

# The Foundations of a Better Culture: *Blessed are the Merciful*

*Matthew 5:7" Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*

A workplace thinktank survey revealed that 50% of the American workforce is not happy with their jobs. The survey showed that productivity was down 41%, there was a larger turnover in staff and a higher number of complaints from customers when the culture was negative.

As this is translated to a church, the culture we create has an impact both on us and those that visit

- When the emphasis is upon what's wrong with everyone else in the world and the religious community, what message does that send?
- When the culture shifts from "have to," to "want to," what upside benefits are seen?
- When the focus is upon the Lord, what cultural changes begin to change?

## A. Blessed are the Merciful (Mt 5:7)

- there is a shift and a transition that takes place with this beatitude
- the first 4 beatitudes are \_\_\_\_\_: seeing \_\_\_\_\_ properly
- the final 4 beatitudes are \_\_\_\_\_: how we see \_\_\_\_\_

## B. It is easy to define mercy as merely forgiveness

1. Read: Mt 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30

When these people asked for mercy, what were they wanting?

## 2. Mercy is a characteristic of God (Ps 116:5; Lam 3:22)

- NAS: uses the word "\_\_\_\_\_"
- Nehemiah's prayer refers multiple times to God's mercy (9:17, 19, 27, 31)
- James 3:17 wisdom from above is full of \_\_\_\_\_
- Rom 12:1 by the mercies of God, present your bodies a living sacrifice
- Heb 4:16 the throne of grace that we may receive mercy

"Mercy is the feeling of compassion and kindness toward the hurting that causes us to act and help and forgive" - Mark Roberts, *The Sermon on the Mount for Everyone*

Mercy is grace in \_\_\_\_\_. Mercy is love reaching out to help those who are helpless.

Mercy does involve forgiveness (Mt 18:33)

- Jas 2:13; Mt 6:12 (14-15)
- Nothing is more \_\_\_\_\_ than forgiveness and nothing is more \_\_\_\_\_ than forgiveness

To extend mercy is twice blessed: it blesses him that gives and it blesses him that takes  
(Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*)



*Luke 18:13 "But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to Heaven, but was beating his breasts, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"*

How can we cultivate a culture in which people are not afraid to seek the help and the forgiveness of God? How do we eliminate the "fear factor?"

What attitudes express that you are a person of mercy?

How do we defeat the spirit of Luke 18:9?

People sought mercy from Jesus because they felt comfortable with Him.  
How is that established among us?

Jonah, the prodigal's brother, the forgiven man in Matthew 18 all had trouble extending mercy to others. Why? How do I keep from standing in their shadows?

