

Justice Mercy and Anger

The believer who judges others without mercy and spares themselves has dispensed with clear vision, and belong to a church that has lost its way because it has no fear of God.

"I never could believe in the Jesus Christ of some people, for the Christ in whom they believe is simply full of affectionateness and gentleness, whereas I believe there never was a more splendid specimen of manhood, even its sternness, than the Saviour; and the very lips which declared that He would not break a bruised reed uttered the most terrible anathemas upon the Pharisees." Charles H. Spurgeon

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This is Justice

"The one who believes in Him is not judged; the one who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." John 3:18

"The one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." John 3:36

Judgment is mandatory

'For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.'
2 Cor 5:10

'And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'
Daniel 12:2

This is Mercy

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life."
John 3:16

"I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will show compassion to whomever I show compassion." So then, it does not depend on the person who wants it nor the one who runs, but on God who has mercy. So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires."
Rom 9:15-16,18

'He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love.' Eph 1:4

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy." Matt 5:7

Jesus expects those who have received mercy to be included in the kingdom of God will be merciful, and they will receive more mercy. For He is speaking in the Sermon on the Mount about how we will live in the kingdom of God. Those who have received mercy are afterwards merciful. *“Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”* Luke 6:36

“With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful” 2 Sam 22:26

This is reality

The end result is that everyone who trusts in the Lord Jesus is saved from God’s wrath experiences His grace and mercy. As Paul says, *“Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!”* Rom 5:9

Those who believe in Christ and obey Him live because of the merciful grace of God. Therefore, believers should understand that instead of justice they received mercy through faith, not because they had some personal merit, but purely due to the work of God in Christ. Now they are to be children of their heavenly Father and obey Him.

But we get mad because we feel people are being selfish and inconsiderate towards us. However, in our anger, we similarly indulge ourselves and so we are equally guilty of failing to love our neighbour as ourselves. Even worse, in our self-righteousness we make ourselves out to be equal with God, because vengeance belongs with God alone.

When we take God's place of justice in wanting others bow down to our demands, we distort His character for the indulgence of ourselves. In God's economy, the Rod and the Staff are to be a comfort in the valley of shadows. (Psalm 23) But we are guilty of taking the rod meant to give direction, and instead, we begin beating others mercilessly with what is supposed to keep them safe by following godly directions.

We go on demanding sorrow and repentance, but in our anger, we don't understand the need for mercy, because we have not always been sorrowful ourselves. And if there are signs of sorrow from our victims, we are blind to mercy, and we keep rubbing their nose in their supposed failings.

Because we are equally as guilty without remorse for the things for which we condemn others, we are in Jesus' words, hypocrites. We haven't always gone back to those we have unjustly condemned, or beaten with a rod, full of anguish and with real sorrow and repentance, sought to be reconciled before God who is our righteous judge.

Instead of doing what we demand from others, we demand to be loved, to the extent that they should ignore our sin, and then we think we don't have to repent in tears ourselves. We actually need those who love and live for Christ in obedience and truth, to put the light on our blind spots in order that we can also build up the church in maturity to please our Lord.

Therefore, to keep from sinning against God, our anger should be directed at ourselves.

We are to be angry and not sin

Eph 4:26

This instruction is in the context of body life of Christ, His Church. It is not some justification for anger of any sort, like righteous anger, because verse 31 tells us to "*put off anger*" as those who are in Christ. And Jesus said: "*But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be answerable the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.*"

Matt 5:22

We need to be angry with ourselves in wanting to be angry with others. For under the providence and vexing of God, which He has ordained for our training in righteousness, His testing causes our

flesh some annoyance, and frustration, or anxiety. This painful testing highlights our dissatisfaction is really with God who has allowed this for the proving of the quality of our faith.

God uses our interaction with others to reveal to us what remains earthly in us. It is that which causes us to behave as earthly creatures that we must put off if we intend to put on Christ in obedience to the Spirit of God. And this labour of love is all for the sake of maintaining the unity of the body of Christ as we grow in maturity and obedience.

