

Series: Romans
Title: Glorify God for his Mercy
Text: Rom 15: 7-12
Date: February 27, 2020
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Do you profess to be a believer? Then I have a message for you.

Believer, has God received you? How so? If God receives you and I who are sinners then he did it in mercy. Mercy is God withholding from us what we deserve. Grace is God giving us, not only what we do not deserve, but what we have demerited. In our text, “mercy” means both grace and mercy. It includes forbearance, longsuffering, and forgiveness.

I’m so great a sinner that if God my Father and his Son my Lord Jesus Christ have received me then *it is by his mercy and grace*. That being the case, should not I receive my offending brother the same way?

Romans 15: 7: Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

Romans 14: 1: Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations...3...for God hath received him.

Romans 15: 7: Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

God gives this admonition to every believer. Do you profess to be a believer? Paul is writing to Jewish believers as well as Gentile believers. Both are saved by God’s mercy. Concerning God’s elect among the Jews:

Romans 15: 8: Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision [the Jews] for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers

Concerning God’s elect among the Gentiles:

Romans 15: 9: And that the Gentiles might GLORIFY GOD FOR HIS MERCY; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. 10: And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. 11: And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. 12: And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

Subject: Glorify God for his Mercy

Proposition: Believer, knowing that Christ received us in mercy to glorify God, God commands us to receive one another in mercy that we might glorify God.

We will see the glory of God’s mercy in the face of: 1) our sin 2) our Redeemer 3) our brethren

MERCY IN THE FACE OF OUR SIN

You who have received mercy, you who need God’s mercy, do we know how exceedingly sinful we are? It is only then that we will see the exceeding riches of his mercy and grace.

In Adam we sinned against God. I know you know that doctrine. But do we know it about ourselves personally? It was God himself that you yourself trespassed against in the garden. Not only in Adam but there is not one commandment we ourselves have not broken every moment of every day. How can I put this so as to encompass the totality of our sin? In *everything* we have ever done the *only thing* we have ever done is sin against God.

Our fleshly nature was conceived in sin so that we ARE SIN itself; we ARE enmity itself—“*Carnal mind IS enmity against God*”; we ARE abomination to God—“*For the froward IS abomination to the LORD: ...*” (Pr 3:32)

What is abomination? It is a stinking wound, oozing putrid puss so nauseating that it would turn a sailor’s stomach. Is that too offensive? Sinner, you and I are far more offensive to God than that. Do we know what we ARE before God in our sin-nature?

Isaiah 1: 6: From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

That is what our sinful flesh is. From that cesspool the only thing we belch out is sin after sin after sin. In our flesh we can do nothing to please God. Sinner, do you believe that about yourself? Do we really believe we are saved by mercy?

We have offended God so much that God owes me and you nothing, except eternal condemnation under the justice and wrath of God. Think of someone who has offended and hurt you deeply! If someone had murdered your only child or your entire family, they have not offended you like you and I offend God by our sin. Someone may offend us at certain occasions. But we offend God every moment of every day. For one sinner to offend another sinner may truly be offensive—but for a sinner

to offend *holy God!* No offense toward you from another sinner compares to your offenses toward God. Yet, God has mercy on you, believer, for Christ's sake!

God shows mercy to whom he will show mercy. We know that scripture and doctrine. But do we know it about ourselves? Can I say (can you say) God chose me purely by mercy simply because he would? Can we say I am such a sinner that God saved me by mercy because it is the only way God could save me?

Believer, when you hear those blessed words, "*Christ hath received you—God hath received you*"—do you see the glory of God's mercy in the face of your sin? "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Oh, I need mercy from God. There is not a moment that goes by that I do not need God's mercy because every moment of everyday I am sin and all I do is sin. Is this so of you? Do you need mercy from God? If God has shown us mercy then we will be merciful to other sinners like ourselves!

MERCY IN THE FACE OF OUR REDEEMER

Brethren, God owed us nothing but judgment. God owed us nothing but condemnation. He owed us nothing but an eternity in hell.

