

# THE EXPECTATION OF HOPE IS MERCY

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*“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” Matthew 15:21-28*

This morning we shall consider this interesting story of expectation and hope that ends with the bestowing of great mercy in one of those events in the life of Christ where His mercy and grace is displayed in such love that I enjoy reading and re-reading this story over and over again regarding this Canaanite/Syrophenician woman. I would like to speak this morning on: “The Expectation of Hope is MERCY!” Before we get into our study here in Matthew 15 allow me to share some things about mercy.

Mercy is a blessed attribute of God for it makes all the other attributes of God sweet. The Bible tells that God is a GREAT God full of compassion, longsuffering, gracious and plenteous in mercy. If you are hurting this morning oh I point you to the mercy of God. Now, by the mercy of God we mean that God is always ready to help and relieve those who are hurting and going through hard times and perhaps discouraged and cast down, but His mercy is also to pardon the guilty sinner and to save the fallen. Mercy presupposes our sinful and ruin condition. Mercy arises from the compassion and goodness of God. God's mercy is universal and general to all, but also particular and special to God's children, that is, that particular mercy to the vessels of mercy as set forth in Romans 9.

Therefore, God's mercy is that holy disposition to have pity upon us both saved and lost. Again, God's mercy is universal or if you wish common to all in that He relieves His children who are at times in severe trials and also extends mercy to the lost by passing by their offenses without wrath or anger. Mercy is seeing a person's misery and taking it to heart. Perhaps this is why David wrote, “O give thanks unto the God of heaven; for his mercy endureth forever!” Mercy then, is when we do not get what we deserved from God and in its place He bestows on us His goodness and benevolent compassion. Therefore, God's mercy is common to all. It is a general and universal

benevolence to all that God is merciful: Ps.145:8 & 9, “*The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. 9 The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.*” Thus God’s mercy is His goodness and benevolence over us in bestowing His compassion, kindness and goodwill towards us. Mercy is being kind to an undeserving person, to have compassionate treatment even to an enemy. God’s mercy is His tender kindness towards the helpless and needy, mercy sees us as needy people. Mercy; then is God bestowing His benevolence towards us instead of judgment and punishment. Mercy is for our care and for our good. Psalms 103:8, “*The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*” Lamentations 3:22 & 23, “*It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*”

In regards to the aspect of mercy let me remind you that if you name the name of Christ this morning we are to imitate and emulate God when it comes to being merciful. We want mercy from God, we all want God to be merciful to us and He is, but what about when we are put in situation to show mercy to others, especially our enemies? It is amazing how quickly we say, but it’s not fair, you don’t know how they treated me. We want to qualify it, but I ask how is this different when the basic definition of mercy is being kind to an undeserving person, to have compassionate mercy even to an enemy? We forget that we are all born enemies of God into this world and therefore we deserve the wrath of God, but because God is a MERCIFUL GOD, His mercy withholds His wrath and bestows His goodness and benevolence towards us. Now, perhaps in your eyes, your enemy deserves your wrath because they have wronged you, they have hurt you, they have pained you, they have wounded you and therefore you feel that they deserve your wrath and fury. We can again justify this by saying but, you don’t know what they did to me, you don’t know how they treated me and we can go on and on. What if God treated us like that, if He did, we would all be in hell this morning, but thanks be unto God that He has been good to us in bestowing us mercy!

Therefore it this be true, then we should be merciful to others, even our worst enemy. I have been hurt many times, but that does not give me the right to hurt those that have hurt me or be ugly and revengeful to those who have hurt me. I have tried my best to teach my children even when they were young, that we are not to render evil for evil. If I saw the person that hurt me on the side of the road that needed help, I would not past by them and stick my tongue out at them or if there was a puddle of water by them to purposely splash them, because, I mean if you only knew what they did to me and so forth. Can you imagine how often you and I have offended a Holy God and yet He is merciful to us, even before our salvation. We sing Micah 6:8 where it says, “*He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?” Matthew 5:7, “*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*” In Zechariah 7:9 it says, “*Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother.*” Let us not be as*

those in Matthew 23:23, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” Colossians 3:12, “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **bowels of mercies**, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” Hosea 12:6, “Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.”

