

The Beatitudes IV

“Blessed are the merciful...”

Fred R. Coulter

Let’s go to Matt. 5 and review a little bit here. I think you will see that as all of these come in order there’s a reason for them to be in the way that they are. As I’ve mentioned *John the Baptist as “Bridge” Between Old and New Covenants...* [note chapter three, pg 28, of Commentary in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*] ...what Jesus is teaching here now is *the unity of Scripture between the Old and New Testament*. All of these things are founded on the Old Testament, but now, brought to us with the spiritual application of the New Testament.

We’ll just review until we get down to where we’re going to be today; Matthew 5:3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (vs 3-4).

The true spiritual comfort that comes from God is what is important for us to know and understand all the time. You can’t be comforted by things. You can get some comfort from a dog, if you’re down and depressed, because a dog will love you in spite of who you are and what you are and will demand love from you. I think God created the dog for that very purpose. True comfort comes from God. God is the only One Who can give you comfort in your mind, in your heart and in your whole being.

Verse 5: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” Verses 3 & 5 tell you the basic qualifications to enter into the Kingdom of God. Each one of these, each Scripture in itself, is not an end to itself—the beginning and an ending—it is a beginning and it branches out into the Old and New Testament to give us a more full definition of it.

Psalms 119:18: “Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law.” So, what we are reading in Matt. 5 is the Law of the New Testament.

In *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* you see that there are seven divisions of the Bible. The middle division is the Gospels and Acts, which gives a balance to everything that God has done. With the four Gospels and the book of Acts, that’s five books, and that is the spiritual counterpart of the Law, which is the five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These things become very important because they go back into the Old Testament and as the New Testament was being written, they go

forward into the New Testament as well, to bring it all together.

In part three we covered Matthew 5:6: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” That has to be, constantly, our attitude toward God. The righteousness is just not commandment-keeping or justification through forgiveness of sin, this is righteousness in character, understanding and in becoming more God-like.

Let’s see the goal of all the teachings that Jesus has given, v 48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.”

The goal and standard that we have is the absolute highest. We can reach that and attain that in increments through our lives with God’s Spirit and with His Word, but the perfection is going to go also, on into all eternity, as the sons and daughters of God. When we read these Scriptures, let’s realize that they expand out way further than just reading a verse or two or turning here or there. It’s all part of God’s great plan for us.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy” (Matthew 5:7)

Now, we come to the one that we’re going to cover today, We’re going to see how important mercy is. This goes right back to the very nature of God. Actually, when you read all of these things here:

- poor in spirit
- mourn
- meek
- hunger and thirst
- merciful
- pure in heart
- peacemakers

These all relate to characteristics of God. God is the most humble Person in the whole universe. That’s why He’s in control of it. He’s also the most powerful, because He’s Creator and Ruler over all. True rulership comes through true humility. So, this is what God is teaching us; likewise, merciful.

Let’s see that in addition to love, mercy is one of the great characteristics of God toward man. When we understand that and realize it, this helps us an awful lot.

God gave us the nature that we have and of course, when Adam and Eve sinned the ‘law of sin and death’ was put into their being.

I actually had a man write to me and say, ‘No, God didn’t do that. Satan did that.’ I thought about that and I thought, ‘No! God did it because Satan does not have the power to put something within human beings that is passed on by heredity.’ He can influence behavior. Demons can possess people, but nothing is passed on by heredity from demons. Otherwise, that would make Satan a creator. God says *He* creates, good, righteousness, and also evil.

Here we are, we’re born into a world and we have a nature that is automatically hostile against God. Of course, that comes out in varying degrees, depending on how we’re reared, taught and things like that; all the way from those who want to know about God and will follow God, to the very worst criminal who is in prison for life, is hardened and has no feelings about anyone or anything but himself.

If you want to know the epitome of that, and if you have an opportunity to watch any documentaries on Charles Manson and his brood, that will tell you the epitome of a seared conscience. When he dies and the second resurrection comes about and he’s resurrected in the second resurrection—I’m just kind of projecting forward—we don’t know what his attitude is going to be then. This is why God said that those who do terrible and awful crimes, it affects their minds so much that they *must* be executed. Man says, ‘Oh, no! He was temporarily insane.’ So, they inflict upon them ‘cruel and unusual punishment’ called life in prison, which God never intended.

I’m kind of straying, here, a little bit just to show the difference between the extremes of human nature. So, here we are born into this world and we have this nature. Until God begins dealing with us and unless our parents teach us correctly, we’re going to end up with certain deficiencies. We’re subject to all of these things. So, God executes mercy in relationship to man, very easily. He also executes vengeance for those who won’t repent. Remember that *before mercy is given, true mercy, there must be repentance!*

Exo. 34—this is after the children of Israel sinned by making the golden calf and Moses got angry, threw the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written on the ground and broke them.

Exodus 34:1: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Cut out two tablets of stone like the first *ones*....’” We are one step removed from God because of sin. The first ones, God cut out and He wrote on them. The second ones, Moses had to cut out and he took them up to God. Yes, God wrote on them, but we’re one step removed from God.

