

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Mercy

"Teach me to feel another's woe, to hide the fault I see, that mercy I to others show, that mercy show to me." – Alexander Pope

"We need to show mercy. I mean, because as much mercy as you show people, that's the mercy you're going to be receiving." – Joel Osteen

"We hand folks over to God's mercy, and show none ourselves." – George Eliot

"Our prayer and God's mercy are like two buckets in a well; while the one ascends the other descends." – Mark Hopkins

In Scripture, we find that mercy, be it human or divine, means compassion, or tender mercy. There are times in which one gives a plea to obtain it, and in other instances, where one chooses to be merciful or compassionate toward others.

Some 44 times in sacred literature we find the expression "have mercy." It is quite obvious that this concept is very important in the eyes of Almighty God.

The popular story in our New Testament is the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). We know in the familiar story that a man had been mistreated by thieves and left half-dead. Three people encountered this man, a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan. The priest and Levite failed to render aid, but the Samaritan bandaged his wounds, poured oil and wine obviously medicinally, and allowed the wounded man to ride on the Samaritan's own animal. He even went so far as to take him to an innkeeper and promised to pay for whatever services were rendered. Now what is interesting is Jesus' question, "So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves? We must key in on Luke 25:37: "And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." He was not even able to verbalize the word Samaritan. And Jesus did not hesitate to say, "Go and do likewise." The beauty in this is that it reveals to us a true understanding of mercy. It is not talking of what we can do for others, but actually demonstrating that compassion.

The church has struggled to find its moorings when it comes to relationships. We want God to be merciful to us, but we seem to have great difficulty in showing mercy towards others.

Perhaps the best way to answer the cry for mercy would be for us to remember the Golden Rule. "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 7:12).