You know that Mercy is also found in the Law of God or if you wish the 10 CC's. In Exodus 20:4-6, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And **shewing mercy** unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.” In Exodus 34:1-7 when the 10 Commandments are given again, “And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, **The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin**, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”

I wanted us to learn and know sometime of the mercy of God as we look into this story in Matthew 15: Again, the expectation of hope is mercy and mercy is the hope for salvation, because it is of the Lord mercies that we are saved. In light of mercy we need to understand that there are not enough good works or good deeds that we can do to erase our sins. Our forgiveness of sins is by the mercy of God, in extending forgiveness found in the Person of His only Begotten Son. Again, the mercy of God is seen and demonstrated in His giving of His only begotten Son to die in behalf of sinners. The beginning of the Gospel of Luke sets forth the blessings of the mercy of God in the sending of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ; Luke 1:77 & 79, “To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 **Through the tender mercy of our God**; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Mercy for salvation comes from God, but only through the Person of Christ! In Eph.2:4 it says, “But God, who is **rich in mercy**, for his great love wherewith he loved us.” If we were to read the whole context of Ephesians we see in the first 3 verses we see the truth of total depravity, **but more glorious is the truth that mercy triumphs over our depravity**. We are clearly told in Titus 3:5 & 6 that it is not in our good works, but in pure mercy that saves, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but **according to his mercy he saved us**, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” Notice what Peter says in 1 Peter 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which **according to his abundant mercy** hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” As a depraved sinner before a Thrice Holy God, there is nothing we can do to merit the mercy of God, it is totally undeserved. We have seen the blessed example of this in the salvation of Saul of Tarsus as he attributes his salvation to nothing but the mercy of

God. The Apostle Paul tells us that before his conversion he was blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, but that he obtained mercy in 1 Timothy 1:13-16. We see in this text that Paul's conversion was but an act of mercy, he was the chief of sinners, which teaches us that no sinner is out of the reach of God's mercy! To those of us who are saved this morning we owe our salvation to the mercy of God in Christ and if you are yet outside Christ this morning, there is mercy for you at the cross. Notice the hope of forgiveness in the compassion of God in Micah 7:18 & 19 where it says; "*Who is a God like unto thee, that **pardoneth iniquity**, and **passeth by the transgression** of the remnant of his heritage? **he retaineth not his anger for ever**, because **he delighteth in mercy**. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*" God will pardon iniquity, God will pass by the transgressions of sinners, God will not always retain His anger, all because HE DELIGHTS IN MERCY and WILL HAVE COMPASSION! What is the end result of bestowing mercy and compassion in the grace of salvation to a sinner? God will pardon our sins, God will pass by our sins, God will not retain His anger, God will subdue our sins and God will gloriously cast our sins in the depths of the sea and remember them no MORE! This is mercy, this is mercy; this is the MERCY of GOD! Do not misconstrue my next statement, but there is no reason for sinners to be in hell, because God delights in mercy. The issue is not with God, the issue is not election, the issue is in the sinner who will not seek the mercy of the compassionate and forgiving God who delights in mercy. You will not find one verse from Genesis to Revelation that says that God delights in wrath, God delights in punishment or that God delights in judgment, but oh how blessed that it reads, HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY!

It is nothing but the pure sovereign grace of God which alone determines the exercise of Divine mercy. God expressly affirms this fact in Romans 9:15, "*For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.*" One writer says, "*It is not the wretchedness of the creature which causes Him to show mercy, for God is not influenced by things outside of Himself as we are. If God were influenced by the abject misery of leprous sinners, He would cleanse and save all of them.*" It is solely because He delights in mercy, there is nothing in us to move God to bestow mercy, it is all in the blessed work of God's Son. This is the chief cause of God's mercy, Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Apart from this, there is no MERCY from God for salvation. Mercy sees us in misery, mercy sees our need, mercy provided us a redeemer, it was mercy that sent the Son of God to be born into this world and it was mercy that accomplished our redemption found in the satisfaction of justice. Mercy arises from God's good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself. MERCY is altogether free and UNMERITED! We see this in the life of Christ in the gospels in bestowing mercy to hell deserving sinners in the grace of salvation.