“...And I will write upon the tablets the words that were in the first tablets, which you broke. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. And no man shall come up with you, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mountain. Also do not let the flocks nor herds feed before that mountain.’ And he cut out two tablets of stone like the first *ones*. And Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone. And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.... [this must have been an awesome thing] ...And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, **merciful and gracious**...’” (vs 1-6).

Even though the people sinned, Moses intervened and said, ‘O God, don’t exterminate all these people. If you’re going to do that, blot out my name.’ God said, ‘No, I won’t do that.’ He was merciful even in spite of their sin, and also, with Aaron; Moses pleaded for Aaron and God spared him. God did execute judgment on those where the instigators of that and those who did not ‘come on God’s side.’ Nevertheless, the characteristics of God are ‘merciful and gracious.’ We can add in there, because God is love.

“...longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, **keeping mercy to the thousandth generation**...” (vs 6-7). I mentioned this one time and I said, ‘the thousandth generation. If it’s 25 years, that’s 2,500 years,’ but no, that is 25,000 years.

Let’s think about where we are as the modern descendants of Israel and the modern nations of Israel today. We’re here doing what we’re doing because of the mercy of God, that God had toward Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the children of Israel. We have been blessed with all the things that we have because of God’s mercy in fulfilling His promises, because He promised Abraham that He would do it. It is not dependant upon the righteousness of those who receive it. However, if those who receive it sin, He’s going to bring some correction. All of that is because God is merciful.

“...forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*... [if there’s no repentance] ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and to the fourth generation” (v 7).

This shows the goodness and mercy of God and the severity of God. God says, “**Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.**” We will see what God requires of us on that in a little bit.

Now, let’s see how these were incorporated into part of the Ten Commandments. Let’s come to Exo. 20. The second commandment is actually the longest commandment, a little longer than the fourth one.

Every once in a while Paul Harvey says something that’s very interesting. He said—and even Zig Ziglar said this—that if you read the Ten Commandments, they are not difficult to understand. People try to make them difficult to understand because they don’t want to do them. So, when we read the first and second commandment, you will see that they are not difficult.

Exodus 20:1: “And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me’” (vs 1-3).

That’s pretty simple. Does anyone not understand that? I’m sure everybody here, understands it. If you talk to anyone else in the world concerning this, they would understand what it says, but they don’t want to do it.

Verse 4—second commandment: “You shall not make for yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters under the earth.”

That’s not too terribly hard to figure out. Don’t make any thing of any likeness representing God, “...in the heavens above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters under the earth.” There are two parts to this:

1. you are not to make them
2. Verse 5: “You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God *am* a jealous God...”

A lot of people say, ‘If God is jealous and we’re not to have jealousy, how can God be jealous and He doesn’t allow us to be jealous?’ He does allow us to be jealous for the right thing. Stop and consider this:

- Who made the heavens and the earth? *God did!*
- Who created everything that’s on the earth? *God did!*
- Who made man and woman the way He did? *God did!*
- Who provides everything that we have, saint and sinner? *God does!*

we breathe the same air:

- that God gives to the earth
- that the sinners do
- that the incorrigible prisoners who have life in prison do

God has one humbling reminder of where we came from, and that’s called a ‘belly button.’ Every once in a while, if you get lifted up in your vanity and think you’re so great, just reach down and feel your belly button. That tells you that:

- you didn’t created yourself
- you’re not independent
- you came because of your father and mother

That goes back to their father and mother, and their father and mother and all the way back to Adam and Eve. Don’t ask me if Adam had a belly button or not, I couldn’t tell you, but he knew that God had created him.

All the way through the Bible, God shows the stupidity and the vanity of idols and other gods, which is nothing more than Satan and demon worship. He says, “You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them, for I, the LORD your God *am* a jealous God...” Since God has done all of this in His love and mercy for all of us, wouldn’t you be jealous if you did something of a great consequence and then someone turned around and just:

- threw dirt in your face?
- spit in your face?
- turned around and walked off?
- did whatever they wanted to?

That’s what mankind has done to God! That’s why He’s jealous. Why should people give homage to a piece of wood, a piece of stone, or a piece of metal, when the living God is there which you can worship and He’ll bless you and do things for you. That’s why He’s jealous. That’s why this penalty comes:

“...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me” (v 5). There are people who hate God. All you have to do is just look and see: Do they have the judgment of God against them because of hating God? God would not be just, God would not be fair if He did not, in giving mercy to those who repent, if He did not, also on the other hand, have a penalty against those who live in sin.

Verse 6: “**But showing mercy to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.**”

A lot of people, especially those out there in Protestant land, claim:

- that you don’t need to keep the commandments of God

- that the Old Testament has been fulfilled
- as the Catholics with their weak-kneed excuse says when someone asks them, or a priest, ‘Why do you bow down to idols and worship them?’ *Oh! We don’t do that! We venerate them.*

Why did you make them in the first place?

