

Announcements

Want to keep up on what's going on around here? Drop your info card in the offering plate and we'll add you to the e-letter list.

Community Groups:

This is where we gather to pray, study and encourage one another as part of the missional work of the Gospel. We would love to get to know you more, and this is one of the best ways to get planted as a part of Seaside.

Please consider joining a CG to strengthen the not only your family, but the larger community.

Contact
eric@seasidechurch.com
for info on where groups meet or to lead/host one.

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Mercy's basic meaning is tied to a word in Hebrew 'Hesed', which is one of the most commonly used words used in the OT to describe the character of God. It is typically translated as love, loving-kindness, steadfast love, and finally, mercy. Because of that, it is undeniably connected to God, and any act of mercy on our end must be tied to Him - He defines it, initiated it, lived it (Lamentations 3.22). For those, like us, who live in the NT, it has even greater meaning, because mercy defines the work of Christ up to His death on the cross. But that doesn't necessarily put it into context for all of us, or make it easier to understand.

Mercy means a heartfelt response, both in word and in deed, to a seen or felt need. It is to see the afflicted and broken as they are, and, in light of whom Christ has made us, we act and live out the gospel with the purpose of bringing them to the knowledge of grace. Grace is often confused with mercy, which is unfortunate because it ends up making both of them less by muddling their complementary nature. While mercy deals with the pain, the suffering, the brokenness of life, grace deals with root issue of the heart. Mercy offers relief from the symptoms of a life stuck in a rut of sin and despair, grace goes in and pardons the sin itself. Mercy is what led Christ to the cross, grace was the outcome of that life, death, and resurrection (Titus 3.5; Eph 2.4-5). They must not be separated - for they are interwoven into the very fabric of who God is.

Mercy that emotionally or legally responds to a need with no intention of bringing grace alongside is only a temporary painkiller burying a far deeper problem. Grace that does not lead to the offering of mercy to others is no grace at all. They will never be able to be free from the sin that has entangled and held them captive. And according to 2 Timothy 2.20-26, that is the primary mission of believers - to live a life a life so that "*perhaps God might grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of truth, and they may come to their sense and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.*"

Two of the best places to see this are the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10.25-37 and the Rich king and his servant in Matt. 18.21-35.

Mercy is uniquely ours to offer. We do it through the work of the Holy Spirit in our own heart and lives, but it nonetheless remains a precious partnership with God's grace. It is an act of worship - which as we have said before, is the response to the work of God in our lives. It has great cost. If we are indeed merciful, and it is indeed from the heart, then we do not act purely when our heart *feels* like it. It is borne out of a desire to worship and obey our heavenly Father. We are bearing the load of others until we can deliver them to the arms of our own savior, Jesus Christ. We offer our love sacrificially, trusting that grace is indeed sufficient (2 Cor. 12.9), knowing that mercy is required (Deut. 15.7-9; Luke 6.36; James 2.13; Jude 1.21-23)

Being one who is merciful is to desire to meet and walk with those who are suffering where they are at, so that we might worship God through not only our obedience, but also, if He wills, through their coming to the knowledge of His grace.

"In every act of mercy, someone pays the price." Martyn Lloyd-Jones

