

Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

A Discipleship Journey



Beatitudes

Week 33

Blessed are the merciful;
they shall have mercy shown them

This weekly material is offered to support our Discipleship Journey as we walk in the foot prints of Jesus.

We encourage you to use this material as a part of your daily prayer practice as follows:

- ❖ Begin with the Opening Prayer.
- ❖ Study Blessed are the merciful.
- ❖ Reflect on Scripture (*Psalms 136*).
- ❖ Close with the Closing Prayer.

Let us pray for each other that we are transformed, as individuals and as community, by this Discipleship Journey.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are good, for You are a faithful God. By offering us the sacrifice of Your Body and Blood, You lovingly give us Your grace and invite us into deep relationship. Forgive us for the times that we've failed to recognize that You desire to be truly present with us and in us through the Eucharist. In Your Scripture you tell us of the first Eucharist, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15) Thank You for giving Yourself to us in the Eucharist so freely and so completely. Help us to know that You eagerly await us at every Mass. Lord, inspire us to grow in intimate union with You by receiving You in the Eucharist often. Jesus we trust in You. We make this prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

AMEN

Reflection:

Mercy is one of those things that you don't know until you've really needed and experienced it. *Misericordia*, the Latin word for mercy, is the combination of two words: *miseriae* meaning misery and *cor* meaning heart. In other words, mercy is God's loving response to human suffering.

Mercy and forgiveness go hand-in-hand; both reflect God's love for us and our love for others. Mercy and forgiveness is God's *hesed*, the consistent, ever-faithful, relentless, constantly-pursuing, lavish, extravagant, unrestrained, furious love of our God. We cannot buy and sell this love by worthiness, by achievement, by obeying the commandments. By definition, mercy and forgiveness are unearned, undeserved, not owned. The experience of mercy or forgiveness is the experience of a magnanimous God Who loves out of total gratuitousness.

This experience of receiving forgiveness and mercy allows us to become merciful. That's the Beatitude; we become forgiveness because we have been forgiven; our mercy is the outpouring to others of God's gift of mercy that we have experienced. Eventually, mercy and forgiveness are the only things that make sense, the only things alive in us. Mercy becomes who we are and what we are about.

So mercy has these two aspects: Forgiving and giving:

Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. The measure you give will be the measure you get back.

Luke 6:36 – 38

What does being merciful look like? It is being concerned about people in their need. Our compassionate heart leads us to acts of mercy intended to relieve the suffering and misery of another. Like the golden rule, *do unto others as you would have them do unto you* (Matt. 7:12), being merciful involves giving, helping, and serving others and as we live that way we generate a small measure of God's love.

All of us have been looked upon with divine compassion. Mercy draws our suffering into God's infinitely loving heart and transforms it, reorders it, redeems it. Seeing and acting with mercy: That is discipleship!

Psalm 136

Taken from *The Message Bible*

Thank God! He deserves your thanks.

His love never quits.

Thank the God of all gods,

His love never quits.

Thank the Lord of all lords.

His love never quits.

Thank the miracle-working God,

His love never quits.

The God Whose skill formed the cosmos,

His love never quits.

The God Who laid out earth on ocean
foundations,

His love never quits.

The God Who filled the skies with light,

His love never quits.

The sun to watch over the day,

His love never quits.

Moon and stars as guardians of the night,

His love never quits.

The God Who struck down the Egyptian
firstborn,

His love never quits.

And rescued Israel from Egypt's
oppression,

His love never quits.

Took Israel in hand with His powerful
hand,

His love never quits.

Split the Red Sea right in half,

His love never quits.

Dumped Pharaoh and his army in the sea,

His love never quits.

The God Who marched His people
through the desert,

His love never quits.

Led Israel right through the middle,

His love never quits.

Smashed huge kingdoms right and left,

His love never quits.

Struck down the famous kings,

His love never quits.

Struck Sihon the Amorite king,

His love never quits.

Struck Og the Bashanite king,

His love never quits.

Then distributed their land as booty,

His love never quits.

Handed the land over to Israel,

His love never quits.

God remembered us when we were down,

His love never quits.

Rescued us from the trampling boot,

His love never quits.

Takes care of everyone in time of need,

His love never quits.

Thank God, Who did it all!

His love never quits.

Closing Prayer

Lord, I am not worthy
that You should enter under my roof,
but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Matthew 8:8