



Sunday, November 7, 2010: Blessed are the Merciful

Scripture: Psalm 86; Matthew 5:7

Speaker: Joe Boot

Sermon Notes:

1. As children of God's mercy, we're being remade, conformed to the image of Christ.
2. You must be a Christian to know what it is to be merciful- we internalize the mercy of God shown to us.
3. Oliver Cromwell was called and used by God as a faithful individual, who embraced the covenant mercies of God.
4. The beatitudes are tough because they probe us and search us out before God.
5. Mercy means lovingkindness, compassion, pity -- all are related to grace.
6. There's also a legal aspect of mercy, expressing the covenant of our God.
7. Mercy is based on our obligation to God and others; mercy is not humanistic in its orientation, it's not man-centred.
8. Being merciful is first of all what we are in Christ, then we live in terms of covenant mercy.
9. There are relational connotations to mercy. These are not just aspects of your personality; you could be both zealous and merciful.
10. Humanitarianism as defined by man's conception of mercy is cruel, creating the circumstances it claims to address.
11. The modern doctrine of environmentalism is an anti-human ideology; man's concept of mercy becomes hatred if it is not rooted in God.
12. All covenants are gracious, made by the greater to the lesser.
13. Because God is gracious to us, we are obligated to be merciful to others.

14. Paul opens his letters with "Grace, mercy and peace" – Grace is especially associated with men in their sins; mercy is especially associated with men in their misery.
15. Real mercy implies merciful action to address the need. For example, the Good Samaritan.
16. The atonement is God's merciful response to our pitiable estate.
17. We can be merciful to the offenses of others.
18. We can pass over a transgressions of others (Proverbs 19:11).
19. We can consider how to help the poor (Leviticus 25:35-37) and the fatherless (James 1:27).
20. Who shall obtain mercy? Our receiving mercy/forgiveness is not grounded upon being merciful. It would not be mercy if it was earned. Rather, our mercy, in the logic of the Beatitudes, is the consequence and manifestation of our being recipients of God's mercy in Christ.

Application Questions:

1. What does it mean to be merciful?
2. How do the following passages inform our pursuit of mercy? Proverbs 3:3-4; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8.
3. Do I have an unmerciful heart toward others?
4. How has my life been probed by this study of the beatitudes?
5. How does God's covenant inform our view of mercy?
6. What's wrong with mercy grounded in man's feelings and ideas?
7. How do we respond to those who have offended us, and who then need some help?
8. What does it mean to obtain mercy?
9. Am I among those who fast and pray, but fail to relieve those in distress?