

Men of Mercy

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Thanksgiving Eve Service: did you get a card? inviting you to *take photos of needs in the valley* using our hashtag so we can collect them for use at the service. We also need people to bring pie that night.
- B. Slide3 CMCS Missions: Christian Audio, supporting CMCS missions.
- C. Slide4a,b Sanctus Real Video: Sun 11/22 6:30pm
- D. Slide5 CMCS Warriors: won 1st round of play-offs. Next game Fri in Irvine. *Crean Luthern HS*
- E. Slide6 Children at Risk 3pm Agape room
- F. Pray: France. *What we know not/teach us. What we are not/make us. What we have not/give us...for Your names sake.*

II. Slide7 Intro: Men of Mercy

- A. Slide8 A South American minnow-like fish is called *four eyes* because it knows how to make the best of two worlds. The Creator designed its large bulging eyes with an air lens on the upper half and a water lens on the lower half. As it cruises along the surface of the water, it is able to look at the **world above** and the **world below**. [believers in Christ must be like this little fish]
 1. As we go through life, we need to look **above** to **heaven** and **also below** to the world around us.
 - a) The **heavenward** look enables us to focus on what God says is **true and right**, and The **earthward** look helps us see *opportunities* to demonstrate *Christlike compassion* to people who are entangled in sin. *Mercy*
- B. Slide9 The reference here is to Ps.18:25 *With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful*
- C. Not that our mercifulness comes absolutely first. *On the contrary*, our Lord Himself expressly teaches us that God's method is *to awaken in us compassion towards our fellow men by His own exercise of it*. So, God rewards those who *imitate* His goodness and mercy.
 1. Slide10 Spurgeon said, *Followers of Jesus Must be men of Mercy; for they have found Mercy, & Mercy has found them.*
 2. These famous lines from *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare are true in every way. *Mercy always comes down. It starts with God and moves to man, it begins in heaven and ends on earth. You don't bargain for*

mercy because to make a bargain you've got to have something to offer, and we have nothing to offer God.

(1) A ragamuffin knows *he's only a beggar at the door of God's mercy.*

III. Slide11 MERCY DEFINED

- A. This is similar to, *Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.*
- B. **Mercy is** connected with those who may be *easily ignored...the crippled, the sick, the deformed, or the aged.*
- C. **Merciful** embraces the characteristics of *being generous, forgiving others, having compassion for the suffering, and providing healing of every kind.*
- D. The blessing lies not only in **doing a merciful act**, but in **being merciful in disposition.**¹
 - 1. It's better to give others a piece of your **heart** than a piece of your **mind**.
- E. **Slide12 Justice** is getting what you deserve. **Mercy** is not getting what you deserve. **Grace** is getting what you don't deserve.
 - 1. Mercy & Grace are actually forms of **nonjustice**, but they are not acts of **injustice**.
 - 2. **Mercy** is always **Voluntary** [If its is **obligated**, then its **justice**, not **mercy**]
- F. **Mercy** is *the outward manifestation of Pity.*

IV. Slide13 MERCY LIVED OUT

- A. **Mercy is** one of the *special bridges* God has built so that He can relate to you & me. **And Mercy is** a bridge **you & I** must build if we are going to *relate lovingly* to others.
 - 1. **Slide14 Mercy was 1st shown to Lot, his wife & daughters**, as the angels led them by hand out of the city before destruction.
 - a) Gen.19:16 **And while he lingered** (Sodom & Gomorrah), **the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city.**
 - 2. **Abraham to Lot** - He could have let Lot get his just do & left him in Sodom, when the kings attacked.

¹ Spurgeon Quote

3. Slide15 Joseph to his bro's - He had them under his mighty power down in Egypt
4. Slide16 David to Saul - Twice had the power to kill Saul, **but** showed his real power by showing Mercy.
 - a) What about YOU? Ok, *your right & they're wrong*. What are you going to do? Show your power to retaliate **or** show your power to show mercy?
 - b) Saul reigned in *malice & hatred*, David reigned in *love & mercy*. Matter of fact, when Saul was killed, *David sang a song of Lamentation* w/no mention of Saul's hatred. 2 Sam.1:17-27. *Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights. How the mighty have fallen.*
5. Slide17 Jesus to the Woman caught in Adultery (Jn.8)
 - a) 1st taught how not to deal w/it. *Find the sinner, expose the sinner, & use the sinner to accomplish your own selfish acts.*
 - b) Jesus in one fell swoop annihilated this egotistical approach in vs.7 *He who is w/o sin among you, let him throw a stone at her 1st.*
 - c) How did He deal with it? (vs.11) He didn't deny the fact she sinned. (He knew she was a sinner, she knew she was also) **But** mercy & truth met together that morning, & the result was *a forgiven sinner*.
 - (1) Ps.85:10 **Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.**
 - d) Think of what that **cost** Jesus to say those words in vs.11, *neither do I condemn you; go & sin no more. Think of the suffering He would endure on the cross to make that cleansing possible.*
 - (1) *There can be no mercy w/o suffering, no pardon w/o pain.*