Let’s show that ‘God is the same yesterday, today and forever’ and is always true, and His laws and commandments in the spiritual application of the never change from generation to generation. In different societies and situations there may be different judgments that need to be made concerning the laws, but not whether they are applicable or not.

In John 14, we find again, the unity of Scripture, which is the whole point of this series of sermons. This is also a test for us. To everyone who reads this, it is a test. You say you love God, how are you going to prove your love? You cannot tell your husband or wife, ‘I love you.’ Then as soon as they’re out the door, run over to your neighbor and commit adultery, because you have no love or no loyalty.

The same way with God, if you say you love Him and despise His commandments, you don’t love God. That’s why Jesus said:

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” Look at the blessing that’s going to come if you do.

An expansion of the blessing that God said for ‘those who love Me and keep My commandments,’ which we’re reading here, is that He would have ‘mercy to a thousand generations.’ Here’s the immediate thing for us with the Holy Spirit.

Verse 16: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter... [we covered that in the section on ‘blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted’] ...that it may be with you throughout the age.”

Here is the blessing that those who truly, truly, love God, repent and receive the mercy of God, that comes that cannot come any other way; except through ***the love and mercy of God*** and our response to Him by loving Him and keeping His commandments.

Verse 17: “*Even* the Spirit of the Truth...” — so that you can find your way out of your own deceitful human nature and you can understand the Word of God living in this world where Satan the devil, is the god of this world.

“...which the world cannot receive... [that’s why the world is blinded and cannot understand]

...because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you *are* in Me, and I am in you” (vs 17-20).

How? There has to be some provable verification that you belong to God. Not a feeling, not because you think so, but because you do have the Spirit of God, and it is proved by your actions.

Verse 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me...” Here’s the test. You say you love God; you say you love Jesus. Are you keeping His commandments? *You have them and you keep them!* When you understand that Jesus was the Lord God of the Old Testament manifested in the flesh, then when He says, ‘If you love Me keep My commandments,’ that goes all the way back to Genesis and extends to Revelation. It’s all the way through.

“...and the one who loves Me...” (v 21). Here’s another benefit. *You receive the Spirit of Truth!* Now you receive another benefit of God, which comes from His mercy because He’s merciful and gracious.

“...shall be loved by My Father...” (v 21)-- ***the Sovereign of the whole universe!***

That’s why in the beginning of the Sermon Series: *The Love Of God #1 is Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You.* Everything else is going to fail. It’s all physical, it’s bound to fail. Just like us, ‘all flesh is like grass, like the flower of the field:’

- it grows
- it’s green
- it blossoms
- it withers

If you don’t believe that is true, the older you get, just check in the mirror:

- What do you see? *Wrinkles!*
- What is that? *Withering!*

The Word of God is true. Do you love God? *‘The one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father!’ You can’t have any greater position in life than that!* A lot of people think that:

- if they have power, they’re something
- if they have a lot of wealth, they’re something
- if they have control over people, they’re something

They're nothing!

Too many ministers of God follow that way and don't teach the love, Truth and mercy of God, and tell the brethren that God loves them. The Father loves each one of us individually and has the capacity to do so for **all** whom He calls, **because He is God!**

Here comes another benefit. Look at all of these benefits. Loving God and keeping His commandments *comes from the mercy of God!*

“...and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him” (v 21) This really got to Judas.

Verse 22: “Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” ‘How can you show Yourself to us and no one else is going to see this?’ Well, it was after the resurrection and they saw Him directly. But God manifests Himself to us in a way that the world cannot understand, because of His mercy and graciousness toward us, which is through His Spirit.

- God's Spirit *draws* you
- God's Spirit *leads* you

No one can see that—can they? *No!* There came a time in your life when you said:

- Where's God?
- What am I going to do?
 - ✓ you started searching
 - ✓ maybe praying
 - ✓ maybe because of circumstances in your life you were in deep trouble
 - ✓ maybe you were like Jeremiah, you were in deep 'skubalon' and God rescued you
- How did God rescue you?
 - ✓ In a way that you knew the hand of God did it, though you didn't see it because it was by His Spirit!
 - ✓ Maybe with the assistance of the angels who are to be ministering spirits to those who are 'heirs of salvation!'
- How does God do it today?
 - ✓ with His Spirit
 - ✓ with His Word
 - ✓ with preaching
 - ✓ with teaching

God manifests Himself to you and if you are drawn to God and follow that 'draw,' you're going to find God the Father and Jesus Christ. ***That is merciful and gracious!*** Here's the key: How is God going to manifest Himself to everyone whom He calls and the world be completely ignorant of that fact, except that they see you're a nice person?

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word...’” When you see the Word singular that means Christ's entire message.

“...and My Father will love him, and **We** will come to him and make Our abode with him” (vs 23). That's why, with the Holy Spirit, we have the mind of Christ and the begetting of the Father. Not just singular, but *We*.

Here's the dividing line and here is where mercy is not extended because there is no repentance. Here is where graciousness and mercy is not given because they don't love God.

