



The Gift of Mercy

Ministering with the Heart of God

*Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; **our God is merciful.***

Psalm 116:5



Wide Distribution

- ❑ Because it is so close to the heart and character of God, this gift is very widely distributed and its exercise overlaps with many other gifts.
- ❑ It is at the core of the **Golden Rule** and the Lord's **second commandment** to love our neighbors as ourselves.

What's the Golden Rule?



I don't think so...

The GOLDEN RULE

Treat others as you want to be treated

Jesus - “Do to others as you would
have them do to you.”

Luke 6:31



Context in Luke 6:27-38

But I tell you who hear me: **Love** your enemies, **do good** to those who hate you, **bless** those who curse you, **pray** for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, **turn** to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. **Give** to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. **Do to others as you would have them do to you.**

If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and **lend** to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. **Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.**

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. **Do not condemn**, and you will not be condemned. **Forgive**, and you will be forgiven. **Give**, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.



Jesus' end of the age test

1. For I was **hungry** and you gave me something to eat,
2. I was **thirsty** and you gave me something to drink,
3. I was **a stranger** and you invited me in,
4. I **needed clothes** and you clothed me,
5. I was **sick** and you looked after me,
6. I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Matthew 25:35-36



Realms of Mercy

1. Hungry



4. Naked



2. Thirsty



5. Sick



3. Homeless



6. In Prison





Traditional Works of Mercy

Corporal

1. To feed the **hungry**
2. To give drink to the **thirsty**
3. To clothe the **naked**
4. To shelter the **homeless**
5. To visit the **sick**
6. To ransom the **captive**
7. To bury the dead

Spiritual

1. To instruct the ignorant
2. To counsel the doubtful
3. To admonish sinners
4. To bear wrongs patiently
5. To forgive offences willingly
6. To comfort the afflicted
7. To pray for the living



Exercising Different Gifts

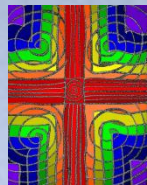
We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; **if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.**

Romans 12:6-8 NIV



Definition of the Gift

- ❑ **Mercy:** To have compassion for, and, if possible, to alleviate another's misfortune.
- ❑ The **gift of mercy** is the capacity to feel and express unusual compassion and sympathy for those in difficult or crisis situations and provide them with the necessary help and support to see them through tough times.



People with the Gift

- ❑ **Focus upon alleviating the sources of pain or discomfort** in suffering people. They have the ability to "walk in another's shoes" and empathize with the pain and burdens that other people carry.
- ❑ **Address the needs of the hurting, poor, or marginalized.** They concern themselves with individuals or social issues in which people are treated unjustly.
- ❑ **Express love, grace, and dignity** to those facing hardships or crisis. They desire to make a difference in the lives of hurting people without being judgmental.
- ❑ **Serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances** and do so cheerfully. Most noted modern example is Mother Teresa.
- ❑ **May have a difficult time evaluating the intentions of others** and at times may appear to be naïve.



Examples of Mercy in Action

- ❑ **Graciousness for the poor.** *“He that despises his neighbor sins: but he that has mercy on the poor, happy is he.”* Proverbs 14:21. The one who is gracious to the poor around him is rewarded with happiness and the pleasure of God.
- ❑ **Kindness shown to a fallen friend.** *“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.”* Proverbs 16:6. Offering honesty and kindness to one who has stumbled can quicken them to righteousness.
- ❑ **Relief for the suffering.** *“And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”* Luke 17:13. Whether it is suffering of a physical, emotional or spiritual kind, a merciful person not only comforts but is empowered to relieve pain.
- ❑ **Salvation for the hopeless.** *“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.”* Ephesians 2:4. Just as God has rescued us from utter devastation, we will have opportunities in life to redeem utterly hopeless situations and people.
- ❑ **The character of a king.** *“Mercy and truth preserve the king, and his throne is upheld by mercy.”* Proverbs 20:28. Some possess a gift of leadership that is sourced in mercy. The one who governs from a position or mindset of mercy and truth will not be cut short.



Who has the Gift?

Mother Teresa



You?





Mercy Gift Manifestations

- Attentiveness
- Empathy
- Caring
- Comfort
- Compassion
- Deference
- Fairness
- Gentleness
- Kindness
- Meekness
- Responsiveness
- Sensitivity
- Tenderness
- Tolerance



Relationship to Prophecy

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. For... everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their **strengthening, encouragement and comfort.**

1 Corinthians 14:1-3



What the Prophet Sees

- ❑ Where things are going and what could be done to change that for the better.
- ❑ The heart of God for restoration and healing.
- ❑ The end from the beginning and the steps along the way.
- ❑ Our part in God's plan of redemption.

“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is there no healing for the wound of my people?”

Jeremiah 8:22



Judgment vs. Mercy

Judgment

- ❑ Takes account of sin
- ❑ Weighs consequences of sinful actions
- ❑ Metes out punishment

Mercy

- ❑ Forgives sin
- ❑ Seeks remedial solutions to consequences
- ❑ Withholds punishment

Both are needed in balance

Justice = Judgment tempered by Mercy



Natural vs. Spiritual Eyes

Natural Vision

- ❑ Hopeless damage
- ❑ People who have brought misery upon themselves
- ❑ Broken down things, people, systems, society

Spiritual Vision

- ❑ Hope
- ❑ Repentance
- ❑ Healing
- ❑ Restoration



Natural Restoration

Before



After



Often our heart for restoration is tested and trained in natural things first before being “turned on” for people.



Do You Have This Gift?

- ❑ Do you find yourself being drawn to people, places, or things that are needy, hurting, sick, disabled, or elderly?
- ❑ Do you often think of ways to fix things that are broken or minister to those who are suffering?
- ❑ Do you sense a great deal of compassion for people having personal and emotional problems?
- ❑ Do you find that when you visit those who are suffering it brings you joy rather than depressing you?
- ❑ Do you find yourself responding to people more out of compassion than judgment?



Mercy Vocation Examples

Obvious

- ❑ Counseling
- ❑ Food/Clothing
- ❑ Medical
- ❑ Nursing
- ❑ Pastoral Ministry
- ❑ Social Work
- ❑ Visitation

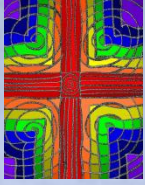
Less Obvious

- ❑ Auto repair
- ❑ Body shop work
- ❑ Community action
- ❑ Disaster relief
- ❑ Home remodeling
- ❑ Public health
- ❑ Tent making



Cautions for Merciful People

- ❑ Should beware of becoming an enabler to those who need to make some difficult changes in their lives. May deal too lightly with situation.
- ❑ Need to guard against feeling unfruitful or unappreciated, since some of the people helped will not appear to improve or express any appreciation.
- ❑ Can lose balance in their own lives because of the burdens they are carrying for others.



Got Mercy?

- ❑ The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

Romans 8:19

- ❑ The team with the most feet on the street wins.

Dana Miller, City Councilman

- ❑ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

God bless you!

