

GOD'S MERCY

The order of the Greek text of Titus 3:5 is different than the English text. "Not by the works in righteousness which we did, but according to the mercy of Him, He saved us, by washing of regeneration and renewing of Holy Spirit."

Titus 3:5 teaches that God saved us by the divine norm and standard of His mercy and not by our norm and standard of merit (Rom.9: 16).

The Hebrew word for mercy is chesed while the Greek word is eleos.

God's mercy meets man's distressed needs without consideration of his merits or demerits. "No one has a right to mercy. When we understand this fact and its implications, we gain a deeper appreciation of God's goodness." (Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, pg.439)

This lesson will study SEVEN aspects of the doctrine of God's Mercy.

1. God's mercy is His provision for the distressed conditions of man while grace is God's provision for its relief (Luke 10:29-37) the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The parable of the Good Samaritan teaches us that God's mercy is the act of unconditional and impartial love (compassion).

Lot understood this doctrinal principle about God's mercy after the fall of Sodom – "But Lot said to them (angels), 'Oh no, my lords! Now behold, your servant has found favor (grace) in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness (mercy), which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest the disaster overtake me and I die.'" (Gen.19:18-19)

The spiritual mature believers associated with barren Elizabeth understood this doctrinal principle about God's mercy (Luke 1:6-7, 57-58).

2. Jesus exemplified God's mercy working through unconditional and impartial love during His ministry (Matt.20:29-34).

This is the story of the healing of the two blind men of Jericho – "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David! And the multitude sternly told them to be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, 'Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!'"

"What do you want Me to do for you? Lord. We want our eyes to be opened." **And moved with compassion,** Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him."

Compassion is the result of understanding and applying this doctrinal principle of God's mercy (Col.3:12-14; Matt.9:11-13; 12:7).

Followers of Jesus Christ are commanded to be merciful to others (Luke 6:36-38/ be merciful/ p.m.impv 2pl/ note the 2 negatives leading to failure of mercy 37a/ note 2 positives leading to applying mercy 37b-38; Matt.5: 7).

3. God's mercy was visualized under the Old Covenant by the shadow Christology of the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant (Ex.25: 10-22).

The mercy seat was the place of propitiation to make atonement for the sins of the people. Sacrificial blood was sprinkled on it on the Day of Atonement (25:17; Lev.16:1-3, 11-17)

“Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption in which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation in His blood through faith**. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.” (Rom.3:24-25)

“The sins of God’s people, punished symbolically in the animal sacrifices of the OT period, would be totally punished in the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross.” (NIV, Rom.3:25b-26)

“Saving faith looks to Jesus Christ in his sacrificial death for us.” (NIV, Rom.3:25b)

4. God’s mercy was visualized under the New Covenant by the propitious death of Jesus Christ on the cross – historical Christology (Heb.8-10; Titus 3:5).

The distressed spiritual state of unregenerate man is due to Adam’s original sin (AOS/ 13 judicial charges).

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Pet.1:3-5)

To reject grace salvation in the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to be deprived of God’s mercy (parable of Rich man and Lazarus/ Luke 16:22-31; 1 Pet.2:10).

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.” (Eph.2:4-5) (1 Tim.1:15-16)

5. The spiritual advancing believer is promised God’s mercy and grace in times of distress (James 3:17).

“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace in our time of need.” (Heb.4: 16)

Sickness – Phil.2: 26-27

Suffering – James 5:11

Offenses – Matt.18:21-22, 33

Desertion – 2 Tim.1:15-18

6. Legalism, bias, prejudice, partially will result in conditional and selective application of God’s mercy (Luke 10:29-37/ parable of Good Samaritan; Rom.9: 16).

In the Good Samaritan, the question was not who is a neighbor what who acted as a neighbor (10:37).

Jesus considered justice, mercy, and faithfulness as the more important matters of the Law (Matt.23: 23).

7. Mercy is a spiritual gift in the church – “He who shows mercy with cheerfulness (hilarotes) (Rom.12: 8).

It is the supernatural ability to minister to the distressed and afflicted members of the church. Hilarotes comes from root of hileos (propitious) (2 Cor.4: 1).