

MERCY OF GOD SERIES

THE THEOLOGY OF MERCY

In the last message, we pointed out the fact that when God commanded Moses to build an ark where His presence could dwell in the tabernacle of Moses and He called the ark the Mercy Seat. Incidentally, when Solomon built the temple he did not build any more new ark. The same ark that Moses built was placed into the Holy of holies in the temple that Solomon built.

Some years ago, I received a video about the discovery of the Ark of the Covenant. We have written to Ron Wyatt because he was the one who discovered both the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem and Noah's ark. The place the Red Sea crosses the towns Sodom and Gomorrah, many archaeological discoveries were made in our time. (If you are interested in his discoveries, check out [Wyatt Archaeological Research \(http://www.pilgrimpromo.com/WAR\)](http://www.pilgrimpromo.com/WAR) website. Ron Wyatt has passed away in August 1999 - Ed.)

All the pieces of the furniture of the tabernacle of Moses have been discovered. God seems to have hidden these ancient secrets until our times as we fast approach the end times and the rapture. God is getting the church to be ready for these events.

We need to bear in mind that the Mercy Seat that Moses made was only a

pattern of what he saw in heaven. We know that in heaven there is an actual brazen altar. There is an actual altar of incense. Isaiah the prophet saw that in Isaiah 6. There is an actual candlestick as mentioned in the book of Revelation. There is an actual place of God's Mercy Seat. The Mercy Seat is God's throne in the holiest part of heaven and is the control center of the whole universe. Humankind would probably have given another name to it - the place of power, the place of glory, the place of authority. These aspects would have been part of this throne but God chose to give it the name the Mercy Seat.

Heb. 4: 14-16 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weakness, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. Now the author is not just talking about approaching the Ark of the Covenant. He is talking about approaching God's real throne. The concept of grace is more developed in the New Testament than in the Old Testament and grace involves mercy. When mercy is expressed, grace is being shown. God calls His throne, not the throne of power, not the throne of glory, although it includes these things, but God calls His throne the throne of grace, which also includes the throne of mercy. For where mercy is, there is grace. Grace is a further development of what mercy means.

What might we find in the throne of grace? Let us read on *that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* Since we are always in time of need, it looks like we continuously require mercy and grace from His throne. The bible in the book of Ps. 23 tells us, *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life.* We need goodness and mercy. Mercy is continuously needed in our life. It is not just once that we receive the mercy of God. It is not just once that we receive the grace of God. We need to grow in grace; we need to grow in mercy before we can grow in compassion, in power and in glory. We are gradually transformed into His image as we receive His mercy and grace.

Today we are concluding the short series on the Mercy of God and we have three theological reasons why mercy is required, why God needs to show mercy, and why we need to show mercy where sin, imperfection or evil is present. Mercy

is a way of life that we need to assimilate in our Christian walk with God.

To Eradicate Evil

The first point is the eradication of evil. To eradicate is to remove totally until there is no more evidence of its previous existence. God is not just interested in overcoming evil, sin and imperfection. God is interested in totally annihilating and eradicating evil. Because of that, evil cannot be removed by evil. Evil or wrong cannot be removed by wrong methods.

When a dog barks at you, what do you do? You do many things to stop the dog from barking at you but it still barks at you. In the end, you lose your temper and you become mad. You finally scared the dog away by barking back at the dog, and the dog ran off. If you behave like a dog to another dog, you have just become a dog. So, when people do wrong to you, when people hurt you knowingly or unknowingly, you should never repay with a wrong. If you repay evil with evil and you succeeded, you have become a greater evil than the other person.

Suppose someone beats you up. You go home and train under a karate coach for many months. Later, you hunt that fellow down and whacked him good and proper. Guess what? That gangster beat you up and you have to become another gangster to beat him up. What have you become? A meaner thug. You have not succeeded in eradicating evil. You have succeeded in removing a smaller evil around you without realizing that you have become a bigger evil capable of wreaking greater havoc and evil.

That is why God needs to eradicate and remove evil. He is not just in the business to punish evil. He is there to totally remove it. The Old Testament laid down the law of retribution before the revelation of grace and mercy came in the New Testament. The Old Testament laid down the rule of demanding an eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, and a leg for a leg. In all civilizations

before the New Testament shed light with the law of love and mercy, there is a sense of strict justice without mercy inbuilt in man to demand *a tic for a tac*. However, if all of us go around demanding an eye for an eye, the world will soon go blind. Everybody has something against everybody and everybody end up losing something. We have not removed evil. We punish what we think to be evil to a small extend but that evil is not completely eradicated. It will surface further down in time and exact its toll on some unsuspecting victims.

