

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

September 2025

GENERAL SUBJECT: CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF MATTHEW 5 THROUGH 7 (Friday—First Morning Session)

Message Four Blessed Are the Merciful, for They Shall Be Shown Mercy and Receive Mercy

RM *Hymns: 26*

Scripture Reading: Matt. 5:7; Rom. 9:15a, 16; Eph. 2:4; James 2:13; Heb. 4:16

Matt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy.

Rom 9:15a For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, ..."

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

James 2:13 For the judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

I. “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy’...So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy”—Rom. 9:15a, 16:

A. Mercy is the most far-reaching of God’s attributes, going further than His grace and love—Matt. 9:13:

Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

1. According to our natural condition, we were far removed from God, totally unworthy of His grace; we were eligible only to receive His mercy—Eph. 2:4.
Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
2. Our disobedience affords God’s mercy an opportunity, and God’s mercy brings us to salvation—Rom. 11:32.
Rom 11:32 For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.

B. Our concept is that the one who wills will gain what he wills to obtain and that the one who runs will gain what he runs after—9:16:

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

1. If this were the case, God’s selection would be according to our effort and labor.
2. On the contrary, God’s selection is of God who shows mercy; we do not need to will or to run, for God has mercy on us.
3. If we know God’s mercy, we will neither trust in our effort nor be disappointed by our failures; the hope for our wretched condition is in God’s mercy—Eph. 2:4.
Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

C. If we would serve God in His New Testament economy, we need to know that it is wholly a matter of God’s sovereign mercy—Rom. 9:15-16; Heb. 4:16:

Rom 9:15 For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

1. If we know God's sovereignty, we will thank Him for His mercy:

a. The expression *sovereign mercy* means that God's mercy is absolutely a matter of God's sovereignty.

b. Being a vessel of mercy is not the result of our choice; it originates with God's sovereignty—Rom. 9:18, 23.

Rom 9:18 So then He has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills.

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

c. God's mercy is in His sovereignty; the only thing we can say to explain God's mercy to us is that in His sovereignty, He has chosen to be merciful to us—vv. 15-16, 23.

Rom 9:15 For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

2. In God's sovereign mercy, our hearts are inclined toward Him; because of His mercy to us, we seek Him day by day—Jer. 29:13; Deut. 4:29; Isa. 55:6.

Jer 29:13 And you will seek Me and find Me if you search for Me with all your heart;

Deut 4:29 And from there you will seek Jehovah your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Isa 55:6 Seek Jehovah while He may be found; / Call upon Him while He is near.

3. The more we see that everything related to us is a matter of God's mercy, the more we will bear our responsibility before the Lord; however, even our willingness to bear responsibility is of God's mercy.

4. Because of God's mercy, we responded to His gospel when others did not, we received a word about Christ as life when others refused to receive it, and we took the way of the Lord's recovery when others drew back from taking this way.

5. Regarding His recovery, God has mercy on whom He will have mercy.

D. Romans 9 reveals the principle that everything depends on God's mercy—vv. 15-16:

Rom 9 be omitted.

Rom 9:15 For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

1. The apostle Paul applies this principle to the Israelites, showing us that everything that happened to them was of God's mercy—vv. 16, 23.

Rom 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

2. There must be at least one time when we see God's mercy and definitely touch His mercy—Eph. 2:4; Matt. 9:13:

Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

- a. Concerning this matter, our eyes need to be opened to see that everything depends on God's mercy.
- b. Whether we see this all at once, or we realize it through a process, the minute we touch this matter, we touch not a feeling but a fact; this fact is that everything depends on God's mercy.

E. “Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help”—Heb. 4:16:

1. Both God's mercy and His grace are the expression of His love.
2. When we are in a pitiful condition, first His mercy reaches us and brings us into a state where God is able to favor us with His grace.
3. God's mercy and grace are always available to us; however, we need to receive and find them by exercising our spirit to come forward to the throne of grace—v. 16.

Heb 4:16 *Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.*

F. In His sovereignty God the Father has had mercy on us; therefore, we must praise and worship Him for His sovereign mercy:

1. “Father, we enjoy Thy mercy, / Ever fresh and ever new; / Every morning shed upon us, / It refreshes as the dew. / How we taste it! How we taste it! / Giving Thee the praises due”—*Hymns*, #26, stanza 5.
2. “Father, Thy mercy with Thy love and grace / Did we obtain; / And in Thy mercy, with Thee face to face, / We'll e'er remain; / And for Thy mercy we would worship Thee / Through all our days and through eternity”—*Hymns*, #25, stanza 3.

II. “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy”—Matt. 5:7:

- A. To be righteous is to give one what he deserves, whereas to be merciful is to give someone better than he deserves.
- B. For the kingdom of the heavens, we need to be not only righteous but also merciful.
- C. To receive mercy is to receive what we do not deserve.
- D. If we are merciful to others, the Lord will give us mercy (2 Tim. 1:16, 18), especially at His judgment seat—James 2:12-13.