Verse 24: “The one who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me.” ***That's the greatest secret of God manifesting Himself to us, with His Spirit, through His Word!***

If you take the Bible and give it to your neighbor and say, ‘Would you read this?’ *Oh, it's the Bible. No one can understand that. I need my priest.* Or, someone would read it and say, ‘I can't understand that. *How can God be loving, kind and merciful and allow children to die?*’ You can only understand that if you know the Word of God.

John 16:22: “And likewise, you indeed have grief now, but I will see you again...” Christ's talking to them and they had a special blessing for 40 days that no one else in the world has ever had. That is to see the resurrected Christ in person, bodily. Not everyone all 40 days, but up to 500 brethren He appeared to at one time, as Paul wrote of. That's a ‘once in a lifetime’ experience.

Consider this in relationship to the viability of the Word of God and the writers who wrote it. ***They saw the resurrected Christ!*** Everyone who wrote the New Testament, saw the resurrected Christ, with the exception of Luke, but he was under the tutelage of Paul and Paul saw Him.

Do you suppose that these men would even think of concocting of some story or myth to write as the Word of God after they had seen Christ, Who was resurrected from the dead? *Of course not!* That completely eliminates any argument that someone says, ‘Well, this is written by men.’ God chose to use men, but men who would be honest, because of this.

Verse 23: “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you. Until this day, you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full. These things I have spoken to you in allegories; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to

you in allegories, but I will plainly disclose to you *the things* of the Father. In that day, you shall ask in My name... [absolute guarantee] ...and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God” (vs 23-27). The reason that God gives mercy and grace is so that ***you will want to love Him.***

We won’t turn to the Scriptures because we don’t want to get bogged down in a lot of details, but let’s just ask:

- What was in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and the temple?
- What did the Holy of Holies picture? *It pictured the throne of God!*

What was in there was the Ark of the Covenant with the over-arching of the angels and in the weavings of the tabernacle that was made in the wilderness, they wove cherubim right into the fabric. When Solomon built the temple, God gave David the instructions to give to Solomon, and the workmen carved the cherubim right in the wood that was overlaid with gold. Then, the mercy seat was there. That’s what the Ark of the Covenant was called. We need to understand that whenever we come to God, it is the *Seat of Mercy* and the central focus of all the worship under the Old Covenant, through the tabernacle and temple, and the central focus of our worship with God today, because of our access to God the Father in heaven above—***His mercy!***

Let’s look at some Scriptures. Let’s come to Psa. 136. Always remember this: Repentance, then forgiveness through mercy and the graciousness of God. ***You’re not going to receive the mercy unless there is repentance!***

This we know: Jesus said that ‘you shall not use vain repetition’ in your prayers like the heathen. So, when you read Psa. 136, though every verse ends with, “...for His mercy endures forever...” *it’s not a vain repetition.*

Psalms 136:1: “Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, **for His mercy endures forever.**” In *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*, you will find a little star after mercy, which reads:

Throughout, the Hebrew could also read
His steadfast love.

His mercy and His steadfast love are tied together!

Verse 2: “Oh, give thanks to the God of gods, **for His mercy endures forever.** Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords, **for His mercy endures forever**” (vs 2-3). What is Jesus called in Rev. 19? *Lord of lords and King of kings!*

Verse 4: “To Him Who alone does great wonders, **for His mercy endures forever**” You can read the whole thing and giving thanks to God.

Verse 26: “Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven, **for His mercy endures forever.**” That’s quite a tremendous one!

Now, let’s see something else about God, a little finer description of the mercies of God. We find almost all of these in the Psalms. Isn’t that something?

The power of Psalms in teaching us to pray and helping us to establish a relationship with God—note sermon series: *Keys to Answered Prayer*—what we need to understand about the Word of God is this: Since it’s inspired by the mind of God, Who is eternal, the messages and things in the Psalms have so many layers of meaning in every verse, that the longer that we have the Spirit of God and the more that we know the Truth of God, the more that inspires us to understand, coming out of these verses.

You will experience this, as you read and study the Bible. You’ll read along and all of a sudden it’s kind of like a light goes on. ‘DING!’ You say, ‘I never saw that before!’ It’s been there all the time. God is so great and He’s designed the Bible for a lifetime study. There is so much in there because it was inspired by His Spirit, so there is a spiritual connection you get with it when you pray and you are crying out to God, it just leaps off the pages. It’s been there all the time, but you didn’t understand it until that very instant, regardless of how many years you may have been baptized. That’s the way the Word of God is.

It’s like one man asked me—wrote in an e-mail—‘Once you get all the training as a minister and once you’ve done all your preaching for five to seven years, what more is there for you to learn?’ I wrote him back and said virtually what I just told you, here.

We’re going to read this whole Psalm, because it shows all of the interconnecting things with mercy, a graciousness of God and the Truth of God.

Psalms 25:1: “To You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.” It’s the same personal relationship that David had with God, because in his house he had this special room where the tent was which housed the tabernacle, until the temple was built. That’s where he would go pray. That’s where he would go play the instrument of ten strings. I’m sure that when he sinned he kept himself back further, like in Psa. 51, which we’ll read a little bit later. Just keep this in mind when we read some of these Psalms of David.

