**Mercy (Matthew 5:7)**

As believers, we show mercy because we have received mercy.

Greetings dear brothers and sisters as we examine today the characteristic of mercy in a believer. Everybody talks about mercy and many bring their ideas forth about it, assuming that the characteristic is an everyday description of kindness. However, when Jesus speaks about mercy, he has in mind his own presence among the disciples, as well as the salvation that he is going to bring about for all mankind. Primarily, God, as his first characteristic, lists “Merciful” in the book of Exodus. Based on that, we can say that true mercy has been a Divine quality which human beings cannot understand or put into practice in their own ability. For that reason, as believers, when we show mercy, we do so with a different purpose in mind. We have received mercy from the Lord and that is why we are merciful with others. As believers, we show mercy because we have received mercy. (So, let’s talk about this Divine quality…)

Being merciful is our response to God’s mercy, in other words to all that Jesus is. There are many human personality traits such as patience or mercy that seem to be common to all people and make us think about what the difference might be between our faith and that of others. After all, there are many other religions that seem to have ethical teachings that appear to be alike to Jesus’ teachings. However, the difference between Jesus’ sayings and others’ becomes more and more apparent when we take into account the overall context of His teachings. Generally, reading single verses is insufficient in understanding the Lord’s purposes and his state of mind when he is saying the words that he is. At the moment when he was saying the words related to mercy, the hearers had every right to be angry and to call to account those that were oppressing and giving them a miserable time. In addition, the directive to be merciful was spoken as part of a string of Beatitudes which described the characteristics and desires of the true people of God. In other words, mercy was not just a good deed; when Jesus was proclaiming that truth, he had in mind the mercy that they would receive from his teaching ministry. He also had in mind that the disciples were already enjoying God’s mercy through being in Jesus’ presence and part of his earthly ministry. In addition, Jesus had in mind that the believers would be filled with the greatest mercy when salvation was accomplished and he, after rising from the dead, would sit down next to God the Father in His rightful place. To summarize in one statement: the mercy that the believer is called to show others was simply a response to Jesus’ presence, teaching, miracles, self-sacrifice, resurrection from the dead and ascension to be seated in authority next to the Father.

Every single one of the above deeds was God’s mercy done for us. We were not worthy of Jesus’ Presence, yet he came and became Emmanuel among us, God with us. We were not worthy of Jesus’ True Teaching, but he came and taught and his words still guide us until today. We were not worthy to know Jesus’ miracles, but through the Holy Spirit whom he sent, we experience those until today in various forms. We were not worthy of being reconciled with God the Father, but Jesus died in our place and paid the price, making possible a relationship with our Heavenly Father again. We were not worthy to be freed from the fear of death, but Jesus defeated even that fear, that power, that kingdom through his resurrection. We were not worthy to have another ruler over us than the devil, but Jesus, despite that truth, ascended to heaven physically, and sat down in his position of power once again, above every power and spiritual or physical authority. Jesus did all this. All the above was God’s mercy to us.

Therefore, let us not give to those around us the answer or punishment that they deserve. Let us be merciful like God and let us bless those when they don’t speak well (to us). Let us give to them when they take from us and do not return. Let us forgive when they are not worthy to be forgiven. Let us show love to people when they are unlovable, because we were in the same boat when God did all the above for us. Being merciful is our response to God’s mercy, in other words to all that Jesus is. As believers, we show mercy because we have received mercy. God Bless You; Amen.