We see this in the life of the Canaanite woman of Matthew 15:21-28. This is a passage that shows the needful responsibility of sinners and how mercy was extended and given to her by a gracious Savior. We see here this Canaanite woman in great need, which showed great faith that obtained great mercy. Here is a poor Gentile woman who is in dire need, she is broken hearted and crying out for mercy in the only one that can

grant her desire. On the other side of the coin we also sadly see those who had obtained mercy and were unmerciful to her. They look down on this Gentile Canaanite woman who was a Canaanite Syrophenician who was from Tyre and Sidon. They were prejudice, without pity and without mercy as they thought she was not worthy of being identified with them as they cry out, “*Send her away; for she crieth after us.*” Ah, she was not crying after them, but after Him who is perfumed with the aroma of mercy and she knew it. No doubt that our Lord is more merciful than any of us in this auditorium this morning. Let us guard our hearts against hardness and pride to keep us from extending mercy to others in our hearts. There are 4 things we see from this woman:

- **I. The Woman’s Perception.**
- **II. The Woman’s Petition.**
- **III. The Woman’s Persistency**
- **IV. The Woman’s Perseverance.**

The first thing we see is: **I. The Woman’s Perception.** In considering this same event, notice quickly what Mark’s gospel says about this narrative: Turn to Mark 7:24-26, “*And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid. 25 For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, **heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:** 26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; **and she besought him** that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.” This Canaanite woman had heard of Jesus Christ, thus she perceived in her heart, if I can just get to him, maybe, just maybe He can help and even be merciful to help me. How about you this morning, if you are outside Christ, are you concerned about your soul? You’ve heard of Christ, but are you willing to seek Him as this woman did? Are you concerned about your situation, are you concerned about your condition, are you as determined to get to Him as this woman was? Or are you willing to face eternity without Christ? This woman is seeking after Christ, because she heard of him, her perception was great, that is; it motivated her to go after Christ. She was so heartbroken over the condition of her child, she was frantic, she was desperate and thus she was determined to get her child’s problem to Christ, no matter what, even if the disciples were unmerciful to her and telling her to stop following them.*

Apparently, this woman had heard about Jesus, how He had healed all manner of diseases, how He had opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf and how He had delivered those possessed by demons and raised the dead and perhaps said within her soul, “*If He can do this for others and heal those possessed with demons, then could He, can He deliver my own daughter from this pitiful condition.*” She needed something others could not help or provide for her, society couldn’t help her daughter, doctors or medicine or even religion couldn’t help, religious rites and ceremonies couldn’t do it for her and her own self-efforts came up empty and she was desperate and finally saw Jesus as her only hope! Oh to God that He would bring you to the end

of yourself so that you would see Jesus as your only hope.

Secondly, look at **II. The Woman's Petition**. Verse 22, "*And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and **cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.***" The woman's petition was, have mercy on me. According to Mark's account she came and fell at His feet as she petitioned Him. Can anyone here this morning identify with this woman and see Jesus as your only hope? Jesus gave this poor woman hope; it gave her expectation and anticipation. Whatever your situation is this morning, your answer is found only in Christ. The woman's petition was simple, have mercy on me, how about you, do you have a petition for God? This woman was in need, she had a pressing situation, her daughter was vexed with a demon and religion and man were impotent to help her and so this poor helpless, concerned and worried woman looks to the helper of the helpless and cries unto Jesus for mercy. Will you cry to God for the salvation of your soul, by crying for mercy this morning? Or are you too proud to cry unto Christ for MERCY this morning? Plea unto God to have mercy on you this morning!

