



Approaching God

Begin your time with an opening prayer

Take a moment to quiet your heart and ask God to help you experience his presence today. Ask Him to free you from any distractions as you begin to read and meditate on today's passages.

Today's Theme: God is Merciful

God's mercy is His tenderhearted, loving compassion for His people. It is His tenderness of heart toward the needy. God's mercy is his divine forbearance in showing compassion and passing over sins.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Slowly Read the Following Passages

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Psalm 103:1-18

1 Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. **2** Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits— **3** who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, **4** who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, **5** who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. **6** The LORD works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. **7** He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: **8** The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. **9** He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; **10** he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. **11** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; **12** as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. **13** As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; **14** for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. **15** The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; **16** the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. **17** But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children— **18** with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

Ephesians 2:1-7

1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2** in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. **4** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. **6** And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, **7** in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 69:13-16

13 But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness. **14** Deliver me from sinking in the mire; let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters. **15** Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the pit close its mouth over me. **16** Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.

Meditation - GOD IS MERCIFUL

Read the short essay from Ligonier Ministries

Of all the things that Paul says about those outside of Christ, perhaps the most terrifying is that the impenitent are “children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3). In writing this, the apostle says that those in Adam — all unregenerate human beings — deserve divine condemnation. People outside of Christ can expect nothing from the Father except for His wrath, which manifests itself ultimately in eternal punishment in hell (Rom. 1:18–3:20; see also Jude 8–13; Rev. 20:7–15).

One of the most important words in all of Scripture, is the conjunction but (see Eph. 2:4). It indicates a contrast. Paul has told us we were children of wrath, and now he tells us what we are after we have put our faith in Christ. Thankfully, our Creator has not left humanity in its miserable estate but has chosen to rescue some people — those chosen from the foundation of the world (1:3–6). He comes to His people, who are all born into this world dead in Adam and unable to respond to His overtures, and performs a spiritual resurrection so that they have a desire to believe and be saved (2:8–10). This is God’s initiative; He takes the decisive step, for those whom He regenerates certainly come to believe in the gospel of Christ and follow Him in a life of repentant and faithful discipleship. John Calvin comments, “Everything connected with our salvation ought to be ascribed to God as its author.”

What moves our Lord to do this? It is certainly not anything in us, for being dead in sin, we were unlovely and undeserving of His love. Even the righteousness that we thought we possessed was nothing but dirty rags (Isa. 64:6). What moves Him, Paul tells us, is His mercy, love, grace, and kindness (Eph. 2:4–7). Why does He not reveal this to everyone? This indeed is a great mystery, but we can be assured that it is to the praise of His glorious grace (Eph. 1:6), according to His good purposes and pleasure. Mercy — unexpected love and generosity — cannot be showered upon us as something owed, because mercy that is owed is not mercy but obligation. It can be given only to those in a desperate situation who cannot help themselves and lack the capability to earn or pay it back. And there is no better way to describe our situation apart from Christ than utterly and hopelessly desperate.

R.C. Sproul - *The Richness of God’s Mercy*

Daily Reflection Questions

1. What 1 or 2 verses of today’s scripture passages most stood out to you? What was significant for you in those verses?
2. How would you briefly summarize what it means that “God is Merciful” in your own words?
3. In what areas of your life right now do you most need to believe and trust in this particular attribute of God? How might your life be different if you were able to trust and truly believe in God’s mercy?

Close in Prayer:

- What can I **REJOICE IN** as a result of today’s study?
- What do I need to **REPENT OF** as a result of today’s study?
- What do I want to **REQUEST FROM** God today?