

## How Do We Show True Mercy?

Text: Luke 6:36-42

Suggested Hymns:

357, 164, 380, 344, 328

1) We Show True Mercy, If We Follow  
The Example Of Our Heavenly Father.

2) We Show True Mercy, If, While Showing Mercy  
To Others, We Are Aware Of Our Own Faults

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Luke 6:36-42, <sup>36</sup> *Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.* <sup>37</sup> *“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.*

<sup>38</sup> *Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”*

<sup>39</sup> *And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?”* <sup>40</sup> *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.*

<sup>41</sup> *And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?* <sup>42</sup> *Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye. (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

<sup>36</sup> *Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.* These words sound the keynote of our Gospel. Mercy, love, charity, and kindness are all important. Societies and associations are formed, and what is the great word they inscribe upon their banner? What is it they call the main object, or, at least, one of the main objects, of their union? It is the great word “Mercy.”

Do we not assist the sick and needy? Do we not help the widows and orphans? they say. Some of these societies even forge weapons, which they wield against the Church, and say, '*Where is the church that does as much good as we do? Where is the church that shows mercy to the same extent as we do? Where is the church that will pay several thousand dollars to the widow and orphans of a deceased member so that they may live comfortably and not suffer want?*'

Now all this appears to be something great; but if we closely investigate the matter, we shall find that such words as "mercy," "love," "charity," and "kindness," and all expressions of that sort, are misnomers in the transactions of these organisations and societies.

Whom do some of these organisations assist and help? Do they make it a practice to show mercy to all who are in need of assistance? No, only those get the benefit of the lodge or society who are members in good standing; and those who join never think of joining for the purpose of doing good to others, but to themselves.

Now, is it not folly to call that mercy, benevolence, and all such pretentious names, which is nothing more than a mutual contract entered into for your own interest? What does the Lord Jesus say to that?

In the part immediately preceding our Gospel He says, "*But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.*" <sup>33</sup>*And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.* <sup>34</sup>*And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.*

<sup>35</sup>*But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.* <sup>36</sup>

When, therefore, Jesus continues to say at the beginning of our Gospel, <sup>36</sup>*Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful,*" He is telling us that is not true mercy if you love to be loved again, or do good to others that, in turn, they should do good to you.

No; your love must embrace all people, even the enemy, and you must not discriminate among people in showing mercy.

Let us, then, with the help of God's Holy Spirit, consider the question, ***How Do We Show True Mercy?*** May the Lord bless our meditation.

**1. We Show True Mercy,  
If We Follow The Example Of Our Heavenly Father.**

Jesus says, <sup>36</sup> ***Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*** How, then, do we show true mercy? In following the example of our heavenly Father, in taking His mercy for our pattern and doing accordingly.

And what are the characteristics of God's mercy? His mercy, above all things, is unselfish. He pours out on all creatures His mercy in vast streams and gets nothing for it.

God Himself is in such a blessed state that His happiness cannot be augmented, and no creature can add to His glory. From all those acts of mercy and kindness shown to sinful man He does not derive the least benefit and advantage for Himself.

So, this is the pattern of true mercy. True mercy expects no reward. To be truly merciful you must do acts of kindness to others and expect nothing for it.

And whom does God's mercy embrace? Is there any respect of persons, or favouritism with God?<sup>2</sup> Does He show mercy upon only those who appreciate His mercy and give thanks? No; ***He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.***<sup>3</sup> He does not discriminate among men and does good to all.

So, this is the pattern of true mercy. True mercy does not exclude from kindness those who seem to be unworthy. Christians following the example of the heavenly Father do not show mercy to only those who are connected with them in the faith.

They live up to the Word of God, as written in Galatians 6:10, <sup>10</sup> ***Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all.***

From this we see, my friends, true mercy is something rather scarce in this world. True mercy is never found with the children of this world, but with Christians only. Many acts of people are termed charitable and merciful deeds

without deserving the name because they are done from sheer selfishness and do not embrace all, friend and foe.

To show true mercy, we must follow the example of our heavenly Father not only in general, but also in particular. Jesus says, “<sup>37</sup> ***Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.***”

Jesus, of course, does not mean the judging and condemning which is done in the secular courts. Civil government is ordained by God for the suppression of crime, and the magistrates must bear the sword.

Neither does Jesus forbid the judging and condemning which is done by parents and teachers. Children must obey their parents and teachers, and parents are not only empowered, but also commanded to enforce obedience, even with the rod, if needs be.<sup>4</sup>

Neither does Jesus forbid the judging and condemning which is done in the office of the holy ministry. Did not God have His prophet Ezekiel<sup>5</sup> tell all pastors to warn the sinners and to proclaim God’s wrath and eternal punishment upon those who remain in their sins? It is therefore a faithful pastor’s duty to proclaim God’s judgement and the condemnation pronounced in the Scriptures.

Nor does Jesus forbid the judging and condemning which is done by a Christian congregation when impenitent sinners are excommunicated. Does not Christ Himself say of such sinners, ***“But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector”?***

What judging and condemning, then, does Jesus forbid here? The judging and condemning which conflicts with the heavenly Father’s example and is inconsistent with true mercy.

