealt with him according to his work, he would have died long ago. Paul tells us a certain reason he says I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. He thought that when he gets all these Christians killed, he was helping God out by getting rid of more heretics.

Look at what he told the Jews in Acts 22:3 *I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are today.* His zeal was actually for

God. Now in chapter 24:16 *So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward God and toward men.* So, Paul deep in his heart had what you would call a right intention but because of the fuzziness in his mind, he thinks that Judaism was the only true religion. He thought all opponents of Judaism were heretics. When we get rid of the heretics then we are doing something for God. That was his thinking. That was his mental concept. So, in his heart he was zealous towards God. Which is why in I Tim. 1:13 he says I did it ignorantly. He intentionally wanted to serve God.

Galatians one tells us he said that he had a call from his mother's womb. He knew he was supposed to do all these religious stuff. And in his zeal for God, he was doing the wrong thing. How many of us have gone through time when our intention was right but our actions were wrong. Not because you intended your actions to be wrong. But because your understanding was imperfect, so your actions became wrong. But the worse part of it is that you didn't realize your actions were wrong. Many of us did wrong things without realizing that we were wrong just because our intentions were right.

Under the classification of judgment, we will still be judged. And pleading that you have good intentions does not assure you of righteousness. You cannot come before a lawful court and say, "I intended to do good," and get away with a murder or some robbery. You cannot come like Robin Hood and say I rob the rich to help the poor. That is robbing Paul to pay Peter. Two wrongs do not make one right. Because of your imperfect understanding, you do a lot of wrong things. Paul did the wrong thing without realizing that it was wrong. If you do the wrong thing, you began to reap what you sow.

How do you stop the law of reaping and sowing from operating? By appealing to the mercy of God. David understood it and says Lord deal with me according to your mercy. Because some one called Stephen understood mercy and he says, "Lord lay not this charge on them," he released his persecutors from judgment. And the mercy of God started coming and out of that incident came a mighty apostle.

We human being are very self-righteous. Any thing done wrong to you and you

know that you deserved to be justified you release judgment on that guy who did wrong thing. We all had that sense of righteousness placed inherent in us. When wrong things are done to you, you say God judge them. But it is divine and part of the divine nature in you when instead of releasing judgment you release mercy.

Jesus said in Matt. 5 *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy*. If you release judgment, you do not obtain mercy. Do you know that when Moses release mercy and pleaded for mercy, those very people he pleaded for would have killed him if they had a chance? He didn't plead for mercy because they like him and he likes them. It was not a situation where they are buddies. That was not the case. You look at it in the book of Numbers chapter 14:10 those guys would have killed him if they had a chance. They say stone Moses, stone Joshua, stone them. And Moses said Lord mercy. Now you why Moses himself obtained mercy? Those who obtain mercy are those who give mercy. Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

Jesus said judge not that you may not be judged. For with whatever measure you judge it will be measured back onto you. If you want God to deal with you according to your works, then you deal with others according to their works. You be a judge and start judging everybody you will get it too my friend. But when you learn to show mercy, you have a great heart to give mercy, God releases mercy to you. And there are times when you say God I don't deserve. I need this blessing but I don't deserve. There is no way I could deserve and work towards that. And when you have given out mercy you can say, "Lord deal with me according to your mercy and let your blessings come to me." The intentions of your heart are not enough to justify you.

Paul says I did it ignorantly in unbelief and I obtained mercy. When God deals with you according to mercy, God can still bless you according to your intention. This is in spite of the wrong actions and the wrong principles you have misapplied. Did you realize that Paul's intention was met? What did he want to do? He wanted to serve God. What did he say in Acts 22? He says *I was zealous towards God*. I did it because I wanted to do God a favor. So, I shut up those heretics to get rid of them; the fewer heretics there are the better. He was a well-educated man. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. He could have lived a quiet good life.

Why did he get involved in these religious things? He was a man who was zealous towards God. In the end when God showed him mercy, do you know what happened? He obtained what he intended in the first place. But now he had the right intention. He had the right understanding and he had the right method. He became an apostle. He still had the same zeal. He still serves God except now his understanding of God is better. Now he got on the right track. He discovered the Christians were not heretics. The Christians were the truth and the Jews were the heretics. And he got what he intended.

Many people don't get what they intend. Many people die in life without accomplishing what they intend to do and intend to achieve. But when God shows you mercy you are able to bring out everything you conceive. Everything you conceive within you, you can achieve with the mercy of God. But if you don't have the mercy of God no matter how hard you try, you may never succeed. With the mercy of God, God helps you to bring to pass everything you conceive in your heart. When you look at it, you say it is impossible.