2 Tim 1:16 *May the Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain;*

2 Tim 1:18 *May the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord in that day. And in how many things he served me in Ephesus, you know best.*

James 2:12 *So speak and so do as those who are to be judged by the law of freedom.*

James 2:13 *For the judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.*

E. We must learn to be righteous with ourselves and merciful toward others.

III. “Grace, mercy, peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord”—2 Tim. 1:2:

- A. Only in 1 and 2 Timothy, among all his Epistles, did the apostle include God's mercy in the opening greeting.
- B. God's mercy reaches farther than His grace.
- C. In the degraded situation of the churches, God's mercy is needed.
- D. This mercy brings in God's rich grace, which is sufficient to deal with any degradation.

IV. “The judgment is without mercy to him who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment”—James 2:13:

- A. To despise a poor brother is to have no mercy.
- B. Anyone who despises a poor brother in this way will not receive mercy when he appears

before the judgment seat of Christ—Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10:

Rom 14:10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God,

2 Cor 5:10 For we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad.

1. When we come before the Lord to be judged, He will not show mercy to us, because we have not shown mercy to our brother.
2. We need to show mercy, for mercy triumphs over judgment.
3. If we have mercy on our brother today, we will receive mercy from the Lord at His judgment seat.

V. We should bow down before the Lord and worship Him for His mercy—Psa.

145; Isa. 63:9; John 10:10; Rom. 3:24; 11:32; 2 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 2:4-5:

Psa 145:1 I will extol You, O my God and King; / And I will bless Your name forever and ever.

Psa 145:2 Every day I will bless You, / And I will praise Your name forever and ever.

Psa 145:3 Great is Jehovah, and much to be praised; / And His greatness is unsearchable.

Psa 145:4 One generation will laud Your works to another, / And they will declare Your mighty acts.

Psa 145:5 Upon the glorious splendor of Your majesty / And upon Your wondrous works I will muse.

Psa 145:6 And men will speak of the might of Your awesome deeds, / And I will declare Your greatness.

Psa 145:7 They will utter the memory of Your great goodness / And will sing for joy of Your righteousness.

Psa 145:8 Jehovah is gracious and compassionate, / Long-suffering and great in lovingkindness.

Psa 145:9 Jehovah is good to all, / And His compassions are upon all His works.

Psa 145:10 All Your works will praise You, O Jehovah; / And Your faithful ones will bless You.

Psa 145:11 They will speak of the glory of Your kingdom / And tell of Your power,

Psa 145:12 To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts / And the glorious splendor of Your kingdom.

Psa 145:13 Your kingdom is an eternal kingdom, / And Your dominion is throughout all generations.

Psa 145:14 Jehovah upholds all who are falling / And raises up all who are bowed down.

Psa 145:15 The eyes of everyone wait for You, / And You give them their food in due season.

Psa 145:16 You open up Your hand / And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Psa 145:17 Jehovah is righteous in all His ways, / And faithfully kind in all His doings.

Psa 145:18 Jehovah is near to all who call upon Him, / To all who call upon Him in truth.

Psa 145:19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him, / And He will hear their cry and save them.

Psa 145:20 Jehovah preserves all who love Him, / But He will destroy all the wicked.

Psa 145:21 My mouth will speak the praise of Jehovah, / And all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.

Isa 63:9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, / And the Angel of His presence saved them; / In His love and in His mercy / He redeemed them, / And He bore them up and carried them / All the days of old.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

Rom 11:32 For God has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.

2 Cor 4:1 Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart;

Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Eph 2:5 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

- A. The more we worship the Lord for His mercy, the more we will be uplifted.
- B. What a mercy that God has selected us, predestinated us, called us, and placed us in His recovery!
- C. For the future we trust not in ourselves but in Him and in His marvelous mercy.
- D. Our going on with the Lord is a matter not of our willing or running but of God's mercy.
- E. God's mercy works in a wonderful way.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM PEOPLE

The Merciful to Be Shown Mercy

Matthew 5:7 says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy." To be righteous is to give one what he deserves, whereas to be merciful is to give someone better than he deserves. For the kingdom of the heavens, we need to be not only righteous but also merciful. To be shown mercy is to receive what we do not deserve. If we are merciful to others, the Lord will grant us mercy (2 Tim. 1:16, 18), especially at His judgment seat (James 2:12-13).

To be righteous is to deal with ourselves in a strict way. We must be righteous in dealing with ourselves. We should not give ourselves any excuse. Toward others, however, we must be merciful. If we are diligent to seek the surpassing righteousness, we will eventually become merciful toward others. In our seeking we will find that our natural man is weak and that we are prone to failure. If you do not realize the pitiful condition of your natural man, you will never have mercy on others. Instead of showing mercy to them, you will condemn them when they fail or fall. The reason you condemn them is that you do not know yourself. If you know yourself, whenever someone fails, you will say, "Lord, have mercy on me and on my brother. We all are weak vessels and cannot fulfill Your requirements. Lord, even though my brother has offended me, I would still be merciful toward him." If you have never failed, you will never be merciful. If you are always successful in your pursuit of holiness and perfection, you will have no sympathy toward others when they fail. You will always condemn them. But if you know how weak you are and how many mistakes you have made, you will be merciful to others.