History records stories of vengeance between families, between gangsters and triads, between ethnic groups and tribal peoples, between monarchies and countries. When one person in a particular family, tribe or triad is killed, his members go off and kill someone else in the other family, tribe or triad. Revenge is executed for the sake and honor of the slain one. Revenge killings may even take place in the next generation. When will it end? It will continue until both sides come to their senses and decide to stop the senseless killings once and for all by signing a peace truce. It is then that the cycle of evil will end. Otherwise, it will go on continuously.

Thus, the first reason why we have to show mercy is that only in mercy can good overcome evil. There is no other way to eradicate evil. God is interested in removing evil completely. He has to use good to overcome evil so that when evil is overcome by good, evil disappears. When evil is overcome by another evil or by another natural imperfect method, the imperfection will continue to the next generation.

Lets look at the book of Rom. 13:8 *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet " and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

Now in chapter 12 it gives an example in verse 17. Now this is New Testament. The Old Testament demands an eye for eye. *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge ourselves, but rather give no place to wrath: for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."* Now this is taken from Proverbs 25:21-22 *If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, (this is the part Paul didn't quote) And the Lord will reward you.*

Look at it this way: how many of you are losing your rewards? God has a reward for those who show mercy. "Vengeance is Mine," says the Lord. It is human to desire vengeance and justice. Every single one of us deep in our heart wants righteousness and justice to be done in our lives, in our career, in our family, in the world around us. It is human to desire that evil be punished and vengeance be served. However, it is divine to forgive. So choose whether you want humanity or divinity. Choose whether you want to become more human in nature or godlier in nature. It takes a divine nature in our life to rise up above what human cannot do and say that we will repay good for evil. The more we want to overcome evil, the more we must show mercy and love. If we try any other methods of overcoming evil, it will not remove or eradicate that evil. It will only temporarily punish that evil. The only way you can remove evil is by overcoming it with love and mercy. Jesus asks every Christian to abide by this standard.

How many Christians find it so easy to repay evil for evil. We who live in the New Testament must live by the New Testament standard and not by Old Testament standard. Jesus in the gospel of Matthew gives us the highest standard that He requires every true believer in Him to follow. Chapter 5:38 *You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. However, Jesus said in verse 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person.* Now isn't that so foreign to worldly thinking? He says do not fight with flesh and blood. Do not resist evil people.

Paul said resist the devil and he will flee from you. Resist the demon power that is found in Ephesians 6:12. *For we do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* The book of James tells us in chapter 4:7 *Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

God is not against us using our spiritual energy to resist demon forces. However, He is against you lifting your finger against your fellow men, whether they are brethren or they are people of this world. It is Jesus' standard. He says do not resist them, do not fight them with natural methods.

Look at what he says in Matt. 5:39 *Whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.* These are the standards of Jesus. Question: Did Jesus practice what He teaches? When they came and slapped Jesus, He did not do anything.

How many of us would get angry when somebody slap us? How many of us would get upset when somebody kicks us? A lot of us do. To have those feelings make you human. However, to yield to them reduces you to a mere mortal. We are not mere mortals. We are a new species in II Cor. 5:17. We are born of divine nature that refuses to use carnal methods to seek just ends. We have a higher nature and a lower nature. The lower nature says to fight back. The higher nature says to let go. To which nature will you yield? The old man says, "Go ahead and fight." The new man says, "Yield to God and love." When we are told to yield to the new man inside us, some of us would say that it is not fair for we will get bullied. Everybody wants to bully us. We will be like little mice.

You have forgotten Proverbs 25:22. What is the last phrase there? Say *and the Lord will reward you.* If you will be patient, the Lord will reward you. I do not know how the Lord will reward but the Lord will reward. And the Lord will always see that in the end justice triumphs because He is the Almighty Policeman. He will see that justice and righteousness prevail. Look at the earth and the story of this earth. The just always survive in the end. Sometimes evil

seems to thrive for ten years, twenty years, but in the end the wicked falls. There is a Person controlling the lives of people on this earth to see that righteousness, truth, and justice prevail. All He is asking for is to be patient and in the process keep showing love and the Lord will reward you. I wonder how many of us are daily losing our rewards.

