

Evening Worship / January 1st 2023

“Motivated By God’s Mercies”

Lamentation 3:22-24; Romans 12:1-2

²² **Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.**

²³ **They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.** ²⁴ **“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!” Lamentations 3:22–24 (NKJV)**

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

I am a great believer in New Year’s resolutions. Why? Because I know my spirit is willing but my flesh is weak! Like the apostles who fell asleep when they should have been praying, I am sleeping when I should be zealous!

It is by God’s mercies we are not consumed, and they are not annual THEY ARE DAILY!

Every one of God’s new mercies should be a MOTIVATOR to our NEW COMMITMENT!

The entirety of Paul’s letter to the Romans up to chapter 12 is deep doctrinal teaching about the great mercies of God which result in our salvation. It is true; the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Hell’s fires are a motivator too! However, love for God and living for God are also sweetly motivated by understanding His great LOVE for us!

We love Him because He first loved us!

I. Why should we be motivated by God’s mercies?

1. Because they are God-given mercies –

When I did my seminary internship at Glen Eyrie, Colorado Springs, with the Navigators two of my friends were David and Anne Frahm, one day Anne told our group the story of their courtship which led to marriage. During a portion of their courtship, long before internet and email, definitely before smart phones, they were separated. They would send each other letters (paper). One of the things David sent Anne, which she told all of us she “treasured” and kept at least until that date... was a scab / torn old skin off of David’s foot! Now, for anyone else such a thing would have been garbage or worse. But because of who David was to Anne, her future husband, it was part of him and precious! So should everything “of God” be to us!

A. God is worthy of our honor simply because of Who and What He is

WSC 4 What is God? A. God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. (WSC 1:4 WCS)

B. God is worthy as our Creator – “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” (Revelation 4:11 NKJV)

C. God is worthy as the Sustainer of our lives – 6 ... O LORD, You preserve man and beast. (Psalm 36:6 NKJV)

2. Because sinners receive them, we were God's enemies, we were fighting Him, yet He was and is merciful to us –

³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. Luke 23:34 (NKJV)

What sins did we commit against God?

A. We would not retain God in our knowledge – And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (Romans 1:28 NKJ)

B. None of us sought God – As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJV)

C. We definitely did not deserve God's many mercies – For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8 NKJV)

3. We should be motivated by God's mercies, because of how they were attained (purchased) for us –

knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (1 Peter 1:18-19 NKJV)

And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (Revelation 5:9 NKJV)

4. We should be motivated by God's mercies, because of the greatness of the mercies themselves –

A. We should be motivated by God's mercies, because they accomplish great things in and for us – And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:28-29 NKJV)

B. We should be motivated by God's mercies, because they make us children of God and heirs with Christ – The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. (Romans 8:16-17 NKJV)

II. How should we respond to these wonderful mercies?

1. By Giving our bodies as living sacrifices – WHY?

A. Because He gave His body for us – And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22:19 NKJV)

B. Because He is worthy of our best love –

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. (Matthew 10:37-39 NKJV)

2. By living "HOLY" lives –

THE ESSENCE OF TRUE HOLINESS

A. True holiness is intimately tied to and totally dependent upon regeneration - Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3 NKJV)

B. True holiness implies a hunger for Heavenly things - Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6 NKJV)

C. True holiness will manifest itself in an ever-increasing liveliness about the worship and service of God –

The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" (Revelation 4:8 NKJV)

D. True holiness will make its mark on every aspect of a person's life –

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV)

E. True holiness is not equivalent to sinless perfection - If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-9 NKJV)

F. True Holiness is dependent upon a constant, vital union with Christ one that will make us more and more like Him - "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5 NKJV)

He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (1 John 2:6 NKJV) Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3:1-2 NKJ)

G. True holiness will make us odd-balls in this sin-filled world –

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. (John 15:18 NKJV)

8. *True holiness is the one thing we need –*

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: (Hebrews 12:14 NKJV)

3. *By seeking to please God –*

A. *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom – The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever. (Psalm 111:10 NKJV)*

B. *Yet, the motive for our service of God is His mercy / love – 19 We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19 NKJV)*

I remember as a child wanting to please my earthly father – “watch me run daddy” I would say!

We aim to please our Heavenly Father with spiritual running –

²⁴ Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for an imperishable crown*. ²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:24–27 (NKJV)

Meaning energetic effort / discipline with spiritual things!

C. We gain our direction for His service from His word –

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2Timothy 2:15 NKJV)

¶ Nun ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path. Psalm 119:105 (NKJV)

4. *When we do all this, we know this is our REASONABLE SERVICE –*

... which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

10 "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, `We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'" (Luke 17:10 NKJV)

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