Yet, Mercy sent his only begotten Son to bear the condemnation and hell we earned. God has withheld from his people what we deserve because Christ willing became the offense we were to God and God withheld none of his fury from his Son our Substitute. He was made a curse and God poured out what we deserved on him. Christ bore eternal condemnation that every elect child of God deserved. Do we realize that it was the great mercy of God toward us for him to do so? Do we?

We hated and were hatred toward Christ. We were nothing but a constant offense to him. Yet our Lord Jesus lowered himself to the lowest low, bore the most shameful shame. He bore the shame of my sin and my curse and my death. That was mercy! Do we see that everything Christ did, and does, for us is mercy? Do we?

Now, God can say to his people, "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out" (Is 51:17). But when did we drink the dregs of the cup of trembling and wring them out? When Christ drank damnation dry on our behalf!

Then God showered us in mercy when he called us by his gospel! We were like these Gentile believers in our text.

Ephesians 2: 1:...who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others...12: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Christ said I did not come but for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. So how did I, a Gentile, a stranger, a dog become partaker of God's covenant promise?

Ephesians 2: 4: BUT GOD, WHO IS RICH IN MERCY, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (BY GRACE ye are saved;) 6: And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: 7: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding RICHES OF HIS GRACE in *his* kindness toward us THROUGH CHRIST JESUS.

God gave us spiritual life, faith, all things that pertain to life and godliness. How could he give such gifts to sinners who deserved nothing? By Christ meriting it for his people God is just to show mercy. By Christ fulfilling all righteousness for his people God is just to impute righteousness to the believer. By Christ, God has given us every good and perfect gift which all came of his rich, rich mercy! Oh, child of God, do you see the glory of God's mercy in the face of our Redeemer! God hath received us for the sake of Christ his Son! Oh, what mercy!

MERCY IN THE FACE OF OUR BRETHERN

Do you offend your brethren? Do you need mercy from your brethren? I need mercy from you, my brethren. I need mercy for my sins which offend you my brethren. Of course, I need mercy for the sins that we all know are sins. But I tell you when I need mercy most is when that old Pharisee within rears his judgmental head against a brother and refuses him mercy.

Paul was addressing believers who had been received by God by his mercy. Yet, they were standing in judgment of their brethren because they were offended by their weaker brethren's outward acts. They were despising, doubting and ready to reject them because of what their weaker brethren had done. This self-righteous judgment was worse than their brothers outward acts. But these stronger brethren looked only at the outward acts of their weaker brethren and judged unrighteous judgment.

Yet those weaker brethren were brethren also received by God in mercy, "*God hath received him.*" Do you see the injustice? God had received these brethren because they were perfect in Christ. But their brethren would not receive them because a

few outward acts offended them. They claimed to reject their brethren for the glory of God! Those are contradictory things. Reject brethren for the glory of God?

Brethren, if God does not subdue our Pharisaical old sin-nature that is what we will do. But that is what Paul is teaching us not to do in these two chapters. I have experienced that old Pharisee in me on more occasions than I care to count. He speaks in the conscience, saying, “I’m just not to show mercy! I am just because that brother greatly offended me!” But, brethren, we greatly offended God! My inner Pharisee says, “They hurt me and they are wrong! But we crucified Christ! And God our Father and Christ Jesus his Son received us in mercy. Oh, God help me to glorify God by giving mercy to my offending brethren.

Imagine my awful state if God hath received my brother yet I won’t receive him. God, for Christ’s sake, hath shown him mercy. Yet I won’t show him mercy for Christ’s sake. Shall I, a sinner, refuse to receive a brother in mercy who the righteous and holy God has received in mercy? Not one of us would stand up before our brethren and say that we do not really thank God for his mercy. But that is what we say if we will not receive a brother in mercy after Christ has received us in mercy. Brethren, self-righteousness is THE sin that kept us from Christ and would still separate if not for the mercy of God. So having that Pharisee in me, I need mercy from my brethren. Do you?