Verse 2: “O my God, I trust in You...” Notice where all of this comes from, and notice the relationship.

“...do not let me be ashamed, let not my enemies triumph over me” (v 2) That doesn’t mean he won’t have to fight the enemies, but don’t let them win, Lord.

Verse 3: “Yea, let none... [no one] ...who wait on You be ashamed...”

- you don’t have to be ashamed of God
- you don’t have to be ashamed of what you believe
- you don’t have to be ashamed of the Bible that you have
- you don’t have to be ashamed of the mercies and kindness that God has given you
- be thankful
- be grateful

Verse 4 is also a continuous, on-going thing. You don’t just learn this all at once: “Show me Your ways, O LORD...” That’s vs the way of man; ‘there’s a way that man goes that seems right, but the end thereof are the ways of death.’

“...teach me Your paths” (v 4). Notice that David wants God actively involved in working in his life. Now we have the whole Word of God.

Verse 5: “Lead me in Your Truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day long.”

(go to the next track)

Notice how David approached God, v 6: “Remember, O LORD, Your **tender mercies**... [God’s tender mercies] ...and Your loving kindness, for they have been of old.” In other words, through all eternity God had loving kindness and tender mercies. The way you avoid the wrath of God is to love Him. Later we’re going to find out that because of that, other people might persecute you. That doesn’t mean that God doesn’t love you.

Verse 7: “Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to Your loving kindness remember me for Your goodness sake, O LORD.”

Notice what this does in the changing of how he’s approaching God, here. In other words, when you come to God, you repent of your sins, you received His tender mercies and His graciousness to forgive you, it does something to you spiritually, internally. Notice what David says:

Verse 8: “Good and upright is the LORD; therefore, He will teach sinners in the way.” You have here:

- show me your ways
 - teach me your paths
- now *he’s going to*:
- teach sinners in the way

Which means that when you sin, what is there? When you repent, what happens? *There’s a lesson to be learned!*

Verse 10: “All the paths of the LORD are mercy and Truth...” The sinner won’t say that, because he’s on the wrong road.

“...to those who keep His covenant and His testimonies” (v 10). What are we going to do at the Passover? *Renew the covenant through the Passover and we remember His covenant!* Keep it.

Verse 11: “For Your name’s sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity, for it is great. What man is he who fears the LORD? He shall teach him in the way that He shall choose” (vs 11-12)—how to make right choices. Isn’t that a part of life?

Verse 13: “His soul shall dwell at ease...” He’s not anxious or filled with anxiety, as Jesus said, ‘Don’t be anxious over anything’ (Matt. 6). If you’re on God’s side, God is for you.

“...and his seed shall inherit the earth” (v 13). Here’s something. God doesn’t give everything that He knows to everybody in the world. It’s a mystery to them, but it’s called here:

Verse 14: “The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.”

We’re talking about graciousness. How does Paul open every one of his Epistles?

Ephesians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace...” (vs 1-2).

In the Beatitudes we’re going to find out about peacemakers. Those are not the ambassadors in the world. Grace comes from God, which He gives to you through:

- His love
- His Spirit
- His Word
- His kindness
- His relationship with you

—and peace, because you love God and are no longer fighting Him, which puts you in the category which we read there in the second commandment.

Those who hate Him, are at war with Him. We’re no longer at war with Him because we’ve repented and have God’s Spirit.

“...*be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ” (v 2). See how that ties in with John 14 that we read earlier? The whole Bible fits together.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ”:

- to understand the Bible is a heavenly thing
- to receive the Spirit of God is a heavenly thing
- to walk in the ways of God is a heavenly thing that God gives you the power, motivation and desire to do, through:
 - ✓ conversion
 - ✓ mercy
 - ✓ grace

Verse 4: “According as He has **personally chosen us for Himself...**” *That’s something!* A lot of people want to be important, but what is more important than God personally choosing you? *Nothing!*

“...before *the* foundation of *the* world...” (v 4). That doesn’t mean that He knew us before the foundation of the world; nor is this fatalism in taking away the choosing between good and evil. God has His plan, as we have already covered, before the foundation of the world and this is what it’s referring to.

God made a choice before the foundation of the world that He would call certain people who would repent. Until they repented, He wouldn’t call them. Even Saul (Paul), when God called him and knocked him down on the road as he was going to Damascus, had instant repentance. He said, ‘Lord, what do you want me to do? I have these orders to go arrest all of those who are following You. I don’t have them any more, Lord.’

“...in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love” (v 4). That ties right in with what we read in:

Matthew 5:48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.”

Ephesians 1:5: “Having predestinated us...” That’s the predestination of *what we are going to be*; **not** predestinated us in a special category that we had no choice in it, vs those that He predestinated to evil and they had no choice in it. Otherwise, there’d be no repentance. There would be no choosing right and wrong.

