



Saint James AME Church
588 Dr. M.L. King, Jr. Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102
www.experiencesaintjames.com
Rev. Ronald L. Slaughter, Senior Pastor

Women's Bible Study

Rev. Janelle Y. Greene, Minister to Women
First Lady Kyla Slaughter, Women's Ministry Advisor
Tuesdays at 6:30 PM

June 13, 2017
Rev. Janelle Y. Greene, Facilitator

Subject: Showing Mercy

Scripture: Matthew 5:7 and Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 5:7 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Matthew 5:7 The Amplified Bible (AMP)

⁷ "Blessed [content, sheltered by God's promises] are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Matthew 5:7 The Message (MSG)

⁷ "You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

Matthew 18:21-35 NIV

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

²² Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."^[a]

²³ "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold^[b] was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' ²⁷ The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.^[c] He grabbed him and

began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹ “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

³⁰ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your

fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Footnotes:

- a. [Matthew 18:11](#) Some manuscripts include here the words of Luke 19:10.
- b. [Matthew 18:15](#) The Greek word for *brother or sister (adelphos)* refers here to a fellow disciple, whether man or woman; also in verses 21 and 35.
- c. [Matthew 18:15](#) Some manuscripts *sins against you*
- d. [Matthew 18:16](#) Deut. 19:15
- e. [Matthew 18:18](#) *Or will have been*
- f. [Matthew 18:18](#) *Or will have been*
- g. [Matthew 18:22](#) *Or seventy times seven*
- h. [Matthew 18:24](#) Greek *ten thousand talents*; a talent was worth about 20 years of a day laborer’s wages.
- i. [Matthew 18:28](#) Greek *a hundred denarii*; a denarius was the usual daily wage of a day laborer (see 20:2).

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

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[Amplified Bible \(AMP\)](#)

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[The Message \(MSG\)](#)

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Background:

In Matthew chapter 5 we see Jesus interacting with his disciples; Jesus illustrates to us how God’s kingdom should be equipped through the beatitudes and how our spiritual character may be shaped. These passages are called The Beatitudes; which means blessed.

We learned in the previous lessons that there is a divine response of blessing; which represents the reaction from God. We are reminded that The Beatitudes are a framework in which we can look at how God thinks of these people whom Jesus is talking about to his disciples. Greek philosophers described the word “blessed” to mean “happy”; they also associated it with wealth or good fortune considering God’s provisions which extend His grace. (Strong’s Concordance 3107 *makarios*: blessed, happy). Blessed also means fortunate, happier (NASB Translation). It is reasonable to think about how we view our happiness. However, we should ask the question “What makes us blessed from God’s point of view? When we consider the Spirit of God whom we invited to dwell in us, how does that impact our heart, will, behavior and how we approach God?” Our loving God

positions each verse with a reward. Here is the fifth Beatitude; were we are learning about being merciful and being the recipient of mercy.

Mercy is extending compassion, forgiveness, grace for people who need; and sometimes those whom need it the most. Showing mercy unto people may occur to those whom may be guilty; at fault; it may even presuppose guilt. However, we do not see Jesus categorizing who “deserves” mercy. He does not allude to what actions would warrant mercy: if they are victims, had misfortunes, out casted, marginalized, the oppressed, if they carried out injustices – intentionally or unintentionally. The text suggests that God is merciful to all people; and so, we should respond in kind.

Scholars have suggested that” this Beatitude states a self-acting law of the moral world. The exercise of mercy (**ἔλεος, active pity**) tends to elicit mercy from others—God and [people]. The chief reference may be to the mercy of God in the final awards of the kingdom, but the application need not be restricted to this. The doctrine of Christ abounds in great ethical principles of universal validity: “[s]he that humble[s] [herself/] himself shall be exalted,” “to him that hath shall be given,” etc. This Beatitude suitably follows the preceding. *Mercy is an element in true righteousness* ([Micah 6:8](#)). It was lacking in Pharisaic righteousness ([Matthew 23:23](#)). It needed much to be inculcated in Christ’s time, when sympathy was killed by the theory that all suffering was penalty of special sin, a theory which fostered a pitiless type of righteousness...” (Expositors Greek Testament).

Questions for Group Discussion and Individual Reflection:

1. What is the intended result of this Beatitude? Do you see a cause and effect?
2. How do you define mercy and merciful?
3. Jesus promises that those who are merciful will obtain or be shown mercy. So, what risks have you taken to show mercy to others?
4. Have you ever received mercy? What risks do you think others have taken in showing mercy to you?
5. Jesus promises that those who are merciful will obtain or be shown mercy. So, what risks have you taken to show mercy to others?
6. What risks have you taken to show mercy to someone?
7. In Matthew 18:21-35 What was Peter apparently looking for when he asked his question (v.21)?
8. What effect would Jesus’ answer have had on Peter (v.22)?

9. What was the master willing to lose (v.23-27)?
10. In what ways do you see the master portray the character of God?
11. How did the servant's behavior reveal his true attitude towards the master's forgiveness (vv. 28-34)?
12. How does the outcome of the servant's actions confirm the truth of Jesus' beatitude (vv.32-35)?

While You are at Home:

1. What difference has mercy of other people made in your life?
2. *When* are you especially grateful for the mercy of God?
3. Self-Examine with the help of the Holy Spirit. What areas in your spiritual character needs to be more merciful? Who can you show mercy to this week?

As you reflect on the study this week, consider the mercy of God and the mercy of other people as your example. While you pray, ask God to show you areas in which you can (further) develop and reflect the mercy that has been shown to you. Practicing thanksgiving, abiding peace, love, gratitude, faithfulness and removing resentment can help you towards working on practicing mercy daily. Keeping this attitude in mind is helpful especially in realizing that others' may also attempt to convey mercy towards you.