

THE PERSONS DESCRIBED

Blessed are the merciful: "To be merciful implies a sympathizing regard to the mercies of others; liberality in relieving their distresses according to our utmost power, the ready forgiveness of offences, and the remission of obligations due to ourselves, when the parties are unable to discharge them."

The higher qualities of human nature would include mercy, but sin is cruel and ruinous. Mercy in the Christian sense begins with the work of God in the human soul; the man seeking the mercy of God somehow becomes merciful. To be forgiven, we must forgive, and that means mercy. These virtues enumerated by the Lord Jesus in the beatitudes are beyond the ordinary virtues, such as courage, wisdom, justice, temperance. While it is true that the people who exercise these virtues are blessed, it is equally true that the blessedness pronounced in the beatitudes involves the grace of God, the saving and sanctifying grace of God.

The virtue of being merciful, as in this beatitude, is the outcome of compassion, and compassion is a heart condition. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies (a heart of compassion, R. V.)"—Col. 3:12.

One may show pity on a person and not show compassion, and in consequence not be merciful. The Good Samaritan not only showed pity; he did something about it. He showed mercy.

Mercy should not, however, be carried to the extreme of dispensing with justice. When it is carried that far, it ceases to be mercy; for so many persons may be involved, and so much. The principle of justice is involved in the heart of compassion which enables a person to be merciful.

THE PROMISE DESIGNATED

For they shall obtain mercy:

(1) The merciful man is blessed because God has had mercy on him. "According unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions," cried David. It is through His mercies we are not consumed. He is a merciful God!

(2) The merciful man is blessed because he showeth mercy. You remember the words of Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia's plea to Shylock: "That in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation. We do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy."

Indeed, our obtaining mercy must be considered largely from the human standpoint of our showing mercy. Read again the beatitude with this in mind. We must forgive from the heart in order to be forgiven: "But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:26).

(3) The merciful man is blessed because he hath obeyed the Word of God, and hath put on "a heart of compassion," so that he has a compassionate heart. He is blessed because of his state of mercifulness; his heart condition.

(4) The merciful man is blessed because of the comfort and happiness arising in general from a state of mercifulness. "The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh" (Prov. 11:17). The merciful man is merciful to the unmerciful; he is merciful to his servants, his enemies, his beast. "He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed" (Psalms 37:26).

(5) The merciful man is blessed because he is like God. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36). He is like his merciful Heavenly Father.

Read again the words of Shakespeare:

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His scepter shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the fear and dread of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptered sway.
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute of God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

THE PURE IN HEART

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matt. 5:8).

What shall the pure in heart see? This may be a good introductory question. The answer is obvious. The question, What shall the pure in heart enjoy? would also help as to the meaning of the expression "see God"; for enjoyment and possession are included in the expression.

Many teachers and preachers are very frank in their declaration that no such experience as "pure in heart" is possible in this life. Surely our Lord and Saviour would not promise to bless a people that did not exist.

Rev. Dr. Peter Wiseman

"A FATHER UNTO YOU"

II Corinthians 6:18

How great are the love and protection of a true father. He will care for and protect the child to the utmost of his ability. He may not always know how to express his love in words and caresses, but in the time of need he will give his life to save the child. When I was a small boy I had not a care. I trusted my father fully to supply every need. In the time of danger I felt so safe if he were present. I believed that he knew just what to do in every emergency.

Able for Every Need

Later I discovered that my earthly father was not able for every need, but our **Heavenly Father is abundantly able** for every circumstance, His power omnipotent, and His wisdom omniscient! He is the Almighty God. There is no power in earth or in hell that He is not able to handle. He is able to care for you, regardless of the circumstances. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." He is able to protect you, regardless of storms in the elements or of wars among the nations. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him." He is able to supply your every need. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought; neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

Protection and Guidance

Beloved, the devil and wicked men would blind you if they could. They would block every avenue to keep you from spreading the Gospel; but you have a right to believe God to keep the avenues open and to make you fruitful until He is through with you upon earth. He is all-wise and knows the end from the beginning. He knows just how to direct the battle and to work everything out to His glory. You cannot afford to be without His care and guidance. He will make you more than conqueror.

Love Bestowed Upon Us

"God is love." "Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me" (Isa. 49:15-16).

How good it is to have received "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." And in the second place, how blessed to have entered into that oneness with Christ mentioned in Hebrews 2:11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." If you are one with Christ you bear the same relationship to the Father that Christ bears to Him.

Unbroken Confidence

When you are facing troublous times, or when the pale horse with his rider is standing at the door, what comfort to have God as your Father! What a safe feeling to know that this relationship with the Father has not been broken! How blessed to know that you have walked before Him with a perfect heart! How good it is then to know that you have been true through the tests; you have kept yourself free from the entanglements of the world; you have walked in the light; you have been separate from the world; you have not leaned upon lodges or worldly organizations for help. Beloved, there is a time coming when you will need something more than worldly fraternities for protection and help. Those who have leaned upon the arm of flesh and have trusted in these things will be in confusion when the nations are crumbling. How good it will be then to be able to trust alone in **The Everlasting Arms!**

How good it is in the time of trouble to know that you have been true to God with your tithes and offerings,—that you have kept God first in the matter of finances. The prophet said, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." How important to keep an open heaven and to be where you can prove God. If you are behind in your tithes or if you have been delinquent in your service to God, your confidence in God to answer your prayers will be weak. On the other hand, if you have been walking with God in covenant relationship, where you are keeping His commandments and doing those things that are pleasing in His sight, you have an unshaken confidence in Him, and have great boldness of faith in coming to your heavenly Father for grace to help in time of need.—D. W. Reynolds.