Because we lose our reward unknowingly, we don't know what the reward could have been like. I can assure you that the rewards are tremendous. More than you could ever realize. Jesus says in Matt. 5:40 now this is a practical situation. *If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic - what did Jesus say? - let him have your cloak too.* Some of us from the human side will say that is not fair. Wait a minute, it depends on how big you think your God is that He can supply your needs. Lets say for example, somebody comes to your home and some of your money was lying around the house. You see him taking one dollar and walking away. If you lose one dollar you would not take that fellow to court, will you? You know the reason. You could afford to lose a dollar. Think about the fact that you can afford that small loss. Your Father can afford to get you another tunic. Somebody wants to sue you for your tunic and you say, "I am going to fight you tooth and nail." Look at it this way. Your Father can afford that. Your Father is not El Gangster, El Terror. Your Father is El Mercy, El Shaddai. It depends on whether you know God as your Father and you know what you could afford. If somebody wants to take all those things and you say, "I am not sure whether God is going to give it back to me," then your problem is your faith in God and your relationship with your Father.

Say I have a rich Father. I have a rich heavenly Father. He owns all the cattle on the thousand hills. He owns all the silver and the gold on the planet earth.

When you look at it from that point, you see how big your God is. Can you afford the loss when somebody wants to sue you for your coat? You tell that person, "If you want it, then take it. No problem, I got a few thousand more." See it depends on our viewpoint. If we can see how big our Father is, how big our God is, we can freely give away what people ask or demand or steal from us. Some of you will say in heaven we got this silver and gold. We have a heavenly

account that is unlimited. You just call Jesus' name and you can have any amount you want. Yes, but why is it not being transferred into my account yet? The key is patience and faith.

God the Father wants to see whether you believe in Him. For he who comes to God must believe that He exists. We believe our Father exists. We believe our Father God cares for us. If He gave His only begotten Son to die for your sin, will He not give you another coat, another tunic? We must believe that He is and must believe that He is the rewarder of everyone who seeks Him diligently. When we see how big our God is and when somebody comes and slaps you, you know why you can take it because your Father is bigger than him and you are strong and you can afford it. You can afford to take that kind of thing because the strong can bear with that imperfection of the weak.

Pastor Joshua, give me a punch here. Now I can take it because I am strong enough to take it and therefore I do not react. If we do not know that God is in us and that we are strong, we will want to react because we think that we are going to get killed. The reason many react is because of self-preservation. They think that if somebody slaps them, that will be the end of their life. It is the end of their reputation. They lose their face; they lose everything.

However, you remember you do not have to preserve yourself. You know who is on your inside, who is your strength, and you know that you could take it because you don't have to worry about your life. You see those two points there. The reason why you do not have to worry about people suing you and taking things away from you is because you can afford it. You have God as your Father. The reason why you can take a slap when people slap you is because you are not concerned about your own life. God is preserving your life. You know that if that fellow keeps punching you while you do not react negatively, one fine day your big Father God shows up and it will be a different story for him. So all the Father asks of you is to look to His bigness. Leave your life, your reputation and your name and everything in His hand if you are willing to allow Him to preserve your life Do you realize that He can preserve our life better than we preserve our life?

Let us say that Joshua who punched me is not a believer and I punched him back. I am not aware that Joshua's friends are thugs. I am punching him back to preserve my life and to protect myself. However, do you know that in doing so I am actually endangering my life? Lets say Joshua knew a few top-notch gangsters and I only see Joshua. He punched me first and I punched him back. Suddenly gangster friends of Joshua surround me. Thus, to take action against Joshua just to preserve my own life is putting my life at greater risk.

However, if you are conscious that God is the one who preserves your life and that He will take care of Joshua, then you know that you do not have to slap back. The next time your reputation or whatever is at stake remember Jesus lives in you. Self-preservation is a lower form of human activity. Self-sacrifice and the willingness to let go is the divine nature that God has imparted into those who are born again. So Jesus says somebody slaps you its O.K. because you can take it. You are strong. You can put up with the weak. Whoever compels you to go one mile go with him two. Give to him who asks you and to those who borrow from you do not turn away because God wants you to show love and mercy. He continues later on in the passages He says love your enemies - and that is the highest call for our life - and do good continually.

The whole story of Matthew chapter 5, 6 and 7 is based on the fact that Jesus wants us to walk in the realm of mercy and love where God dwells. Why mercy and love? Firstly, only mercy and love can eradicate evil. Lets say that fellow slapped you and you slapped him back. Have you eradicated evil? You have only punished the evil. Then you got to wrestle with your own conscience that you have become evil to overcome evil. It is impossible to eradicate evil any other way. Think about God. God is sitting on His throne in heaven and the goal of God is to eradicate evil not just to punish evil. Because we are so small, we are only thinking only of our little problem. God has to think about the universe. He is not interested in continuing evil. He is interested in removing all evil. When you look at the bigger view from God's point, we understand how we stop the progress of evil in our little relationships here and there. Do not look at evil from the worm's eye view. Look at it from God's point of view. To eradicate evil we need to show love and mercy.

Salvation

Why do we have to show love and mercy? Why not we repay evil for evil, judgment for judgment, fight for justice where you think justice should be meted out instead of leaving the matter in the hands of God? Why does God want us to show love and mercy? It is because God wants to save the evil people. If God is interested in punishing people and bringing them to justice, He could right now kill off every evil person. Lets say somebody punched you and you punched him back and killed him. What have you done? You have become a bigger evil. You have avenged yourself but you have not saved that person. You have allowed that person to die in his evil. There is no salvation for that person. God is not interested in just punishing the wicked. God is interested to save evildoers and turn them into good people. That is where the greatest glory comes. If we use any other method other than loving these evil people, we would never succeed in changing the evil person to a good person.

Many of us in the process of life may have done wrong things or made mistakes in our lives with regard to other, and in the eyes of other people we were bad to them. However, as we grow in life, we learn how to express ourselves better in a more loving way and thereby redeem our image in the eyes of people. What happen if we were never given a chance? Think about Saul one of the greatest apostles that lived. When he heard about the Christians he was mad against them. In the book of Acts 8:1 *Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.* Acts 9:1 *Then Saul still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to persecute, to kill and to destroy the Christians.* He was like a wild man. What happen if God had punished him? What happen if justice had been shown? There would have been no apostle Paul. We would have seen justice served. I mean when Saul was a bad man and he broke up families. Saul had plotted against the church; that man has plotted and killed many Christians. What does the church gain by asking for justice and killing all the evil? Nothing.

God is interested in the salvation of sinners. He requires us to show mercy. Paul says in I Tim. 1:13 *Although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* No one would have known he done it ignorantly because God sees the heart that no man can see. We think that some wrongdoers ought to know what they are doing, but in fact, they do not really know. Paul obtained mercy because he was ignorant. If God have not shown love and mercy to Paul the church would not have seen I Cor. 13. Paul was one of the few men who knew the greatest love because he who is forgiven much loved much. He knew he did not deserve it. He knew that he deserved to die for all the wrong things he had done to the people of God. In other passages, he said that he was the chief of sinners. He knew that what he received was mercy. He that is loved much will love much. This same man wrote one of the most beautiful poems of love in I Cor. 13.

God is interested in salvation. The reason why He asked you to love people who hurt you; to love your enemy; to show mercy is not that He does not care for your life. He does but He is asking you this one favor. Can you for a moment of time not just think about yourself and all that you are? Think about the other person who is causing all these things. Do you want that person to be saved or not? If you want that person to be saved, you must show love and mercy. If you decide that you do not want that person to be saved, I am sorry for you. You are not acting like God. Are we just interested in punishing evil? Or are we

interested to save those who are evil.

In every human being, there is a spark of goodness. If they have been brought up correctly, influenced correctly, guided correctly, we may never know how great a benefit to humankind that person could have been. However, maybe you could be the key to those people. Even the world knows how to do good to those who are good to them and do bad to those who are bad to them. If you act like the world, what difference is there between the world and you; between the people of God and the people who know not any god? Since we know God, we are the people who should show love and mercy where justice is required. Where judgment is required, we withhold judgment and we show love and mercy so that the person can be redeemed and saved. That is all God requires of you.

God is interested in redemption and in salvation. Are you interested in the same thing He is interested in? If you are show love and mercy to everyone good and bad, you will be an instrument for God to bring salvation and mercy. Who knows what good all those people could do when they come to know God. Who would have dreamed that the person who had murdered, killed, and threatened the church would become one of the greatest apostles of the New Testament age and sacrifice even more than all the other apostles to bring the gospel to other men? Who would have thought that this thing could have happened?

Glorification

By glorification, we mean the revelation. Much of the world and sadly many Christians have the wrong image of God. They think of God as the big man upstairs with a stick all ready to hit them and punish them. The Bible has always shown that although God has to judge; God has to bring forth judgment; that behind all His judgment is a heart full of love. Whenever He has to judge, you can find that He is grieved. Now if God really enjoy punishing people why then did Gen. 6 says He grieved in His heart. The Hebrew word for the word grief is the word sorrow. God was sad. God was sorrowful. He felt sorrow. Yet, Almighty God felt sorrow when He had to judge. The highest revelation of God is not the revelation of God as judge. The highest revelation of God is a God of love. That is why every other religion managed to somehow come to the revelation that God is a God of justice and a judge. All religions teach some good. Look at the concept of God in all religion. It is the concept of God as a judge. He as a good judge will be fair. However, you will never find in any religion of the world the concept of the God of love. The highest revelation of God is not that God is a judge; that He is a fair God and a righteous God. That is the revelation that even unbelievers and philosophers can come to.