V. Slide18,19 MERCY'S CHAIN

- A. **Pain** - The Mercy chain starts when someone *hurts us unjustly* (whether phys. or emotionally). **We must respond** to this hurt.
- B. **Power** - If you have **no power**, **then** you can only *give in*; **but** if you have the *power to retaliate* then you must decide what to do. [**so**, you cannot show **mercy**, unless you have the power to hurt]

- C. **Truth** - Suppose the person **deserves** it. You feel you must teach them a lesson. You have the power to hurt them back...but should you use it?
- D. **Love** - Now, Love enters the picture, **not** to cancel truth, **but** to control it.
- E. **Faith** - Because of God's love, we **don't** give to the offender what he deserves.
1. *This demands Faith; we must leave the offender & his offense in the hands of God.*
- F. **Growth** - What's the result of this painful experience? Growth. [we share in the *fellowship of His sufferings* & become more like Him]
1. **Lesson:** Use your power for *growth* **not** retaliation. *When you show mercy you are practicing one of God's attributes.*

VI. Slide20,21 IF NO MERCY, THEN WHAT?

- A. Tell the story of *the unforgiving servant* in Mt.18:21-35
- B. He **didn't** show mercy so he found himself in prison, because he wouldn't forgive a friend
1. This might be *the most miserable prison* we will find ourselves in, the prison of *unforgiveness*...the prison of *no mercy*.
 2. Where our **thoughts** become shackled, our **emotions** are chained, & our **will** is almost paralyzed.
 3. When we **do** show mercy all the bonds are broken. We enter into a *joyful liberty* which is one way to **receive mercy** as we **show mercy**.

VII. Slide22 MERCIES PROMISE

- A. Be sure you'll always be opportunities to show Mercy. *We never grow out of this privilege. Put on Jesus' merciful eyes.*
1. Mercy in the abstract means nothing. *It must be incarnate in human flesh.*
 2. The world cannot **see mercy** apart from the people who experience & share it...*We are those people!!!!*
- B. *Slide23 Micah 7:18,19 Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.*

VIII. Slide24 SHOULD WE ALWAYS SHOW MERCY?

- A. God's will is that sometimes we repay people with **what they deserve**, whether **punishment** or **reward** (i.e. justice). **And** God's will is that sometimes we repay people with **better than what they deserve** (mercy).
1. In upholding the claims of **justice**, we bear witness to the truth that God is a **God of justice**. **And** in showing **mercy** we bear witness to the truth that **God is a God of mercy**.
 - a) A **biblical parent** will usually follow the wisdom that *sparing the rod spoils the child* (Prov.13:24; Eph.6:4). **But** there will be times when a child's fault will be forgiven w/o punishment to teach the meaning of mercy & woo the child to Christ.
 - b) A **biblical judge** will usually be scrupulously just by impartially sentencing criminals according to the grievousness of their crimes (Rom.13:4). **But** there will be times when he will dispense clemency for some greater good.

IX. Slide25 HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN TO SHOW ONE OR THE OTHER?

- A. I would answer, *by getting as close to Jesus as you possibly can*.
1. I know of no hard and fast rules in Scripture to dictate for every situation, and I don't think this is an accident.
 - a) The aim of Scripture is to produce *a certain kind of person*, **not** provide and *exhaustive list of rules* for every situation.
 2. **Slide26a** The beatitude says, **Blessed are the merciful, not, Blessed are those who know exactly when and how to show mercy in all circumstances**.
 - a) **Slide26b** We must be *merciful people* even when we act with severity in the service of justice.
- B. **So should a merciful person always show mercy?** is a qualified **no**.
1. No, you will often support the claims of justice and recompense a person the way he deserves, in order to bear witness to the truth of God's justice and to accomplish a greater good for greater numbers of people.
 2. **But** it is a qualified **no** because **if** you are *a merciful person*, **then** even the way you **spank a child** or **prosecute a criminal** or **dismiss an employee** will be different. **The mercy will show**. **The parent** may cry. **The attorney** may visit the

criminal and his family. The **employer** may pay for remedial training.

Slide26c The heart of mercy will show.

- C. Maybe the Christian community can show **mercy** on Starbuck's w/their *Red Cups*?
Remembering, It is not Starbuck's job to share the love of Jesus. It's our job. Ed Stezer