No doubt that we see the persistency in this Canaanite woman because the Jews and the Gentiles avoided each other and surprises me that this woman was willing to approach Jesus. This courageous woman had no hesitation to call out to Jesus as she begins to cry out that her daughter was grievously vexed with a devil, that is, that her daughter was cruelly demon-possessed which no doubt made her desperate in seeking the Lord. This woman no doubt felt the helplessness in seeing her daughter's condition and so she cares not who is around and she cares not who hears and cares not what anybody says, she comes with her petition centered in hope in Christ as she cries and shouts repeatedly unto Jesus, "*Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David.*"

This is also a good example for Christian parents, we cannot save our children but Jesus Christ can, we need to come continually crying out, thou Son of David, yea thou Son of God, have mercy on my children and save my children. Lam. 2:19, "*Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children...*" The Canaanite woman didn't have to tell Jesus what He needed to do; it was enough to simple plea for mercy regarding the condition of her daughter. She alone sought the Lord without the help of another, without the aid of another; she alone believed that He could deliver her daughter. Amazing that being a Gentile woman she recognize that He was the Messianic King and rightly called Him by His Messianic title, thou Son of David, have mercy on me! Where are the Pharisees and Sadducees who knew the language and terminology but never called upon His Messianic name nor upon His MERCY! Knowing the language and terminology of Christianity has never saved anyone, you better know the PERSON, not the language and terminology of Christianity! This poor Gentile Canaanite didn't know the terminology or language, but she believed in her heart to cry

to the PERSON of MERCY; Jesus Christ, so she cried: HAVE MERCY ON ME O LORD THOU SON OF DAVID!

Thirdly we see **III. The Woman's Persistency**. Verses 22-27, "*And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But **he answered her not a word**. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*" Wow what persistency by this woman, most of us would have given up with the obstacles that were thrown her way. This woman was consistent, she was persistent, she was determined and she was relentless in the pursuing of Christ. This woman comes to Christ for help and does not get the response she thought she would have. But, amazingly she continues and stays after Christ until, until, until she gets what she needs. There were certainly some obstacles in the way that she had to overcome. It seemed that she met resistance after resistance at every turn for her request. She was helpless and powerless in helping her own daughter. There was nothing she could do to help her daughter's condition, she was destitute. She was a Gentile mother crying out to a Jewish Messiah. She was coming from a different religion and from a cursed people.

She was a Gentile seeking the Jewish Messiah. She was surprised by the reaction of Christ in that, He answered her not a word. Many of us would have given up by then. But she was persistent! She had to overcome the aspect of religion and now she had to overcome the aspect of prejudice because she was a gentile and not a Jew. When the Disciples see and hear this Gentile Canaanite woman calling to THEIR Messiah, they react by telling Jesus to send her away. They wanted nothing to do with her and they did not want Jesus to have nothing to do with her also. She was not one of them, she was different than them and she was not a Jew and therefore in their eyes a lower human being than them. Many of us would have been insulted and would have given up by now. Jesus ignores her and his followers don't want anything to do with her. "*But **he answered her not a word**. And his **disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away;** for she crieth after us.*" But she was persistent! As she begins to speak to Christ it seems to get worse, because it seems that Jesus' words are harsh to us. His words more than probably broke her heart, as He first ignores her, then He tells her that He came for the lost sheep of Israel and even when she persists He then insinuates that she is a dog. I mean how worse can it get, He who is helper of the helpless, ignores her when she says Lord, have mercy on me, He says that He had come for lost sheep of Israel and does not deserve the children's bread, surely by now, she gives up completely. The Disciples rejected her and now it seems that even Christ is rejecting her too. Why even bother the Master anymore. She had to overcome the aspect of religion, she had to overcome the aspect of their prejudice and now she has to overcome the seeming rejection of Christ. These realities were real and harsh, her daughter is possessed by a

devil, the Disciples are prejudice, Jesus ignores her and then calls her a dog, no doubt the situation went from bad to worse and her situation now seems hopeless. Verses 22-26, “*And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23 But **he answered her not a word.** And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*” The account from Mark 7:27 says, “*But Jesus said unto her, **Let the children first be filled:** for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.*” Jews consider all non-Jewish people as dogs, that is it means mangy, unclean and dirty as in Matt.7:6 where it says, “*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs...*” but here the word for dog means little puppies, liken to pets in a house. Wow, most of us at this point would have said, its over there is no hope for me! But she was persistent, because even through all this she answers unbelievably in verse 27 of Matthew 15 it says, “*And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*” Wow, unbelievable, yea What FAITH!