Many of us have received visions, have received dreams, have received ideas, have received calling, have received ministry, and have received the work of God that God has placed in your heart and mind. It's like a vision in your life. It's like a dream that capture you. You know that you could rise higher. You know that you could do better. You know that the body of Christ should rise higher. But you say if I could work for a thousand years and I can never reach that. But thanks be to God when you have the mercy of God you could in one day accomplish what a thousand years cannot reach, regardless of whether it is in your business or in your ministry.

For example, when I look at the ministry I see the need of souls to be saved. I see the need of teaching all over the world. I see people being born every day and Christianity still needs to go forth. In our own nation, there are many people in the streets who have not heard this message. How to bring the gospel to them? How to bring the power of God to them? How to bring the Word all over this land until

every ear hears the gospel of God. We look at the task and we say it's not possible. But thanks be to God through the mercy of God its possible.

We ask God to deal with us according to His mercy and its help us to bring all the intentions of our heart to pass. Irrespective of the imperfection of our understanding; the imperfection of our actions, God can bring mercy and grace to your life. It could be in your business where you see some thing and you say here are all these unbelievers getting all these things. They worked 40, 50 years to reach that stage. Some of them inherited it from their forefathers so they have a great start ahead of you. Here you are a believer you are keeping the principles of God. You say God I want to catch up with them. But if I work as hard as them by the time I reached that stage, I will be old like Simeon. But thanks be to God when God shows you mercy in one day you will overtake them. Thanks be to God for His principles and His words.

We should be familiar with the laws of His word that we have learnt, including the law of tithe and offerings. So, when all these things are already ingrained in you and you want to press further into the greater things of God, you began to study His mercy and understand how to come to the throne of grace to obtain mercy. The bible says come boldly.

There are 2 ways in which the bible tells us in receiving mercy. One is to come in prayer. You kneel down and humble yourself to God. When you kneel and humble yourself before God, you acknowledge He is the God of the universe. He is the creator there is nothing that you can receive in life without His decree. And you acknowledge that if God decree that you be a multi-millionaire, you can become that because He decrees by His mercy. If God decreed that you have a ministry to reach a million souls, He can do it because He decrees. But you can never do it by your own strength. You can work for a million years and you will never achieve it. But if you learn to continually depend on the mercy of God, the mercy of God will bring you into areas where no work can do.

Because of the mercy of God Joseph was quickly promoted wherever he was. It was

the mercy of God on his life. Because of the mercy of God, he became the head at Potiphar's house. Because of the mercy of God, he became the head in the prison. Because of the mercy of God, he became the right hand man of Pharaoh over and above Potiphar himself. Potiphar worked all these years to become one of those big shots in Pharaoh's army. But when Joseph came about, he was a slave. He was not even an Egyptian. In a short time, he overtook Potiphar. And he became lord over them.

Think about Daniel he came into Babylon as nothing. But he had all those principles refined in him. The religion, prayerfulness, a man who wanted to obey God's word and not drink and be merry like the others young Israelites. He kept himself for God and he was the right hand man in 3 kingdoms. Tell me where could such a favor come to a person who started with nothing. It was because the grace and the favor of God.

We all realize that outside in the world some people are where they are because of a set of circumstances. Let me assure you that God is in control of circumstances. He was in control of circumstances to bring about the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. God is in control in all situations to promote you. And God works all circumstances for good to those who love Him, to cause them to be promoted, to cause them to rise up. The mercy of God lifts them up.

Potiphar could see the Lord was with Joseph. And people will be able to see that the Lord is with you. There is something about you. When you come into their midst they all started receiving the mercy of God. You are not a judge. You are a man of mercy. When you bring mercy to others, others also start getting blessed. Remember when Joseph was serving Potiphar, Joseph was not getting blessed for he did not own anything. Potiphar was the one who was blessed. But Potiphar recognized that he was blessed because of Joseph. Why because he was a man of mercy. But if Joseph was very critical and judgmental, he will never be able to give blessing in the house. We should learn to be positive about people. When you are talking about people, do you give them a chance? Are you cruel to them to cut them off? If you don't give them mercy, you cannot obtain mercy. You bring a blessing wherever you go. And that is possible because you learn to give mercy and you learn to draw mercy from God all the time.

At the bottom of this mercy is an understanding of the nature of God. You appeal to God's nature day by day. Moses understood this in the book of Exodus he said Lord show me your glory. The Lord showed him His glory. And then the Lord declares, "The Lord is full of mercy, compassion and loving-kindness." Then he bowed his head before God and said, "Lord if I have obtained mercy go with us." He came down from that mountain with his face full of the glory of God. He has seen the mercy of God. At the crux of the matter is the understanding that even though judgment does occur because He is the ruler of the universe, He is still the mighty God of love. God so loved the world. He is a God of love.