“...for sonship to Himself... [His very sons and daughters] ...through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will” (v 5). What Paul has done here in these few verses has given us a great summary of the whole plan of God.

Verse 6: “To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace... [we’re talking about His grace and mercy] ...wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence” (vs 6-8).

All of this brings us up to a certain point in learning and understanding. Now we are ready to receive some things of God that needs all of this basic foundation first.

Verse 9: “Having made known to us the **mystery...**” To the world, it’s a mystery. It’s called *the secret of God* (Psa. 25).

“...of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself; that in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times...” (vs 9-10). That’s the correct translation. Not ‘in the dispensation of time’ from which they get the false doctrine of ‘dispensationalism,’ which I won’t get into here.

“...He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth; *yes*, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things **according to the counsel of His own will**” (vs 10-11).

All of that expands on Psa. 25, that if we keep His covenant we’re going to know the ‘secret of God.’ Here it is! The ‘secret of God’ is that we are going to be resurrected and **born into His kingdom as spirit beings and live forever!**

Barbara Walters was interviewed, and she said, ‘There’s no reason why we can’t all live to be 150.’ I was looking at her and I thought: you have a long way to go, gal! You could tell that she has had all of her facials and her cream and all of this sort of thing. It’s like everyone else who is getting older, you want to live longer. You don’t know the plan of God, *but we do!*

Psalms 25:14: “The secret of the LORD... [What on earth is God doing?] ...is with those who fear Him... [to hold Him in awe and worshipful reverence] ...and He will show them His covenant”—and the whole purpose of it. That’s what Eph. 1 is all about.

Here again, you have a verse here, and the New Testament expands it. You don't have the New Testament fighting the Old Testament, the Old Testament fighting the New Testament. *No!* It's all together.

Verse 15: “My eyes are ever toward the LORD...”

What is one of the most important things that we are to do as human beings, even in the world? *You are to have goals! You're to have something to work for!* The successful people, even in the world, have their eyes always on the goal where they're going. What is our goal? *The Kingdom of God!* Our eyes always have to be on Christ and God the Father. Notice how this pulls us through all the difficulties and problems that we go through.

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; *and* let us run the race set before us with endurance.” What are you looking for in running a race? *The finish line!*

Verse 2: “Having *our minds fixed on Jesus*, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith... [as I pointed out in *Jesus, Our Hero and Champion*] ...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured the cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God.”

There you go! Don't let any trial or difficulty get you down. It may depress you for a while, but there is God to help you and encourage you. When you get through the problem and past the pressure and stress of it, you can look back and see the reason for it. As long as you have your mind on Christ then you're going to succeed.

Verse 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners...” You do that by:

- thinking about God
- praying to Him
- studying the Gospels

“...against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds” (v 3).

That's not only a command, but that's also a promise, which is this: *If* you keep your mind focused on Christ, *if* you keep your mind on the goal, you are not going to get weary and you're not going to get faint of mind, because the strength of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, is going to make you 'strong in the Lord.' You don't have to be powerful physically—'strong in the Lord.' He also gives a little comparison:

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.” The closest we come to that is if you shave, like men, and you cut yourself in the morning.

Psalms 25:15: “ My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net... [you're going to escape all the traps of Satan the devil] ...Turn unto me, and be gracious unto me, for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; O bring me out of my distresses” (vs 15-17).

Again, it doesn't matter what the circumstances are. Don't look to the circumstances or even your own anxiety and mental problems that you are having when you are going through difficulties. Like here, “...The troubles of my heart are enlarged; O bring me out of my distresses.”

Verse 18: “Look upon my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins.” See how that ties in right from the first verse all the way through? This is why I'm going through the whole Psalm.

Verse 19: “Consider my enemies...” You can bring up to God, ‘Look at all these enemies. Lord, how am I going to handle them? I can't fight them. You fight for me.’ Can God fight against the enemies better than anyone else? *Yes, He can! Without a doubt!*

“...for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred. O keep my soul and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, for I take refuge in You. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on You. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles” (vs 19-22)—*which God will do in the long run!*

Let's come to Psalms 51. Again, when David sinned he appealed to the tender mercies of God. Of course, this is the Psalm that he prayed for his repentance with the affair with Bathsheba and the killing of Uriah, the Hittite.

Psalms 51:1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving kindness; according to the greatness of Your compassion, blot out my transgressions.”

God had one caveat for David. He told him, ‘because you did this in secret, I'm going to do this before the sun and the whole world. Because you despised My commandments in this sin, your whole household is going to rise up against you. You're going to have difficulties and troubles of a greater proportion than you've had in the past.’

Sometimes God gives us some correction to teach us a lesson. In the long run, just before David died, obviously God looked at all those things.

When you read what David passed on to Solomon in giving him:

- all the wealth
- all the iron
- all the gold
- the plans that God gave him for the temple

You will see that David recovered.

Sometimes there are things that God will give us as kind of reminders because if our sins are as grievous as they were with this, sometimes He has to do that. Notice what David says.

Verse 2: “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me” (vs 2-3).

