

Upside-Down Living
The Radical Message of the Beatitudes
The Joy of Forgiving Others
Matthew 5:7

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Matthew 5:7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

Without mercy there is no forgiveness. And without forgiveness, there is no enduring joy. God wants you to know the joy of forgiveness and the part that mercy plays. It is no small thing, thus it is right next to hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and it marks Kingdom people.

There Are At Least Two Fundamental Reasons Why Mercy Matters For Your Life:

1. Mercy Is God Revealed—His Very Nature

The God of mercy looks like Jesus and looking like Jesus is the only way to live with freedom.

Exodus 34:5-6 “The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.'”

2. Being Merciful And Receiving God’s Mercy Are Linked

“The bondage of triviality is the curse of the unmerciful.” ~ John Piper

Matthew: 6:14-15 “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Since It Matters, How Do You Become A Person Of Mercy?

A. Embrace That Mercy Is Not An Option Because You Have Been Given Mercy

Sinners that come to grip with the truth that God’s mercy rescued them begin to deliver mercy to others. When you know that no one is more needful of mercy than you, it launches you. This becomes your mantra! And because you got it, you rejoice! You fly the flag of joy over your heart! The God of mercy reigns!

B. Bring Your Hurt To God

Disappointments and Shattered Dreams: The “I do’s” that become “I’m done”

Despair: Where you’ve begged for mercy and received none.

Shame and Regret: You have been used by others and been told you’re worthless.

Honesty: You have the very real temptation and gripping desire to be unforgiving and harbor bitterness.

Only when you bring your real self will you begin to know how to be set free. Only in absolving others of the responsibility of your bitterness, will you begin to see God does not intend for you or others to define you as a victim or define your identity. He can set you free. He can make you merciful and forgiving.

C. Consistently Pursue Both The Attitudes And Actions Of Forgiveness

Toward God

Action: Confess and repent—meaning agree with God and turn away from the unmerciful, hard, and unforgiving part of you. Turn away from all that is in you that is contrary to the character of Christ.

Attitude: Because I'm bankrupt and I mourn my sin, I grow in humility and hunger and thirst for walking in fellowship with God.

Toward People

Attitude: You are open and approachable and you are always seeking to grow in being tenderhearted.

Action: Ready to forgive when asked to release people from their guilt. Even if it is over and over, you must forgive. Release them of further responsibility and release your rage that may be just.

Two Steps To Take Right Now To Begin Experiencing The Joy Of Forgiveness:

1. Relive The Forgiveness You Received In Order To Transform The Forgiveness You Give

Ephesians 2:4-7 “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

2. Ask God To Help You Put To Death Every Unmerciful Attitude And Action Of Your Life So You Become More Like Christ

Ephesians 4:31-32 “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Ephesians 5:1-2 “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Don't trivialize the magnitude of the call for mercy. For only when you know it, will you give it. And when you begin to be merciful, you won't be a victim. Your life will begin to know the joy of forgiving because mercy takes you further; it enables you to forgive. It gets specific and only Kingdom people will be capable of being set free to do it.