

"FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE"

Jesus gives the disciples a principle that they should use to guide their actions as they go from town to town preaching His message to others. He tells them, **"Freely you have received, freely give."** (Matthew 10:8) When I first read this verse, my first reaction was that Jesus was talking about generous giving. God gives us so much in this life and blesses us in so many ways, that the very least we can do is share that wealth with others by freely giving of our time, money, and possessions to help others. While this is obviously sound advice and something that we should all practice in our lives, the more we meditate on this passage today the more we will discover that Jesus is speaking about much more than our material goods.

"DO UNTO TO OTHERS AS GOD HAS DONE UNTO YOU"

Freely we have received His grace and mercy, and freely we should extend that grace and mercy to others. **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."** Matthew 5:7
 Freely we have received His forgiveness of our sins, and freely we should forgive others of their transgressions. **"And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."** Matthew 6:12
 Freely we have received His encouragement, and freely we should encourage others. **"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."** Thessalonians 5:11
 Freely we have received His wisdom, and freely we should share that wisdom with others. **"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."** Colossians 3:16
 Freely we have received His love, and freely we should show that love to others. **"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven;"** Matthew 5:43-45

Perhaps the most important thing on this list that we have received from God is the Good News about Jesus Christ. Each of us has been saved by His grace through faith in Jesus, and the fact is that at some point in our lives we learned about our Savior because someone, somewhere cared enough about us to share with us the Gospel. God freely gives us salvation, but in order for people to receive His gift they have to first hear the Good News, and that is where we come in. **Freely we have received salvation through His Good News, and freely we should share that Good News with others.**

"THE GIFT OF COMPASSION"



The gift of compassion moves people to action on behalf of those in need. Compassion is not a simple caring about others, but such a radical caring that we have no choice but to make sacrifices for others. Those with the gift of compassion rarely ask **"Should I help,"** but instead focus on how to help. Compassion

makes us fundamentally aware of the Christ in others and springs from our desire to care for all of God's people. (Romans 12:4-13) **"For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness."** **MARKS OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN:** **"Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers."** The motivation of one with the Motivational Gift of Compassion, or Mercy is to mentally, and emotionally, relate to the feelings of those around him. Just as the server focuses on physical needs, the one with the gift of compassion concentrates on giving empathy, and comfort, during times of distress. The Motivational Gift of compassion, or Mercy, is the ability to show great love, and deep feeling, toward the needs of others, it is the **"outward manifestation of empathy."**

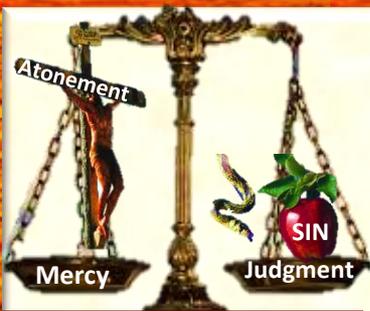
"GOD ALLOWS MERCY TO TEMPER JUSTICE"

"For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James. 2:13). Each of us can be thankful that God allows mercy to temper justice. Since **"all have sinned,"** and **"the wages of sin is death"** (Romans 3:23; 6:23), each of us could properly be damned to everlasting torment. God would not be unjust in that event and none could levy charges of inequity against him. Truly, grace and mercy go hand in hand and it is by God's grace that we are saved. (Eph. 2:8,9) **"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast."** None of us will dare to ask for justice before God's great Judgment; we plead for mercy.

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I fear that many have assumed that mercy will somehow cause God to overlook sin, discount it, fail to impute guilt or, in some manner, be so benevolent toward sinners that we feel we can sin with impunity. For "Mercy To Triumph Over Judgment," it cannot be an absolute situation whereby mercy assures universal salvation to all men, regardless of their deeds. Remember, "it is fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).



"IN CHRIST WE FIND MERCY"

In Christ we find mercy, and this mercy triumphs over judgment because our sins are forgiven, pardoned by the same Judge Who appointed Christ as our Merciful High Priest (Heb. 2:17). It is in this manner that God can say, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12). Indeed, mercy triumphs over judgment in the redemptive work of Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Psalm 51:16



Because God is waiting to see if a person will repent! It is repentance that God desires. He only resorts to judgment when repentance is resisted and refused. In the sense that God has made it possible to extend mercy in the Person and Will of Christ when we ought to be condemned. To appear before God outside of Christ and plead for mercy is to plead in vain.

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5

Judgment For Our Sin

"For God made Christ, Who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:2

"MERCY AND JUDGMENT OVER THE NATIONS"

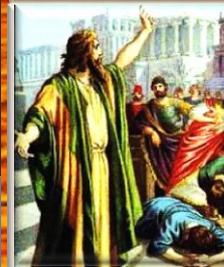


Judgment is true both for individuals as well as nations. If a nation has been prophesied against—that is, God has stated that He will send forth judgments upon it—and then that nation repents, it is spared from God's wrath. "At one moment

I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy it; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it."

(Jeremiah 18:8)

"REMEMBER JONAH CHAPTER 3?"



"The Word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed

God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; He may turn from His fierce anger, so that we do not perish."

"GOD HONORED THE REPENTANCE OF NINEVEH"

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. Here we have one example out of many examples' in the bible where we see God's Mercy/Compassion towards a people and a nation. "Yet even now," declares the Lord, "Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping, and mourning; And rend your heart and not your garments. Now return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, And relenting of evil." (Joel 2:12-13) For He will be slow to anger, giving both individuals and nations time to repent. But if that repentance does not come about, then one can expect that the judgment will come in the time that the Lord has defined.