It is the judging and condemning which grows upon the ground of hatred, malice, or thoughtlessness, and which is so commonly practised among men, even among such as would be Christians.

In place of defending the neighbour, speaking well of him, and putting the best construction on everything, the evil reports circulated about him are readily believed, his actions are looked upon from the worst point of view, and there is no leniency shown. He is judged and condemned often without the shadow of a

cause. Christians should be extremely careful of such uncharitable judging and condemning, for it is inconsistent with true mercy.

Jesus adds, “*Forgive, and you will be forgiven.*”

Did not the heavenly Father present to us the most beautiful example in forgiving? O how much we daily offend God by our manifold sins! And how does His mercy deal with us? Does He judge us and condemn us? No ; He had His beloved Son Jesus Christ come into the world for our sakes, and had Him take upon Himself the entire burden of our sins, and bleed for us, and die for us.

And now our sins are all forgiven, and this forgiveness we have only if we accept Jesus’ merits and righteousness and make them our own by faith. Oh, then, be merciful to others, as your Father is merciful to you. Forgive those who have wronged you, let not the sun go down on your wrath, make haste to be reconciled.

Our text continues, <sup>38</sup> *Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.*”

We read in Romans 12:18, <sup>18</sup> *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.* And give also. Follow the example of your heavenly Father. Not only does He constantly give you all that you must have for the support of body and life, He also gave you His dear Son, and in Him all that will make you truly happy.

O how willing we should be, then, to give also, to give to the poor, to supply the needs of those who are in distress, and to contribute towards the support of the church and the extension of God’s kingdom!

Blessed is the person who follows the example of the Father in heaven in forgiving and in giving! For with the same measure it shall be measured to him again. The more he gives, the more he shall receive. And woe to him who refuses to be merciful in giving! For *he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly.*<sup>6</sup>

## **2. We Show True Mercy, If, While Showing Mercy To Others, We Are Aware Of Our Own Faults.**

Still, to show true mercy we must not only follow the example of our heavenly Father, but we must also be aware of our own faults while we show mercy to others.

In our Gospel we read, “<sup>39</sup> *And He spoke a parable to them: “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?”*” Jesus is telling us that by nature all people are blind as to their own faults.

When, therefore, an unregenerated man attempts to direct another and to show him which way to walk that he might keep clear of sin, it is about the same thing as if a blind man would point out to another blind man, the way which they both cannot see on account of the deficiency in their eyes.

Even when the unregenerate man does good to others and means to show mercy, it is not true mercy; for he is blind, he does not perceive what is truly wholesome, the assistance which he gives is not an aid to eternal salvation; but the way which he treads in his unconverted state will finally lead into the ditch of eternal misery.

But the man who has been regenerated by the Spirit of God, the true Christian, who shows true mercy, whose eyes have been opened, is no more blind as to his own faults and the faults of others. He knows from the divine Word what is right and what is wrong, and is, therefore, capable of giving the correct advice.

Jesus adds, “<sup>40</sup> *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.*” These words teach us to be aware of our own faults while we show mercy to others. Jesus says that the disciple is perfect when he is as his teacher.

But who can say in truth that he is perfect in a spiritual sense? Who can say that he has no more faults? Are we not all sinners? Do we not all possess our own corrupted flesh and blood? Must not even the best of Christians confess and say with James, “<sup>42</sup> *For we all stumble in many things*”?

See, then, a true Christian will be aware of that, while he is showing mercy to others. He will not exalt himself above those whom he helps and assists, and deem himself better and worthier because he is in a position to help them. He knows that in this life he shall never attain to a stage of perfection, that he shall remain a sinner, with no right to make a boast of himself.

Finally Jesus says, “<sup>41</sup> *And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?* <sup>42</sup> *Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother’s eye.*”

Jesus is telling us that many a person has a sharp and keen eye for the faults and follies of others, he observes their slightest mistakes, but his own gross faults and huge sins he does not perceive.

The specks, the weaknesses and infirmities of his fellow sinners, are great annoyances to him; but the beams, the monstrous faults and sins to which he himself is addicted, never seem to cause him any trouble and distress.

And what is the result? Judging and condemning, which is inconsistent with true mercy. O how necessary therefore for everyone to begin with himself, when any judging and condemning is to be done, to sweep away the filth from his own door, before he does that service for someone else.

He needs to look at himself in the mirror of the divine Law and detect those blemishes that make him hideous in the sight of others. Then he will be very cautious about his neighbour’s faults.

When he has taken the beam out of his own eye, when he has found and put off his own sins, he will know better how to deal with his fellow sinners, how to go about it in the right way, that he might cure them of their infirmities, how to be of real service to them, according to the words of the apostle, as written in Galatians 6:1, <sup>1</sup> *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.*

May the Lord, then, grant to us all, His grace to be aware of our own faults while we show mercy to others. Thus we shall be truly merciful, and ours shall be the promise, “*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*”<sup>7</sup> Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 6:32-36

<sup>2</sup> Acts 10:34

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:45

<sup>4</sup> Proverbs 13:24

<sup>5</sup> Eze 3:16-21

<sup>6</sup> 2 Corinthians 9:6

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 5:7