

Application Guide: “Blessed are the Merciful...”

Oct. 17th, 2004: Senior Pastor, Kimber Kauffman, presented his 17th message on the Book of Matthew, this time addressing the fifth Beatitude (Matt. 5:7). Before addressing the text, Kimber provided an overview of College Park’s Historical/Cultural principles, the Beatitudes which he has already addressed, and a diagram of the poetic flow of the Beatitudes. The bulk of the sermon focused on the definition of mercy and examples of it from other Scripture passages.

1. Kimber stated, “Forgiveness is at the heart and soul of mercy, leading to right relationships,” (see Matt. 6:12 and 7:1,2).
 - a. How do our relationships with others affect our prayer lives? Our relationship with God? (see Mt. 6:12-15)
 - b. Are there any relationships in your life right now that need to be made right? What actions are you going to take as a result of this message to rectify these relationships (see Mt. 5:23-24)?
 - c. “For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged...” (Mt. 7:2).
 - i. What is it in other people that *you* find easy to judge? What kind of reflection do these judgments have on your own character?
 - ii. How should this passage instill fear in the heart of one who has a judgmental attitude?
 - iii. Is it always wrong to judge people (cf. 1 Cor. 5:12-6:6)?
2. Kimber’s Old Testament definition mercy as a “steady, persistent refusal of God to wash his hands of wayward Israel.”
 - a. In your own life, how have you seen God persistently, relentlessly pursue you despite your rebellious, independent heart?
 - b. In what ways do you currently see the “Hound Dogs of Heaven” coming after you (Ps. 23:6)?
3. In the New Testament, mercy is succinctly defined as “compassion in action” and is best illustrated by the parable of the “Good Samaritan” (Lk. 10:25-37).
 - a. What are some circumstances in your everyday life that provide you an opportunity to show mercy to those you come into contact with?
 - b. If we are to heed the command to show mercy, what sacrifices in our lives might we have to make?
4. Psalm 136 makes the statement, “For his [God’s] mercy endures forever” twenty-six times.
 - a. What do you think was the point the psalmist was trying to make by continually repeating this statement about God’s mercy?
 - b. How should God’s continuous offering of mercy to us affect how we view God? How should it affect the way we treat others?
5. Kimber noted that the 3rd Commandment is not so much about cussing, but about claiming to be a follower of Yahweh (or Christ) and not living like him (Gal. 6:7-8).
 - a. If someone were to record your actions and words today, could they prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that you were a follower of Jesus? What actions could they point to that set you apart from your co-workers, neighbors, and acquaintances?