

Lessons From the Sermon of Jesus on the Mountain Part 22

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” (Matthew 5:7 KJV)

We will continue in this message to find out how God is showing mercy so we can grasp how we can show mercy to others.

God will be merciful to us when we repent of our sins and acknowledge our shortcomings before Him.

Let us read the following even that Jesus said: ***“10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. 13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” (Luke 18:10-14 KJV)***

The attitude of repentance and of renouncing our sins are the way to receive the mercy of God.

When we humble down before the Lord, and repent before him, we will receive forgiveness and we will be justified before the Lord.

When we stand before God and see ourselves without sin then we are like that Pharisee.

“11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. 12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” (Luke 18:11-12 KJV)

1. The Pharisee stood: He was over confidence and self righteous, thinking himself has no sin. *When we are over confidence, we are thinking ourselves that we don't have any shortcoming, especially when we have ministry and doing some service to God or in contact with God and His Word. So we need to be careful because this will come when we are doing some service and ministry unto God.*

2. And prayed thus: The style of prayer determine the personality and the heart attitude of the person before God. *The self righteousness is when you see yourself without fault while you are having faults, and that will take away the mercy of God.*

Self-righteousness; it is when people think about themselves they are something but in fact they are not. Self-righteousness is when you look to yourself and see everything right in you, but in reality that is not the truth.

Self-righteousness is when you consider yourself upright but the other around you are sinners. This is happen when you adopt certain rules and you want to see others

following them. When they will not follow these rules you will consider yourself righteous and higher than them and they are under you.

You know, even certain times, the non believers that we look down on them because they are not saved, they might be doing or they might be in attitude better than us and that is why we need to be more ashamed and more repentant in our attitude toward God and toward them.

At the time of the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on earth there was the Pharisees group who consider themselves the highest level of the religious standard of the community; they considered themselves the first class; thinking of themselves the nearest people to God, and the only people who follow God. They were observing certain commands like bringing the tenth of their crop and whatever they earn and have to God, and they fast twice weekly. We need to understand that tithing and fasting needs to be observed, but we should not fail to respond and obey other commands like love, showing mercy, faithfulness and practicing justice.

The Pharisees in their obedience to certain God's commands they were blinded to look to what God had said in His Word about other commands. In other word they have not grasped exactly what God is, and what He really wants them to be.

3. God, I thank thee: The Pharisee, the proud and the self-righteous does not really prayed at all. He asked God for nothing. He thanked God to what he is, not for what God is.

The Pharisee did not see God's goodness, mercy and love. He was so self-righteous. For him is fit what the Word of God says, ***“17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” (Revelation 3:17-18 KJV)*** *If you are in such attitude and you look yourself as such you will not be receiving God's mercy.*

4. That I am not as other men are: extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: The Pharisee considered himself perfect because he did not look intently into the mirror, the Word of God, that shows his defects, inadequacy, poverty and nakedness. *When we look into certain sins and not for other sins, we will be blind to see our own sins.* The Pharisee fail to see his own sin because self righteous for him was not a sin, therefore he left God's presence without justification. *He failed to receive because he failed to repent; he failed to humble himself and failed to ask God mercy.*

He failed to repent because he did not look on his sins but he looked on the sin of others. Extortion, injustice and adultery are all sins, but self righteousness is also sin. Not only that, but the attitude of the Pharisees was in enmity with the publican when he said to God ***“Or even as this publican”***, as if he was igniting God against the publican. As if there was a war between him against that man. *Grudges, anger, self-righteousness, judging others and insulting them in God's presence will withhold the mercy of God from reaching us.*

As well as the Pharisee did not see the good things in others, he did not see that the publican was repenting, he came for prayer, was standing afar, he did not see that the publican was not even raising his eyes or head toward heaven. Self righteousness will blind us from seeing the good things in others.

5. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess: Now here is the point when we see ourselves that we are doing favor to God, then how we expect that we can receive mercy. He is telling to God, what you expect from me more, I am fasting, I am tithing my income, I am not making adultery, I am not stealing, I am not doing bad, so what you need me to give you more? Certain times our wrong attitudes and self righteousness will take away God's mercy and other privileges from us. Don't see what you are giving to God, but look to what He is giving you. Don't look on the good that you are doing, but look and give attention on the good things that you are not doing

To the contrast of the Pharisees was the group of the publicans, the tax collectors. Those they were considered as the lower group of people who are far away from God because their job was to collect tax and money from the people. Some of them they were forcing the people to give more or they practice extortion. Therefore they were a detestable group in the society, and they were considered among the sinners. Even now no one wants to pay money especially if it is more than required or ordained to be.

But the Lord Jesus Christ came to save sinners, as He said, ***"12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*** (Matthew 9:12-13 KJV) He came to save sinners and to have mercy on sinners. Jesus also came to save the Pharisees but they were not able to see Him. He came to save us and to have mercy on us. He died on the cross for our sins and rose from the death on the third day by the Spirit of God. Those who believe in Him and trust their lives into His hand He transforms them; they will be changed into His likeness. Even to the worst of sinners Jesus can change them in a profound way, to be a new creation, a new person completely different from the past. So we need to change our minds about other people, the sinners, the worst of sinners, because God can and will change them.

