Welcome back to our Bless This Home series

We all want a blessed home, but a blessed home doesn’t just happen

In the Beatitudes Jesus describes people who are blessed; we are applying these to our home

Week1 – Blessed are homes that hunger and thirst for righteousness

Week 2 – Blessed are homes that keep their hearts pure

**MATTHEW 5:7 NIV** Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Verse 7 is arguably the easiest to memorize – most straightforward link between descriptor and blessing

Let’s do a quiz: I’ll describe the person, you tell me the blessing they will receive

1. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness 🡪 they will be satisfied
2. The pure in heart 🡪 they will see God
3. The meek 🡪 they shall inherit the earth
4. The poor in spirit 🡪 theirs is the kingdom of heaven
5. Those who mourn 🡪 they shall be comforted
6. The peacemakers 🡪 they shall be called children of God

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

**MERCY**

What is mercy? It is an important concept. It is often related to grace.

Grace – unmerited favor – getting good things you don’t deserve

Mercy – not getting bad things you do deserve

“Bad” here is important. We’re good at not giving people good things they deserve: time, attention, appreciation, benefit of the doubt, love, etc. – That’s not mercy.

Mercy – compassion or forgiveness toward someone whom it is within your power to punish or harm.

Mercy is tied to forgiveness.

**FORGIVENESS**
Forgive – 1) to stop feeling angry or resentful 2) to cancel a debt

Forgiveness is a concept that is central to our Christian faith. Who here knows forgiveness is important?

Later in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is instructing his followers how to pray.

**MATTHEW 6:12** **NIV** And forgive us our debts (sins), as we also have forgiven our debtors.

We pray for forgiveness. We are called to forgive. And those two things are related.

But **MERCY** goes farther than forgiveness. Forgiveness is a subset of mercy.

If someone steals $20 from you, you can forgive them. You can stop being angry about it, but still require that they give the $20 back. You’ve still shown mercy by forgiving them.
Or, you could let them keep the $20 but not forgive the person. You’re still angry about it, but in a way you have shown them some mercy.

Or, you could forgive them AND let them keep the $20. This is being merciful. Your reaction is full of mercy.

Again, mercy is not getting bad things (punishment, harm) that we do deserve.

**What We Deserve**

Dave Ramsey: “Better than I deserve.” That’s true for all of us. What do we deserve?

I can tell you, I have received mercy. I have not received all the punishment and harm that I deserve.

God is merciful!

**LAMENTATIONS 3:22 ESV** The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;

**LAMENTATIONS 3:23 ESV** they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Do you realize God is merciful to us every day? His mercies are renewed every morning.

God has been merciful to you today.
The wages of sin is death. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.
The fact that we’re alive is a testament to his mercy toward us.

Examples from the Bible:
Garden of Eden, Mount Sinai, Nineveh

But we often take mercy for granted. We often get upset when we get what we deserve.

We drive around above the speed limit all day for weeks. But when we get a speeding ticket, HOW UNFAIR!!!
We food that comes out of big flat boxes and little bags and we drink out of cans and 2 liter bottles,
but then when we have health problems or get a bad report from the doctor… HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?!?!

At the same time, the world is not merciful. The world wants to give us as much punishment as it can.

By our nature we are not very merciful. We applaud when someone gets what they deserve (as long as it’s not us.) When someone does something bad to us, mercy is usually the last thing on our mind. We want vengeance, but it sounds better if we call it justice.

Legalism isn’t merciful. If you do this good thing, you get this reward. But if you do this bad thing, then you deserve to get this punishment.

This broken world is not a merciful place. The world is not a forgiving place. That is why we need to make room for mercy in our homes.

**A Merciful Home** is a blessed home.

 We need homes full of mercy. We need to extend mercy to one another. We need to model mercy to one another, because you won’t often see it outside.

How do we do this? How do we have a merciful home?

Have mercy on one another. Does this mean I can’t punish my kids?
No. But don’t punish them out of spite or vindictiveness. Don’t punish them legalistically.
Punish them in a way that makes sense to help them correct their misbehavior.

We all have opportunities to “punish” each other when we feel wronged.
Children can “punish” parents through rebellion. Spouses can “punish” each other through passive aggression. We can punish each other by holding on to resentment, and carrying a grudge for what someone did.

Even if you feel they deserve it, let it go. Don’t carry grudges. Have mercy.