We must learn to be angry and deal with it through personal repentance and confession, and this is because we are to love our neighbour as God loves us. We all have much we should be ashamed of if it were known to all. As we have been forgiven much, we forgive much, for love covers a multitude of sins as we especially love those in Christ. When we put off our anger, we don't give the devil an opportunity to divide the body of Christ. *'Do not give the devil an opportunity.'* Eph 4:27

We must let our anger burn away our deception, for we want perfection from others while at the same time we are blind to the sin in ourselves. It is not possible to build up the body of Christ if we don't know where we are falling short ourselves because we are blinded by the supposed faults of others.

And having addressed anger in ourselves, when we need to bring up a shortcoming in the Christian behaviour of another, we can speak the truth in love, but always remembering others may resent the truth and get angry because they are unwilling to measure themselves by the truth of God's word. *'For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.'* 2 Cor 10:12

There will never be a time without conflict in the church while we fall short of putting on Christ. It is for good reason that Paul charged Timothy to: *‘Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.’* 2 Tim 4:2

At all times there is a need for our mercy

We judge mercilessly in others what we ignore in ourselves, or we want mercy in order to ignore what we should condemn in ourselves. But the children of God are no longer to be living according to the flesh because they have been born of the Spirit.

Loving our neighbour as ourselves demands mercy. For if we received the judgement of God we really deserve, there wouldn't be any room for us to receive mercy. Grace is in effect undeserved love. And in His Law, He commands we *“Love the Lord our God, and love our neighbour as ourself.”*

The believer who judges others without mercy and spares themselves has dispensed with clear vision, and belong to a church that has lost its way because it has no fear of God. *“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye!”* Matt 7:5

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.” Matt 5:7

Charles H. Spurgeon wrote: "Our Lord's subject when giving the Beatitudes was not how we are to be saved, but who are saved. He is not here describing the of salvation at all. He does that in many other places, but He here gives us the signs and evidences of the work of grace in the soul."

So: *‘Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. The one who speaks against a brother or sister, or judges his brother or sister, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it .There*

is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you, judging your neighbour?'

James 4:11-12

"Do not judge, so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you."

Matt 7:1-2

The merciful have crucified self to live in worship of God who judges the heaven and earth. The merciful know what it is to be poor of spirit as they have mourned over their uncircumcision.

Mercy and justice are in Christ

As we live for Jesus it is likely the Spirit of Jesus will be testifying to the truth of the word of God, saying to us something like this: *If you remain in Me, and My word remains in you daily through obedience, you will be comforted by the presence My everlasting merciful love, for I am with you to the end of the age, even as you walk in the darkness of a dangerous painful alien and unloving world.*

There is a need of God's comfort of mercy as the children of God suffer the consequences of sin in the world. No relationship with Christ means we are not living in God's word daily, and with no constant obedience, it means no experience of Christ's merciful love, which therefore means no ability to comfort others with His mercy in trials and afflictions.

The mercy required of man is in the context of the judgment of God. God is also a consuming Fire. *"For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him to whom we must answer."*

Heb 4:12-13

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

“In the end, for a Christian, the Bible’s teaching needs to lead the way. Anger is not to be extolled in our lives or in our discourse. Anger quickly becomes sin, and we simply must think in those terms. It is hard to do given the climate in which we find ourselves. We will have opportunities, however, to show ourselves to be different, Spirit-filled sorts of people who respond with good when others have done evil, who leave vengeance in the hands where it belongs—in God’s hands.”

THE MYTH OF “RIGHTEOUS ANGER”: Jeffrey Gibbs

"Having obtained mercy of the Lord, the saved sinner now exercises mercy. It is not that God requires us to be merciful in order that we might be entitled to His mercy, for that would overthrow the whole scheme of Divine grace! But having been the recipient of His wondrous mercy, I cannot help but now act mercifully toward others." A.W. Pink

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