Fourthly, we see: **IV. The Woman's Perseverance**. We know that a lot of people would have given up especially when she even falls on her face to worship Him and ask for help in verse 25, “*Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.*” Could it be that when Christ answers in verse 26, “*But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.*” that he said it with a twinkle in His eye so that she immediately catches the meaning that He was talking about dogs in a family as a pet, that she catches the meaning and answers in great faith in verse 27 “*And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.*” As though she is saying I don't want the bread, I only want the crumbs that come off the table, she was not asking for all of it, asking for everything, she just wanted a dog's portions she was not offended one bit! I hope you can see how our Lord took this woman and her faith and helped her along in order to grow her faith. He was teaching that all her hindrances can be conquered by faith and this speaks volumes to us this morning who give up too easily when in a trial or situation.

No matter the obstacles and hindrances we must be persistent and persevere like this poor Canaanite woman! We know that most of us would have given up by now and would have probably said, I don't need this and so much for a God of love, but this woman was PERSISTENT and she PERSEVERED and it paid off gloriously in giving her great peace in her heart. Too much is at stake, we need to be like this woman in bringing our needs to God, over and over again, no matter what obstacles or hindrances come against us, keep seeking, keep asking and keep knocking until God answers. Christ no doubt complemented her on her perseverance and faith and gave her the desire of her heart in healing and delivering her daughter in verse 28, “*Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, **great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.***” All because she was persistent and thus persevered and never gave up, no matter what. (Read Mark account 7:28-20)



No doubt that great peace flooded her soul when her daughter was delivered, all because she cried out, LORD have mercy on me. Here we have a Gentile dog that had more faith than the Jewish Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees and Priests! This kind of faith takes notice of God and God takes notice of this faith. Hebrews 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* Jesus responded to her faith, her faith brought her great peace because God is a merciful God, full of compassion and plenteous in mercy to any and to all that call out to Him. She called out in great faith, *“Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.”* She had a faith that was determined, yea diligent in seeking and believing Jesus, in faith she trusted that Jesus the Messiah, the Son of David would extend mercy to her. This why Jesus said to her *“...O woman, **great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.**”* Her faith was active and this faith is seen in the action of her heart! Remember this my dear ones: **Faith is Confidence: Confidence is Believing: Believing is Trusting: Trusting is Hope: Hope is Expectation: Expectation anticipates Mercy!** Therefore, the Expectation of HOPE is MERCY!

If you are a child of God this morning and going through a hard and difficult time, if trials are plaguing you, seek the Lord for mercy to help you like He did this woman. *“Thy mercy is great unto the heavens”* (Psa. 57:10). God’s mercy transcends our loftiest thoughts. *“For as high as heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him”* (Psa. 103:11).

How about you this morning, how do you stand before God? If you are outside Christ this morning come to Him for mercy to save your soul? If you are outside Christ, come crying, come calling, come seeking the mercy of God, God will meet you at the mercy seat, the mercy seat is Christ, if you come and ask God for mercy He will be merciful, God delights in mercy, God is full of mercy, God is rich in mercy, God’s mercy is abundant there is no shortage, God extends mercy to sinners for salvation, do not walk out that door without the mercy of God. Jonah 2:8 says, *“They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.”*

Proverbs 28:13, *“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”* Isaiah 55:7, *“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and **he will have mercy upon him;** and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”* IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE CHRIST look to the mercy of God and come to Christ in repentance and faith. In Luke 16:24 when the rich man died and open up his eyes in hell the Scriptures says: *“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”* There is mercy no, but the moment you die without Christ you will enter into a merciless eternity in hell because in hell there is no mercy, nothing but wrath and punishment.

*“Mercy is displayed only in and through Christ, but God out of Christ is a consuming fire.”* (John Gill). It is only in Christ that God proclaims his name to be *“gracious and merciful.”* Christ is the mercy-seat in whom sinners obtain mercy. If you would be saved, you must cast yourself upon the mercy of God in Christ, as this woman did here in Matthew 15.

God’s mercy to sinners in Christ is infinite, beyond measure, and utterly indescribable. The Bible tells us that it is great mercy, rich mercy, abundant mercy, plenteous mercy, and that there are a multitude of mercies from God for sinners in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, call upon God this morning: Come in repentance towards God and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Cry out to God: Be merciful to me!

Let’s Play: Sing: Pass me not O Gentle Savior