

Mercy, Part 2 | Salvation

I. We Gentiles deserve to be rejected by the God of Israel, but God's mercy is also for the Gentiles.

- Romans 9:23-26
- God is the same God He's always been, and even the Old Testament reveals how Gentiles could become part of the Children of Israel, but before Christ came, most Gentiles did not have access to the knowledge of God. However, in the New Testament God chose to redeem Gentiles en masse.
- Since we've learned about the patient, loving, gracious, merciful nature of God — it's easy to think, "How could He not save us?" But that is all backward! We must never take our salvation for granted because we not only don't deserve it, because of our sin and rebellion, we deserve the exact opposite.

II. We deserve God's animosity, but God's mercy grows from His love.

- Psalm 103:10-18; Titus 3:4-7
- Because we weren't Children of Israel, because we were born sinners, we rightly deserved God's hatred, but He didn't pour His wrath on us, instead He washes us with His love.
- For thousands of years, each and every pagan who ever worshipped themselves by worshipping a made-up deity lived in constant fear that their lower-case-god might not be happy with them. Every misfortune, every lightning strike, every sickness was interpreted as their idol's bad mood. When was the last time you lived in fear that Yahweh might hate you today?

III. We deserve punishment, but God's mercy does not give us what we deserve.

- Psalm 103:10-18
- From the day you were born, God's wrath justifiably lay on your head. You were an enemy of His throne and deserving of all His punitive judgment. But God is merciful, compassionate, and loving.
- Right now, in and of yourself, you deserve punishment for your sin . . . all of them. But if you are born again through the crosswork of Jesus Christ, you never have to fear receiving that judgement.

IV. We deserve abandonment, but God's mercy is everlasting.

- Psalm 103:10-18
- When we receive God's mercy in salvation, we can be certain that mercy will never fail. He'll never capriciously take it back, turn around, and give us what our sin deserves.
- Instead of leaving us alone and abandoned and people-less, God draws us to Himself for all eternity. We need never fear banishment!

V. We deserve death, but God's mercy gives us life.

- Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:4-5
- The wages of sin is death, but saved us when we were dead in our transgressions.
- We all deserve to be in Hell. Have you any idea how quickly complaining and griping and discontentment and entitlement and petty annoyance and self-worship absolutely dissipate in light of this truth?
- God's mercy needs to absolutely rewire our selfish thinking.

VI. We deserve to experience the destitution of godlessness, but God's mercy gives us an inheritance.

- I Peter 1:3-5
- On one hand we deserve destitution. On the other, God was so gracious to give us life that we should be eternally grateful simply to not have to go to Hell. A shack on the backside of the wilderness would be infinitely better than Hell, and we should be grateful for such.
- But God is so merciful and gracious that He not only doesn't give us death in Hell, He lavishes on us an inheritance that is imperishable and undefiled. He holds nothing back!
- And yes, this is a future reality, but there's a temporal aspect to this as well. It's true all Christians aren't rich and famous and healthy, and all the others things that humans view as success. But God has promised all of His children the same joy and peace and contentment and thanksgiving and others of His communicable attributes in full! It's a foretaste of our eternal inheritance that we have unfettered access to eternal spiritual blessings right here and right now.
- You never need to fear that you have to give in to sin. You can and should be experiencing peace. God wants you to have access to everything you need for life and godliness . . . the question is whether or not you'll reach out and take the immense gift He's offering.

VII. God's mercy in salvation is conditional.

- Psalm 103:10-18; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7; I Timothy 1:15-17; Romans 9:15-16
- At first glance it may appear that since God is merciful and compassionate and loving to those who fear Him, that His mercy is conditioned on the fact that we have faith. And maybe that's why we're so entitled sometimes. "I believe in God . . . He owes me."
- The reality is that faith is not something I do. It's something that's given to me. And it's given to me as an act of merciful, loving grace. Faith is a gift of God.
- Mercy is conditioned on God's sovereign plan.
- We are pitiable creatures. We are blind, arrogant, suffocated by our own self-worth, and we do not seek after God. And yet God, for no other reason than He is Who He is and His plan is His sovereignly ordained plan from eternity past . . . He chooses to extend us the gift of faith. And when we are empowered by God to accept that faith, He shows us infinite mercy by erasing the condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and granting us grace whereby we are saved . . . not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy.