

Date: September 10, 2017

Sermon Title: Mercy Changes Everything

Speaker: Richard Smith

Scripture text(s): Matthew 5:7

- 1) Richard defined mercy as the compassionate, sacrificial, Christ-affirming actions that brings hope to an oppressed world. How does this definition help you understand Christ's mission for you?
 - 2) Relate the sacrifice of the pastor in the story Richard told (the pastor who protected the man against the gang) and the sacrifice of Christ for us to your own life. In what ways do you sacrifice in order to show mercy to someone in need of Christ?
 - 3) Richard related Matthew 5: 3 (spiritual poverty) to Matthew 5:7(showing mercy) by saying that "Only when you see yourself as a beggar can you then be merciful to other beggars." Discuss how spiritual poverty enables you to be merciful. Discuss also how not having spiritual poverty leads to an unmerciful lifestyle.
 - 4) Richard spoke of two things that can prevent us from being merciful: (1) religious formality and (2) religious performance. Religious formality is seen in Matthew 9: 10-13. Discuss how this lifestyle lends itself to an unmerciful heart attitude. Religious performance is seen in Matthew 23:23-24. Discuss this scripture. In what subtle ways does this creep into your life? What are some steps you can take in order to prevent this in your own life?
 - 5) Are you hungry for people to receive mercy? If not, what steps can you take to be merciful?
 - 6) Who is your neighbor? Who can you show mercy to this week? Will you be open to Christ using you as a willing vessel in order for someone to experience the mercy of God?
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Group Prayer Time:

Have 1 – 2 people in your group pray through each part of the A.C.T.S. prayer acronym.

1. **Adoration** – How is God's character reflected in this week's passage? Let that revelation lead you to worship and adore God.

2. **Confess** – The Word of God exposes and uncovers sin. Respond to that conviction by agreeing with what God has said about your sin.
3. **Thanksgiving** – Where do you see God working? Thank God for his faithfulness in your life and the lives of others.
4. **Supplication** – God’s Word helps us understand his purposes and plans. Ask God to give you the desires of his heart as you pray for your needs and the needs of others.

Pray for Missions:

This week in your group prayer time, have someone pray for this missions effort. Different missions will be highlighted every week.

- **International Missions** – Pray for Joseph Paul and the team at Elshadai Children’s Home in Chennai, India. <http://www.elshadaichennai.org/history.html> Prayer points...
 1. Pray for our good health.
 2. Pray for our children and for their studies.
 3. Pray for more child sponsors.
 4. Pray for the Church in Campus and the branch churches in the villages.
 5. Pray for the pastor’s family, whom we support.
 6. Pray for protection in the campus and also during evangelism in the village.
 7. Pray for the new-comers who attend our church and the ones who are committed but not yet baptized.

- 8. Pray for our Aged Home and that God raise more people to assist.
- 9. Pray for the building loan to be settled.
- 10. Pray for my future and for all my problems to be settled soon.