Now the difference between the Pharisees and the tax collectors who went to the temple to pray is not their religious or spiritual background that would make them justified before God but the way how they approached God.

We are called to humble ourselves before God and see how we can be better people before Him. The Scripture help us to see how we can be better people before God. It is good to see yourself a sinner and unworthy before God for that will invite more mercy from God into your life.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13 KJV) Let us notice the characters of the penitent publican:

1. **Standing afar off:** He was cautious that he will be rejected. He is fearing God and fearing that his sins might disqualify him. He did not expect much, but was pleading for mercy.
2. **Would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven:** He was ashamed of his wrong doings to look toward God.

Are you ashamed of your wrong doing? Are you ashamed of your sins? Be ashamed of your sins and your wrong doings. Not only have mercy on others by not looking down on them but have mercy on yourself by changing your attitude so that the Lord may have mercy on you.

3. **Smote upon his breast:** Putting the fault on himself, and taking the blame of his wrong doing. Yes, see your sins well and put the fault of your sins on yourself and ask forgiveness from God.
4. **Saying, God be merciful to me a sinner:** Accepting His sins and asking God to forgive him and to have mercy upon him. The tax collector when he stood before God he came looking for mercy; asking a grace, to be forgiven for the sins that he has done. He was clearly distressed and agitated by his sense of his own unworthiness and he pleads humbly not even looking up to heaven, but beating his breast and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner" With such attitudes we will receive the mercy of God.

The Publican was not looking or minding the Pharisee who was standing in front of him, he did not look on others but he looked toward God, he repented, and did his assignments well.

My dear and beloved:

What kind of behavior and attitudes you are carrying in your life.

Check yourself from the Word of God that you today received.

Are you self righteous and what you are doing from few things to God in giving and fasting had made you self righteous and made you looking down unto others?

You need then to repent of all your sins and change your attitude in full and be humble, mind yourself and your personal life, allow the Holy Spirit to examine you, repent of all your sins, whether big or small, fear God and be trembled in His presence, ask mercy from Him so His grace will reach you and restore you back unto Him.

Let us today look unto Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith. Let us repent of our sins, let us renounce our wrong attitude and our shortcoming before God. Let us not play the judge rule for this belongs to God. Let us not ourselves in things not of our business.

Let us not look on the sins of others, but let us look into our own sins, and let us see our unworthiness before God because of our sins that we may plead with Him today to receive grace and mercy at this time of need.

Let us humble ourselves into the hands of God in true repentance. True that we are not stealing, committing adultery or doing murder, but self righteousness, looking down unto others and judging those who are truly repenting are sins and we need to renounce these sins all. Let us do that so that we will be exalted and justified and receive mercy from the Lord and get relieved and live in peace with God and with men.

Let us pray:

Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the death on the third day to give me eternal life.

Let us confess and renounce all our sins to the Lord. Let us renounce our pride, arrogance, self-righteousness, and looking down on others. Let us renounce our stubbornness, overconfidence and lack of humility. Let us remember all our sins that we had done in the past and let us repent of them all. Let us mind our own business and see what is wrong in us and work with God to correct it.

Let us commit ourselves to live in humility, holiness, to listen and obey the voice of God and to do diligently what He is asking us to do and to show mercy to those whom He wants us to show.

Let us commit ourselves to obey the teaching in this message and let us not look down on others and speak bad and ill words against them while they are repenting and drawing near unto God.

Let us give thanks to God for the mercies that we had received from the HIM in saving us, in forgiving our sins, in delivering us from troubles, and in giving us favor and mercy in times of need.

Lord, I commit my life to be willing to show mercy as you had showed your mercy to me. Lord, I commit myself to hearken to your voice and to the instructions of your Word. Lord, I commit myself not to be judgmental on others and not to look down on them.

Lord I commit myself to preach your Gospel to my family, my household, friends, relatives, and the people around me, and to show them the same mercy that you showed me.

Lord, I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who had humbled themselves before you, renouncing their sins and are willing to apply the principles that we learn from your Word in this message and to show mercy to others as they received mercy from you. Lord protects them and provides all their needs. Lord comfort them and assure them that you are with them and leading them in their lives. Lord fills them once again with the Holy Spirit and makes their lives' testimony attractive to others so that people will believe in you and start to follow you and live according to your Word. Lord use them to evangelize and to make new disciples of yours.

Lord, I pray for us as a church to help us, protect us, and provide for us to go on in serving you and do your work and your will. Lord fills us once again with the Holy Spirit

and enables us to evangelize and to reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. Lord give us the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, humility, self-control, patience, perseverance, long suffering, faith and faithfulness to go on and serve you in a better way reflecting the character of Jesus in our lives.

Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church and reaching out new people and new places. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus' name, Amen.

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