That’s why as long as you have a sin that is bothering and plaguing you, bring it to God constantly until He takes it completely away from you. *He will! He Will!*

Psalms 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His Holy name.” Can a man bless God? *Yes!:*

- by his heart
- by his mind
- by his attitude
- by how he lives his life

Verse 2: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” That’s when we get ourselves in trouble. It’s when something comes up and we forget all the blessings and we forget all of God mercy, love, and so forth. Here’s what He does:

Verse 3: “Who forgives all your iniquities... [through His mercy and graciousness] Who heals all your diseases... [even if you die, He’s going to resurrect you] ...Who redeems your life from destruction... [by teaching you how to live properly] ...Who crowns you with **loving kindness and tender mercies**” (vs 3-4).

Just think of it this way: Kind of like an anointing from God by crowning you with a ball made out of:

- olive oil
- herbs
- frankincense
- myrrh

Just like it was when Aaron was anointed priest, ‘the oil ran down all over him.’ Just think that that’s how God wants to give it to you, that it’s just right crowned on the top of your head and running down all over you; “...**Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies.**”

Verse 8: “The LORD is **merciful and gracious**... [that’s where we started] ...slow to anger, and **abundant in mercy.**”

Verse 9: “He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” (vs 9-10).

That’s because He’s merciful. It says that ‘God sends the sunshine on the just and on the unjust and the rain on the just and the unjust’ (Matt. 5). So, God is even merciful to them.

Here’s part of your relationship with God. How abundant is it? Verse 11: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him.”

You don’t have to worry about God holding back on His mercy. That’s His nature. That’s why there’s repentance, so there can be a changing, a cleansing. That’s why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread, to realize that *God is in the spiritual business* of changing our minds, building character in our minds, and actually restructuring our minds with His Spirit and His Word. That’s why God has mercy and forgiveness, so He can wipe those sins out of your mind. Here’s what He does with that.

Verse 12: “As far as the east is from the west...” This is the eventual goal of God, with all your sins. When He removes them, they’re removed, but we have to have our mind cleansed to get them out of our mind because the impression of those sins are still there. That takes some time.

“...so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion upon his children... [through His mercy] ...so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him... [through His mercy] ...For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes, for the wind passes over it... [think of a desert] ...and it is gone; and its place shall know it no more. But the steadfast love... [or the mercy] ...of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness is unto children’s children, to those who keep His covenant, and to those who remember His precepts to do them” (vs 12-18). It says a lot!

Psalms 18:30: “As for God, **His way is perfect**...” Ask a Protestant:

- Do you believe that God’s way is perfect? *Yes!*
- Why do you say that Jesus did away with the commandments of God:
✓ if they are Truth?

- ✓ if they are righteousness?
- ✓ if they are perfect?
- Does that mean that you have a very imperfect religion?

They won't like that!

“...the Word of the LORD is tried... [it's perfect] ...He is a shield to all those who take refuge in Him, for who is God besides the LORD? Or, who is a Rock except our God? The God who girds me with strength and makes my way perfect”(vs 30-32). ***You shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect!***

Let's come back here and look at some other verses. This is what the world can't figure out; v 25: “With the merciful...” That's why He said, ***‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.’***

“...You will show Yourself merciful; with an upright man You will show Yourself upright.”

What does he show himself with the wicked? *Harsh, judging, recompensing evil for evil!* But, with the merciful, “...show Yourself merciful; with an upright man You will show Yourself upright” (v 25).

Verse 26: “With the pure You will show Yourself pure...” That ties right in with the next Beatitude we're going to cover, those who are 'pure in heart.'

“...and with the crooked You will show Yourself cunning” (v 26). In other words, they're all entrapped in the automatic penalties of their sins, which is by the cunningness of God. They don't understand that. That's quite something!

Psalms 117:1: “O praise the LORD, all you nations; praise Him, all people, for His **merciful kindness is great toward us**; and the Truth of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!” (vs 1-2).

If His Word is Truth, how can you do away with it? The only way you can do that is to do away with God and God isn't going to accommodate you just because you think that way.

Psalms 119:75: “I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are right, and that You have afflicted me in faithfulness. I beseech You, let Your steadfast love... [or mercy] ...comfort me, according to Your promise to Your servant. Let Your **tender mercies** come to me so that I may live, for Your Law is my delight” (vs 75-77). See the whole attitude?

When you understand the mercy of God, this is why He expects you to be merciful. There's a blessing, if you are. Just remember that every time you harshly judge someone in your mind, always think this: Do you want mercy? or Do you want this

evil judgment I just gave in my mind? *You want mercy!* Get rid of the evil judgment.

Verse 156: “Great are Your **tender mercies**, O LORD; according to Your judgments give me life.” *God certainly will!*

Let's understand something concerning the mercy of God even in desperate times. Let's come to the book of Joel in the Minor Prophets. Even in the worst trial the most severe things that come upon you, you need to understand why God is doing it and allowing it and what He wants you to do.

