

Mercy Triumphs

I. THE POWER OF MERCY IN HEALING RELATIONSHIPS

- A. One important aspect of our spiritual life is how we respond: when we fail or when we are mistreated as well as how we respond to others who fail. If we respond with mercy, we will experience greater joy and freedom in our heart. If we respond wrongly, then a residue of bitterness or anger will slowly build in us, causing us to live with unresolved pain and turmoil.
- B. We must be diligent to discern bitterness in our heart because its powerful influence can quickly spring up in devout believers to trouble their heart with pain and to defile many relationships.

Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled. Heb 12:15

- C. ***Mercy triumphs over judgment***—spiritually, emotionally, relationally, economically, physically, etc. Judgment here speaks of unhelpful criticism, accusation, uncovering faults, whispering, etc. Accusation and unredemptive criticism is the same thing.

13 Judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. (Jas. 2:13)

1. ***Judgement is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy:*** James starts with a warning. This warning is easy to neglect. In place of judgment you could put the word criticism, accusation, uncovering faults... judgments means all of these things.
2. ***Helpful criticism*** is done in right: Timing, Tone, and Ratio and is part of the solution.

- D. Kindness triumphs by giving opportunity for relationships to recover after a difficult season.
- E. Love and mercy cover a multitude of sins or faults in others—we look hard to see good in them.

8 Above all things have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” (1 Pet. 4:8)

- F. Jesus wants His people to learn how much He desires mercy (Mt. 9:13; 12:7).

13 But go and learn what this means: “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.” (Mt. 9:13)

7 But if you had known what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Mt. 12:7)

II. ENTRUSTING OURSELVES TO GOD WHEN WE ARE MISTREATED

- A. King David is a good example of how to respond rightly to God in mistreatment and adversity. In Psalm 31, we see how David interacted with the Lord when he was being greatly mistreated. By trusting God to intervene, and by refusing to retaliate, he brought God into the conflict.

5 Into Your hand I commit my spirit...15My times are in Your hand. (Ps. 31:5, 15)

- B. When David “committed his spirit” into God’s hands, he was committing to God everything that deeply touched his spirit—his reputation, money, possessions, position, impact, etc. David was entrusting the outcome of the most important issues in his life to God’s leadership. To commit “our times” to God is to trust His way and timing in fulfilling His promises to us.

- C. Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father to be vindicated in the right way and in the right timing. By committing ourselves into God’s hands in times of mistreatment, we make a transaction with God trusting Him to intervene to establish His will in our lives

46He said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” (Lk. 23:46)

23While being reviled, He [Jesus] did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously. (1 Pet. 2:23, NASB)

- D. We must re-align our heart to see the Lord as our primary source instead of looking to people to establish us. No man can steal our calling or the sphere of influence that the Lord ordained for us.

27John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.” (Jn. 3:27)

11The Lord will give grace...no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. (Ps. 84:11)

- E. Anger is often caused by people blocking our goals (for honor, comfort, money, etc.).

1 Where do...fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure...? (Jas. 4:1)

- F. Much potential good is lost in our relationship with God, our family, and friends if we neglect to actively love, bless, do good, and pray for people who trouble, disappoint, or hurt us.

44But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you... (Mt. 5:44)