Extend mercy outside the home. Extend mercy to the neighbor who borrowed a tool and never returned it. Extend mercy to the guy at work who cost you the promotion. Extend mercy to the person who cut you off in traffic. Don’t bring your grudges home to “punish” these other people by rehashing their sins with your family.

Don’t just show mercy. Seek mercy. When you do something wrong, don’t just say, “I’m sorry,”
ask “Will you forgive me?” When someone does something wrong, let them know you forgive them,
and mean it.

We need to model mercy and forgiveness to our children, to our families, and to the world around us.

But why? How will we be blessed if we are merciful?

**MATTHEW 5:7 NIV** Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

So, we’re being merciful so we will receive mercy?

**Mercy for the Merciful**

This isn’t a “If everyone showed mercy to one another, the world would be a better place, and people would be merciful back to you,” kind of thing. Not that that isn’t true, but I don’t think the world is going to become a merciful place before Jesus returns.

If you are merciful and demonstrate mercy to those around you, it can tend to change the climate in your home. It can tend to move your home from being more angry and vengeful to being more merciful and peaceful. But even if you are merciful, you can still find yourself in a vengeful home or situation.
Jesus isn’t promising that if you’re merciful everyone will show you mercy.

This promise in Matthew 5:7 goes way beyond that. Merciful people are blessed because they will be shown mercy by God.

But God shows us mercy anyway. I’m sure there are some spiteful, angry, merciful people who got up this morning still holding on to grudges, but they still woke up this morning. They received mercy. So why bother being merciful?

God’s mercies are made new every morning for every person. The rain falls on the just and the unjust alike. But the ultimate mercy we receive from God is related to the mercy we show.

**JAMES 2:13 NIV** because judgement without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. **Mercy triumphs over judgement.**

Mercy triumphs over judgement.

Remember the parable of the unmerciful servant? Matthew 18 21-35

Remember the Lord’s Prayer: forgive us as we forgive…

The forgiveness we will receive is tied to the extent that we are willing to forgive others. It is important that we forgive. We are called to forgive. We are called to be merciful.

**HOSEA 6:6 NIV** For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings.

**God Desires Mercy**

Wait, what?! Why would God desire mercy? We can’t show Him mercy. He doesn’t do anything wrong, He doesn’t deserve any punishment. Why does God desire mercy?

Mercy is an aspect of God’s character, and He wants to see it at work in us. It is an “acknowledgement of God”

**LUKE 6:36 NIV** Be merciful, just as you Father is merciful.

We are called to be more like God, more like Jesus, and part of that is being merciful. In the previous verse, Luke 6:35 Jesus commands his followers to love their enemies and do good to them, and by doing so we are acting as children of the Most High, because God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

By being merciful we are showing God’s merciful heart to the world around us, and rebuking the vengeful nature of the world.

Even Jesus’ disciples got it wrong from time to time…

**LUKE 9:51 NKJV** Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,

**LUKE 9:52 NKJV** and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him.

**LUKE 9:53 NKJV** But they did not receive Him, because His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem.

**LUKE 9:54 NKJV** And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”

**LUKE 9:55 NKJV** But He turned and rebuked them, and said, “You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

**LUKE 9:56 NKJV** For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” And they went to another village.

Jesus doesn’t want to destroy and take vengeance. Jesus wants to save people and bring them to repentance.

**ROMANS 12:19 NIV** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

The right to seek vengeance doesn’t belong to us. It belongs to God. Two verses later it tells us what we are to do.

**ROMANS 12:21 NIV** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

We are called to forgive. We are commanded to be merciful.

When we are wronged, our first reaction should not be to think how we can “get them back.”
Our first reaction should be to pray for them.

We are called to be like Jesus, who while hanging on the cross prayed for those who were crucifying Him,
“Father, forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.”

God wants everyone to receive mercy.

**Mercy for the Merciful**

But then why is Matthew 5:7 so contractual: God will show us mercy **IF** we are merciful to others.

What happened to His unconditional love?

God’s mercy is unconditionally available to everyone. Not everyone receives it.

In order to fully receive God’s mercy we have to be turned toward Him.

Being merciful to others is part of the process of repentance and a sign that we have turned back to God.

We have to repent of our desire for revenge and love our enemies.

And by being merciful to others we become more aware of God’s mercy towards us.
We take it for granted less, and more fully recognize and receive it.

**A Merciful Home**

God is merciful. If we want to see His merciful nature at work in our homes, we have to be merciful. And as we do, we receive the Merciful One as part of our household. If you want a blessed home, be merciful. Seek a home that is full of mercy.