However, no philosopher could come to the highest revelation that God is a God of love and a God of mercy. This revelation of a God of love and mercy came only when Jesus Christ revealed

that God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Look at it this way God did not have to send His Son. He could have created a new species. Why should He continue to work with humankind? He had the power to create. God could have just wiped this world off. However, God saw how weak man was; how deceived they were by the enemy without realizing it; how blind they were to the spiritual world of darkness where the devil is trying to kill all of them. God also said there is no way I could save them if I can't find one righteous and sinless person in their midst to make sacrifice. Even if I can find one, would he be willing to sacrifice for the rest of humankind? God looked high and low, far and wide, there was no one. Therefore, God said He was willing to allow Jesus Christ the Word of God to come to live and die for us because He loved us. He wants us to be saved. While we were enemies of God, God loved us and send His only begotten Son to die on the cross for us. That is the highest revelation that we ever seen.

For the first time, even the angels saw something they never saw before. Angels were created before men were created. They have seen God; they know God. Lucifer once upon a time was an archangel before he fell. Even then, no angel has ever seen how much God could love. When they saw how much God love even His fallen creation called man, even the angels could not comprehend this high revelation. The greatest revelation of God is that God is a God of love. That is why when you and I are confronted with a situation where we could exercise love or

exercise revenge, when we choose to exercise love we are bringing the highest glory we could to God by allowing people to see the love of God in our life. The highest revelation we bring to the world is not the revelation of justice, and judgment and fairness although all those things are part of Christian life. The highest revelation we bring to the world is that God is a God of love. Yes, He is a God of justice and sin has to be punished but He is saying He would rather take the punishment Himself so that we can be free.

In all the highest points of Israel in the highest revelation of God you never see them showing God as a God of judgment. In the highest point of Israel all their worship revolve around the fact that God is good and His mercy endures forever. That was sung in the time of Solomon; that was sung every time there is a temple sacrifice. The love of God is the highest revelation of God. When God reveals Himself as a God of mercy and love, you see the highest revelation.

Glorifying God on this earth is not just a matter of witnessing. Now witnessing has to be done with love. We do not go to the streets and tell people in a very fierce tone that if they do not accept Jesus now, they are going to burn in hell although that is the truth. If there is no love in our hearts for them, we did not bring the highest revelation. The highest revelation is a message of love. Love compels us to warn them to come back to God to avoid the devil's snare to trap and kill them. The highest revelation that you can bring to them is a revelation of love.

You speak the message of the Good News and you act out the message.

If we Christians do not act out in love and mercy, we are not glorifying God at all. If we Christians just act in fairness and justice, we have not really glorified God yet. Even out there in the world unbelievers could reach that revelation. However, if we Christians begin to act in love and mercy that the world cannot understand, cannot comprehend - they say this is something that they have never seen before – then we are glorifying the God of love and mercy.

Forgiveness, love and mercy are the attributes of the new creation. That is why if you and I want to really glorify God with our life to our family, friends and the people around us who don't know God, we need to keep showing them love and mercy. You need to keep showing them that you love them. You got to keep showing mercy to them. That will glorify God. In the end, there is eradication of evil through love and mercy. There is salvation of evildoers by love and mercy. There is glorification of God Himself through love and mercy. That in the end is our prime goal on this earth. This is the Good News the gospel of Jesus Christ and our highest message to people is that God is love. If you find love, you will begin to find God. This love must be Agape love and not human selfish love but the true love of God. It is the goal of God to eradicate all the curse of the law; to eradicate evil from this earth. It is the goal of every Christian that we should eradicate the curse of the law;

eradicate poverty; eradicate sin and sickness; eradicate spiritual darkness. We need to continue these goals in our life. Whenever you have the opportunity to eradicate evil through love and mercy you should. This is the highest call for God. So the mercy of God from the philosophical and theological point of view need to be shown by God and by us because it is the only way to:

No. 1 eradicate evil

No. 2 the salvation of the evildoers and to

No. 3 glorify God by revealing His love and mercy in all His fullness.