There is a promise for us in Matthew 5:7. The promise is that those who are merciful will be shown mercy. If you judge your brother without mercy today, you will not be shown any mercy at the judgment seat of Christ. Because you judge others unmercifully, Christ will judge you unmercifully. But if you have mercy on your brother, the Lord will have mercy on you at His judgment seat. Thus, the kingdom people are strict in dealing with themselves but very merciful in dealing with others. Once again, this is not an outward matter but a matter related to our inward being. (*Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 171-172)

RIGHTEOUS WITH OURSELVES, MERCIFUL TOWARD OTHERS

Although we must be strict with ourselves in righteousness, we must learn to be merciful to others and not to place demands on them. It is wrong for any Christian to place demands on others. If you are truly strict with yourself, then you will know how to be merciful to others. But do not try to be merciful to others without first being righteous with yourself. Every sloppy person is merciful to others because he has already been merciful to himself. If he sleeps late every morning, he will be very merciful to others who sleep late. This kind of mercy is not mercy at all; it is absolutely wrong. No one who is sloppy knows how to be merciful to others. Only a strict person, a righteous person, knows how to be merciful. If you would be merciful to others according to the fifth blessing, you must first be righteous toward yourself according to the fourth blessing.

We must be righteous and strict with ourselves, never making excuses for ourselves. But when others offend us, thereby exposing their shortage, we must be merciful toward them. All those who are self-righteous condemn others and never let them go. The word spoken by the Lord on the mount is completely different from this. To ourselves, we must be righteous and strict, serious and sober. But toward others, we must be merciful. In Himself God is righteous. However, if He were righteous to the uttermost in dealing with us, we would all be killed. Although God is righteous in relation to Himself, He is full of mercy in dealing with us. As fallen sinners, we surely need God's mercy. We also must learn to be righteous with ourselves and merciful toward others. This matter of being righteous toward

ourselves and merciful toward others is not first a matter of outward behavior; it is first a matter of our inward attitude, of our inward being.

As a brother taking the lead, either as an elder in the church or as a brother in the brothers' house, you may find it difficult to be strict with yourself and yet be merciful toward others. Suppose everyone is supposed to be home by a certain time. To come home later than that time is not righteous. Likewise, it is not right to inconvenience others. However, when some young people come home, they like to throw their shoes anywhere they please. I knew of one co-worker, a preacher and teacher of the Bible, who used to throw his socks without any concern for where they landed around the room. One time this brother and I were guests in a certain home. The hostess, quite concerned, spoke to me about this brother's sloppiness. What a shame that was to me! Some of the brothers living in the brothers' houses may act the same way.

Other brothers may be unhappy about being required to wash dishes; therefore, they may not clean them thoroughly. This is not righteous. It is never righteous to take advantage of others, to invade their rights. Not doing an adequate job in washing dishes is taking advantage of others. If you are such a one, you are not a righteous person. If you are a leader in the brothers' house, you must be strict with yourself about the time, about excessive talking, about noise, about washing dishes, and about many other things. Do not say that this is too much. It may seem too much to you, but it is not too much to Christ who lives within you. In everything you do, you must be strict with yourself.

However, as one taking the lead in the brothers' house or in any aspect of the church life, you must also be merciful. Sometimes a leader may warn a sloppy one about his dishwashing, saying, "This is your first warning about the way you wash the dishes. After two more warnings, you will have to move out." Remember the word of the Lord Jesus about how many times you must forgive your brother (Matt. 18:21-22). Even if a certain brother does not clean the dishes thoroughly after you have spoken to him a number of times, you must still be merciful to him. Do not drive away even such a sloppy and pitiful brother. Instead, be merciful to him. This does not mean that you go to the opposite extreme and say, "I have learned that I must be merciful toward this brother. Therefore, from now on, I will never talk to him about the way he does the dishes. Let him do the dishes any way he wants. We'll just have to tolerate it in order to keep him." This attitude is not right either. You need to take care of such a sloppy brother day after day. Let him have a turn at washing the dishes. But each time he does so, you must be patient and merciful toward him.

It is easy for us to be either strict or sloppy. But we must learn to be strict on the one hand and merciful on the other. If we give others a strict dealing, we must immediately be merciful toward them. This is an important lesson for elders to learn. The kingdom people are both righteous and merciful. When you are righteous, you must be absolutely righteous; and when you are merciful, you must be very merciful. Although righteousness and mercy are two opposite poles, they must meet in your experience. Your righteousness must come together with your mercy. (*Life-study of Matthew*, pp. 180-182)