Joel 2:11: “And the LORD shall utter His voice before His army; for His camp *is* exceedingly great; for powerful *is He* who executes His Word, for the day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible; and who can endure it? ‘Therefore, even now,’ says the LORD...” (vs 11-12). Even in the worst time of the world!

I call your remembrance, that after all that had come upon them, Revelation 9:21: “And they did not repent of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thievery.” In the midst of all of these things, God wants repentance.

Joel 2:12: “...turn to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. Yes, rend your heart and not your garments, and **return to the LORD**... [repent and come back to God] ...your God: for He *is* **gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He repents of the evil**. Who knows *if* He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind Him—a grain offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?” (vs 12-14).

Right in the midst of the Day of the Lord, what is God interested in? *Repentance!* That's why the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude are rescued from the Tribulation, because He's interested in repentance and they repent.

Let's see the opposite of when you are not merciful. What is God doing to do? Just put in your notes, there, Psalms 78 is where God even turned by the hand of His anger when Israel in the wilderness had a flattering repentance toward God. He even spared them.

Here's quite a lesson in Matt. 18:21. Everyone wants to know, ‘How far do I have to go, God?’ That's what Peter's asking here.

Matthew 18:21: “Then Peter came to Him *and* said, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?... [What's my obligation?] ...Until seven times?’” If we want the mercy of God, which extends forever, what did Jesus say?

Verse 22: “Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.’” That 490 equates to... Have you ever forgiven anyone even seven times in one day? How about 490 times in one day? If you have to, you’re sure living with a sinner.

Verse 23: “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven... [to drive home the point] ...is compared to a man, a *certain* king, who would take account with his servants. And after he began to reckon, there was brought to him one debtor who owed *him* ten thousand talents.... [that’s \$180-million today] ...But since he did not have *anything* to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. Because of this, the servant fell down *and* worshiped him, saying, “Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.” And being moved with compassion... [this is because of mercy] ...the lord of that servant released him, and forgave him the debt” (vs 23-27).

What this servant should have done was gone out to everyone who owed him money and said, ‘I forgive you! I forgive you! I forgive you! *because I’ve been forgiven.*’ He didn’t!

Verse 28: “Then that servant went out *and* found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred silver coins... [just 100-pence, if we could put it that way in British coinage terminology] ...and after seizing him... [notice the difference in attitude and behavior] ...he choked *him*, saying, “Pay me what you owe.” As a result, his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” But he would not *listen*; instead, he went and cast him into prison, until he should pay the amount that he owed. Now, when his fellow servants saw the things *that* had taken place...” (vs 28-31).

He probably came back to his fellow servants and said, ‘Guess what? ? The lord forgave me all of that \$180-million!’ *So, they knew!*

“...they were greatly distressed; and they went to their lord *and* related all that had taken place. Then his lord called him *and* said to him, “*You* wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt, because you implored me. Were you not also obligated to have compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had compassion... [mercy] ...on you?”... [He didn’t do it] ...And in anger, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors, until he should pay all that he owed to him” (vs 31-34).

Here’s the lesson; this is why there’s a blessing to the merciful—‘for they shall find mercy.’ Verse 35: “Likewise shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each *of* you does not

forgive his brother’s offenses from the heart.”
Very important! What is this telling us?

If we expect God to forgive us, then God expects us to forgive those whom we come in contact with that need forgiveness, not judgment in harshness and cruelty!

When there is mercy, the truth is, ***no one really deserves it! But with repentance, God in mercy and compassion, will give it!***

If we don’t have mercy, ***God will take all those sins that we have repented of and put them right back on us!***

Ask yourself these questions:

- *If you withhold mercy*, do you want God to withhold mercy from you?
- *If you withhold mercy*, do you want God to put back upon you all your sins that He has already forgiven you?
- *No!*

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy.”

All Scripture from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural Reverences:

- 1) Matthew 5:3-5
- 2) Psalm 119:18
- 3) Matthew 5:6, 48, 7
- 4) Exodus 34:1-7
- 5) Exodus 20:1-6
- 6) John 14:15-24
- 7) John 16:22-27
- 8) Psalm 136:1-4, 26
- 9) Psalm 25:1-8, 10-14
- 10) Ephesians 1:1-4
- 11) Matthew 5:48
- 12) Ephesians 1:5-11
- 13) Psalm 25:14-15
- 14) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 15) Psalm 25:15-22
- 16) Psalm 51:1-3
- 17) Psalm 103:1-4, 8-18
- 18) Psalm 18:30-32, 25-26
- 19) Psalm 117:1-2
- 20) Psalm 119:75-77, 156
- 21) Joel 2:11-12
- 22) Revelation 9:21
- 23) Joel 2:12-14
- 24) Matthew 18:21-35

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 19
- Matthew 6
- Psalm 78

Also referenced:

From: Chapter Three of Commentary in *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version: John the Baptist as “Bridge” Between Old and New Covenant*

Sermon Series:

- *The Love Of God (#1—Remember, When All Else Fails, God Loves You)*
- *Keys To Answered Prayer*

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