Still, when you behold a brother overcome in self-righteousness refusing to show mercy to another brother there is something we must remember. If I behold a brother judging and condemning another brother who Christ has received in mercy, remember this about that brother: that is not their new man created of God in righteousness and true holiness; the new man cannot sin because he is born of God’s incorruptible seed and Christ abides in him. That is their old man of sin. So do not be harsh with the self-righteous brother. “Consider thyself lest thou also be tempted.” Self-righteousness begets self-righteousness. Do not be overtaken in the same fault by self-righteously judging the brother who is overcome by his self-righteous old man of sin.

When a brother refuses mercy he needs mercy most of all!

Brethren, do you see the irony in self-righteousness? Self-righteousness says, “You are too great a sinner for me to show *you* mercy.” Yet, God continues to say, “You are not to great a sinner for me to show *you* mercy.” In fact, the greater the sinner the greater the mercy. Oh, thank God that he delighteth in mercy!

Self-righteousness begets self-righteousness. Imagine if Paul listened to those believers who doubted their weaker brother? Think what would have happened if Paul looked at the faults of those weak brethren and said to the stronger brethren, “You are right, these weaker brethren are legalists. They may not even be believers.” Paul would have judged one who God had received in Christ. He would have exalted and established the self-righteous brother in his pride. Worst of all, he would have divided the whole church. But that is what Paul was trying to prevent by admonishing them all to receive one another as Christ received us.

James 2: 12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Paul said that instead of showing a brother judgment and condemnation, “*Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us [you] to the glory of God.*” Do you see how Paul is being merciful by showing them Christ? He is not condemning or exalting one over another. Paul is showing mercy by pointing them all to Christ and encouraging them all to receive one another as Christ received them.

Brethren be merciful and receive offending brethren as Christ does us, especially that brother overtaken in self-righteousness. It is so hard to do because it runs so contrary to our sinful flesh. Truth is, we cannot show mercy unless God shows us mercy and gives us the grace to do it. So restore the weak brother in mercy. “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” (Ga 6:1-3) When you “consider thyself” remember not only that you are you a great sinner, but also remember how God received you by mercy. Receive and restore that brother as Christ does us through his gospel.

“But preacher that weak brother is wrong; that weak brother has judged me, condemned me and they don’t deserve me showing them mercy!” THAT’S WHAT MERCY IS! Did you and I deserve mercy from God? No! Yet, he had mercy on us. That is how we are to receive one another—as *Christ received us*. When an offending brother in no way deserves to be received then that brother qualifies for mercy!

This is true. When God gives us grace to receive a brother in mercy, God will make our bond with each other stronger than ever before. When you saw your sin then God showered you with mercy, did it not soften your heart and make you want to please God? Let us be merciful so that God uses us to make peace. When we are overcome by our flesh we often poke out our chest and think, “I really put him in his place!” But God says, “If you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, delish. For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.” Such a spirit is not of God but of the devil. It will only create strife and confusion and every evil work. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, FULL OF MERCY and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” And through that mercy God will bless it to create peace between you and your brother because “the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (Jas 3:16-18). Do you want to create more division and evil? That is all that will come from a haughty, self-righteous, condemning devilish spirit. Or do you want to be used of God to make peace? Then show mercy!

The devil feeds self-righteousness. He will whisper in your ear, "You have put up with too much from that brother; you've forgiven too many times." But what is the love of Christ that constrains us? It is Christ's unceasing mercy no matter what we have done to him. Believer, have you ever done something so offensive to God that he stopped showing you mercy for Christ's sake? Never! Have you ever come to God begging mercy and he refuse you mercy for Christ's sake? Never! That is the love of Christ that constrains us! It is the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance!

When a brother shows us mercy despite our condemning spirit that is when we see the glory of God in the face of our brethren. It is God's mercy and grace that makes a brother show his offending brother mercy and grace! It brings glory to God for his mercy. Thank God he delights to show mercy! God's mercy makes his people delight to show mercy.

Only a few times in our lives does God give us really, really hard trials. Among the most difficult is an offending brother that disappoints us. We know they are guilty. They have even confessed to you they are guilty. They ask for mercy. But they have offended us so badly and hurt us so much! Despite all of that, if we want to manifest that we believe what God has taught us in the gospel then receive that one who does not deserve it. Restore him to Christ. Doing so you will glorify God because that is how Christ received us to the glory of God. God help us to do so!

Amen!