

## Lesson 27

### **Marveling in the Mercy of God**

*“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us...” Eph 2:4*

*“Are we under the guilt of sin? There is a promise, ‘The Lord merciful and gracious’ (Ex 33:6), where God as it were puts on His glorious embroidery, and holds out the golden scepter, to encourage poor trembling sinners to come to Him. ‘The Lord, merciful.’ God is more willing to pardon than to punish. Mercy does more multiply in Him than sin in us. Mercy is His nature... He shows mercy, not because we deserve mercy, but because He delights in mercy.” Thomas Watson (1620-1686) in *All Things Good**

*“Mercy sweetens all God’s other attributes. God’s holiness without mercy, and his justice without mercy were terrible. When the water was bitter, and Israel could not drink, Moses cast a tree into the waters, and then they were made sweet. How bitter and dreadful were the other attributes of God, did not mercy sweeten them! Mercy sets God’s power on work to help us; it makes his justice become our friend; it shall avenge our quarrels. God’s mercy is one of the most orient pearls of his crown; it makes his Godhead appear amiable and lovely. When Moses said to God, ‘I beseech thee shew me thy glory;’ the Lord answered him, ‘I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will shew thee mercy.’ Exod 33: 19. God’s mercy is his glory. His holiness makes him illustrious; his mercy makes him propitious.” Thomas Watson (1620-1686) in *A Body of Divinity**

**Review:** In past lessons we have considered even further the most encouraging truth that redeemed man is enslaved to the sovereign grace of God (Rom 6:1-19)! We started by looking at a few quotes that declared the vast difference between sin and grace! Sin brings a man low but grace lifts him high...sin puts the man under condemnation but grace puts the man into Christ where there is no condemnation (Rom 8:1)! This is the fuel that drives the man of God as he trains himself for godliness (1 Tim 4:7) and it is upon these eternal truths that we must consistently refuel as God reforms us by His sovereign sanctification (Phil 2:12-13). We looked at Eph 2:1-6 and Titus 3:1-7 and considered the repeated concepts and theological comparisons interwoven between these two passages. We identified the situation of man, the motivation of God in bringing the gospel, the foundation of salvation, the transformation of regeneration, and the eternal hope of our glorious destination with/in/from the Lord! As usual we brought all of this together by contemplating how all of this further equips and encourages the godly man in his all-encompassing pursuit for holiness without which no man will see the Lord (Heb 12:14)! All of this continues to deepen our understanding of how biblical training to godliness is really **directed** by what God has said in His Word, **driven** by who God is in His holy character, and **determined** by what God has done in the Gospel through the grace given by Christ!

1. Read Col 3:5 and 3:1-4 and see the paramount connection between the ever present need (and command) to be daily killing sin as you train yourself to godliness (1 Tim 4:7)! How does the truth of Col 3:1-4 direct and equip you to fulfill the mandate of Col 3:5? What are the past, present, and future realities of the gospel declared in 3:1-4 that provoke the fruits of the gospel which start in 3:5?

Now let's go back to Ephesians 2 as we seek to train ourselves to godliness by growing in our understanding of God's amazing gospel! Notice how Paul describes God in verse 4 as "being rich in mercy." What does mercy mean especially in this horrific context of verses 1-3? Look up the word "mercy" and explain what it means.

Consider how God's mercy is directly tethered to salvation in these passages and how it ultimately is meant to drive one to praise (Rom 15:9; 1 Pet 1:3; 2:10 Titus 3:5; Jude 21).

What does Paul mean when he says he was shown mercy (1 Tim 1:16-17) and is there any connection to Eph 2:1-4?

How is God's rich mercy illustrated in the parable found in Luke 10:25-37?

In Eph 2:4, what is Paul meaning when he describes God's mercy as "rich"? (Ex 34:6; 2 Cor 1:3; 8:9 and Lam 3:22-23)

How did Christ display mercy while on earth? (Mt 9:35-38; 20:29-34)

How does Christ give mercy to those training (1 Tim 4:7) themselves to godliness? (2 Cor 12:6-10; Heb 4:14-16)

2. Give 3 Old Testament examples or illustrations where mercy was manifested either by God or because of God's work through man. Here is an example to get you started, look up Lev 16:11-19 and read about the "mercy seat." Now explain what was the purpose for and provision given by the mercy seat?

Was God obligated, or is God ever obligated, to provide man mercy? See Ex 33:19; Rom 9:15; Jer 13:13-14; Ezek 9:9-10 for help in answering this question.

How does the "mercy seat" all point to Christ and how does Christ become our eternal mercy seat? See Hebrews 9:1-28

Are believers ever in danger of not showing mercy to others, and if so, why?

Are there any clear illustrations of this in the Bible and if so where? Consider the context in Mt 18:21-35 and contemplate the critical nature of mercy within the ministry of the local church. (Luke 6:27-36)

Titus 3:5 and Eph 2:4 make it explicitly clear that **mercy is the conduit through which forgiveness flows!** What does that mean? See these verses for help and explain what is inseparably linked to mercy in all these verses Ps 51:1-2; 78:38; 103:1-14; Isa 55:6-7; Dan 9:9; Mic 7:18; Luke 1:77-78; 18:13-14; Jn 2:13; 1 Pet 2:10)!

How critical is forgiveness to the life that trains for godliness and what connection does this have to 2 Pet 3:18?

**How does the Cross shape your training in godliness?**

**Memory Verse: 1 Cor 1:18**