

I. Review

- A. Jesus starts the SOTM with 8 aspects of His bridegroom heart that He longs to impart. He imparts these heart conditions to us in order for us to share in deep intimacy and love with Him. As we enter into this deeper degree of friendship, we experience increasing levels of abundant kingdom life in our inner man.
1. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit – Out of the desire for intimacy with His Father, Jesus chose to empty Himself and only rely upon the reality of what His Father empowered Him to do and say. Poverty of spirit is the necessary posture of entrance and experience of the Kingdom.
 2. Blessed are those who Mourn for the Kingdom – Experiencing the Kingdom causes us to see a disparity between the current age and the coming Kingdom age. This causes a constant dissatisfaction and mourning in our soul until the fullness of the Kingdom comes.
 3. Blessed are the Meek – Meekness is the restraint of power or strength for the higher purposes of righteousness. The meekness of Jesus is the primary aspect of peace and rest in our inner man and the surety of an eternal Kingdom of peace on the earth.
 4. Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness – God’s righteousness must increase in your soul in order to give life and nourishment to your inner man and grow you up into the maturity of fullness of life and love.

II. Mercy in Review

- A. God’s Mercy Defined – Culturally mercy is defined as holding back due punishment for someone’s offense. Biblically this is not the case. The mercy of God is manifested in a sincere sense of compassion over our state, and having a desire to relieve us from this state. God’s mercy is far from passive; His mercy compels Him to pursue the wicked in order for them to turn from their ways. It was His mercy for us that ultimately drove Him to the cross. This is the reason scripture uses the words mercy and compassion interchangeably when speaking of His love. (Ez. 18:23; Lk 15:4-10, 23:34; Titus 3:3-7; 2 Pet. 3:9)
- B. In this beatitude we are called to walk in God’s mercy, with the corresponding promise that we will obtain mercy. The original Greek word used for “obtain” means to lay hold of something that already belongs to you. In other words, God’s desire is that we would see our relationship with Him through the lens of mercy and in turn obtain the mercy that is already given to us. Thus, growing in deeper levels of understanding and experience of His mercy upon us.
- C. Mercy is paramount aspect of God’s relational heart – When looking at the aspects of relational love God has towards us the one most highlighted by Him, and by the prophets, who carried His word, is mercy. It is the paramount aspect of His interaction with us. (Ex. 25:17-22, 33:18-34:7; Ps. 103:8-13; Jon. 4:2; Book of Hosea; Gen. 9:13; Rev. 9:13)

1. Jesus invites us into the freedom of actively walking in God's mercy towards others as we rightly understand and feel His mercy towards us. When we fail to walk in mercy it is generally because we have not let the weight of how merciful He is to us humble us enough to respond in the same way. A right perspective of God's mercy allows us to be loved by Him, as we are, even in the midst of our lack of sanctification or "state". This perspective is the key to being merciful to others.

D. Mercy Incarnate – Once again, in the face of Christ, we find the beauty of our God, who delights to give mercy. In countless spoken and unspoken ways Jesus displayed the glories of the mercy of God and invited us to share in the life found within His heart.

1. Mercy was the catalyst for His miracles. (Mat. 9:27, 36, 14:14; 15:22, 17:15, 20:30-31, 34, 23:23; Mark 8:1, 9:22, 10:47-48; Lk. 7:13, 17:13, 18:38-39)
2. Mercy was His message. (Mat. 9:9-13, 12:1-13, 23:4, 23)
3. Mercy was His mission. (Lk. 1:50-54, 72-78; Eph. 2:1-7; 1 Pet. 1:3)
 - a. Mercy is still His catalyst for miracles, mercy is still His message, mercy is still His mission. Mercy is His constant invitation for us to enter into the fullness of His love and His life. (Heb. 4:1-16; Jude 1:2)

III. Answering the Questions

I was taught that if I don't forgive others that I will lose my eternal salvation. Is this true?

- A. Some believe we are forgiven by God for salvation only as we forgive others, and to the extent we forgive others. (Mat. 5:7, 6:15, 7:2; Mrk. 11:25-26)
 1. Scripture must be interpreted by scripture, and we must never entertain an interpretation of scripture that contradicts other scripture. The whole of the bible makes it abundantly clear that we are "saved by grace alone" and not by works. This grace is available to all, through the substitutionary and sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus. (Lk 22:39-43; Jhn. 5:24, 6:47; Rom. 3:21-26; Eph. 2:1-22)
 2. Therefore, we must apply these passages in terms of our living condition, or sanctification (being formed in God's nature) rather than in our legal position (righteousness unto salvation in God's sight). Through our legal position, in God, through faith, we now have ability, through the indwelling Spirit, to walk in God's mercy in both our relationship with Him and others. (Mat. 18:21-35; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; Jas. 2:13)

How do you reconcile Gods mercy with the judgements you see in the book of Revelation, and other places?

- A. Culturally, this is a very difficult question, because mercy generally means to give a free pass for offense, while judgment means to bring consequences for offense. In our culture, mercy and judgment are contrasting ideas, in which one must pick between the two responses when dealing with an offender. However, as stated earlier in this teaching, biblical mercy is having compassion upon one's state and intentionally working to bring them out of their state. Within this biblical definition of mercy, it's very clear that Gods judgments are His mercy and they are complementary actions, not contrasting actions. (Is. 30:18; Hos. 2:19, 12:6; Zec. 7:9; Mic. 6:8; Mat. 23:23)
1. We must understand, God in His mercy withholds the just consequences for our offenses because Jesus took the consequences in our place. In this sense God's mercy upon us was far from a free pass.
 2. If we specifically study the judgments in the book of Revelation, we can see they are an act of mercy. God is using His judgments to disrupt the earth and bring difficult circumstances to humanity in order that they would turn to Him, so He can heal and save them. They intensify, as they progress, in hopes to turn even the hardest of hearts.

How do I uphold this beatitude in the discipline of my children or in the workplace as supervisor or manager over other people?

- A. Practically speaking there can be some difficult tension when desiring to walk in God's mercy and not compromise by either being too harsh and impatient or too tolerant or passive. Here are few guidelines you may find helpful.
1. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see the true state of the person who has brought the offense. Then ask how you can help them out of that state.
 2. Many times, in the scripture God's mercy is manifest by His discipline. He holds people to their commitments and does not allow them to fall short of the fullness of their lives He sees for them.
 3. As leaders and parents, it is a very pure form of mercy to not allow standards of righteousness to be lowered. We bring correction in gentleness, humility, and exhortation.