

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

EASTER MEANS IT'S A NEW DAY OF MERCY

PART 1

*“Early on Sunday morning, as the new day was dawning,
Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went out to see the tomb . . .
The angel said ‘He is risen!’”*

MATTHEW 28:1-10

*“A NEW DAY will dawn on US because our God
is LOVING AND MERCIFUL.”*

LUKE 1:78 (GW)

MERCY: undeserved forgiveness & unearned kindness

WHEN DO I NEED GOD'S MERCY? WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ACCEPT IT?

1. ASHAMED: _____

A HUMILIATED WOMAN: JOHN 8:2-11

“One day Jesus was teaching a crowd outside the Temple, and some Pharisees brought a woman who was CAUGHT in adultery. They put her on display in front of the crowd, then said to Jesus. ‘This woman has been CAUGHT in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. So what do YOU say?’ They were trying to TRAP Jesus into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and started writing in the dirt with his finger. They kept badgering Jesus, demanding an answer. Finally, Jesus stood up and said, ‘Here’s my answer: If any one of you has never sinned, then you may throw the first stone.’ Then he stooped down again and continued writing in the dirt! When the accusers heard this, they began to slip away, one by one, beginning with the oldest, until it was just Jesus and the woman. At that point, Jesus stood back up and quietly said to her, ‘Where are your accusers? Is there no one left to condemn you?’ ‘No one, Lord,’ she said. Then Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you! Now go on, and leave your sinful ways.’ ”

• GOD'S MERCY _____

"I was sent to announce freedom to all held captive and forgiveness to all who've been imprisoned."

ISAIAH 61:1

(Jesus) "I have come to save the world and not to judge it."

JOHN 12:47 (LB)

"O Lord, you are so good and kind, so ready to forgive, so full of mercy for all who ask your aid."

PSALM 86:5 (LB)

"Jesus understands every weakness of ours, because he was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin. So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will receive mercy and find the grace to help us in our time of need."

HEBREWS 4:15-16 (CEV)

2. ANGRY: _____

A DISAPPOINTED MAN: JOHN 5:2-9

"In Jerusalem, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, which was surrounded by five covered porches. A large crowd of all sorts of disabled people would lie by the pool, waiting for a miracle. There was a legend that every once in a while an angel would stir up the water, and whoever was the first to get in the water while it was still moving would get what they needed and be made whole. One poor man had been waiting by the pool for 38 years. When Jesus saw this man and heard that he'd been lying there for such a long time, he asked the man 'Do you want to get well?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'I have no one to help me get into the pool when the water is stirred! While I'm trying to get there, somebody else always gets ahead of me!' Then Jesus simply said, 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and start walking!' When the man trusted Jesus, he was immediately able to walk again."

• GOD'S MERCY _____

"What is impossible with men is possible with God."

LUKE 18:27 (NIV)

"As you get to know Jesus better, he will give you, through his great power, everything you need for living a truly good life."

2 PETER 1:3A (LB)

3. AFRAID: _____

A DYING MAN: LUKE 23:39-43

“One of the criminals being executed on a cross beside Jesus ridiculed him saying, ‘If you’re supposed to be the Messiah, why don’t you save yourself . . . and us too!’ But the second criminal rebuked him, ‘Man, don’t you even fear God when you’re dying? We deserve to die for our evil deeds, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong!’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.’ And Jesus replied, ‘I guarantee you that today you will be with me in paradise.’ ”

• GOD’S MERCY _____

*(Jesus) “I am the resurrection and the life!
Whoever believes in me, even though he dies, will live again!”*

JOHN 11:25

*“Anyone who asks for mercy from the Lord shall have it
and shall be saved.”*

ACTS 2:21 (LB)

*“The Lord God is waiting to show you how kind he is and
to have mercy on you. The Lord always does what’s right
and he blesses those who trust him!”*

ISAIAH 30:18 (CEV)

A PRAYER TO RECEIVE GOD’S MERCY

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

GOD CAN USE ANYBODY!

PART 2

“. . . Give yourselves completely to God – every part of you – because you’ve been brought from death to life, and now you want to be used by God for good, and for his righteous purposes.”

ROMANS 6:13 (LB/TEV)

PAUL’S SECRETS OF STAYING USABLE

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-18

1. _____

“God IN HIS MERCY has given us this ministry and work to do. That’s why we do not become discouraged and never give up!”

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1

MERCY: undeserved forgiveness & unearned kindness

“You know what I was like . . . how I violently persecuted Christians. I did my best to get rid of them! . . . But then something happened! For it pleased God in his kindness to choose me and call me, even before I was born! What UNDESERVED MERCY!”

GALATIANS 1:13,15 (NLT)

“It is God himself who has made us what we are and given us new lives from Christ Jesus; and long ages ago he planned that we should spend these lives in helping others.”

EPHESIANS 2:10 (LB)

2. _____

“We don’t try to trick anyone, and we don’t twist the word of God. Instead we teach the truth plainly, showing everyone WHO WE REALLY ARE. Then they can know in their hearts what kind of people we are in God’s sight.”

2 CORINTHIANS 4:2 (NLT/NCV)

*"The Spirit we received does not make us slaves again to fear;
it makes us children of God!"*
Romans 8:15 (NCV)

3. _____

*"Our message is not about ourselves. It is about Jesus Christ as the Lord.
We are merely your servants for Jesus' sake."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 (GW)

*"We are like clay jars in which this treasure is stored.
The real power comes from God and not from us."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7 (CEV)

4. _____

*"We often suffer, but we are never crushed. Even when we don't know
what to do, we never give up. In times of trouble, God is with us, and
when we are knocked down, we get up again."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:8-9 (CEV)

*"All of these sufferings of ours are for your benefit. And the more of you
who are won to Christ, the more there are to thank Him for his great
mercy, and the more God gets glory!"*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:15 (LB)

*"This is why we never give up! Though our bodies are dying, our spirits
are being renewed every day. For our present troubles are quite small
and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great
glory that will last forever!"*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-17 (NLT)

5. _____

*"These little troubles are getting us ready for an eternal glory that will
make all our troubles seem like nothing."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:17 (CEV)

*"So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look
forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon
be over, but the joys to come will last forever."*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:18 (NLT)

The Key to Staying Focused: _____

“A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. And three people are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.”

ECCLESIASTES 4:12 (NLT)

Jesus: “For wherever two or three come together in my name, I will be there with them.”

MATTHEW 18:20 (NIV)

**DO YOU WANT YOUR LIFE TO BE USED BY GOD?
ARE YOU READY TO EXPERIENCE THE MIRACLE OF MERCY?**

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

GOD'S MERCY & MY FAILURES

PART 3

WHAT CAUSES OUR PERSONAL FAILURES? 3 THINGS PETER DID WRONG

1. _____

“Jesus said ‘Tonight every one of you will desert me. For the Scripture says that when the shepherd is killed, the sheep will be scattered. BUT after I’ve been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there.’ Then Peter boasted, ‘But Lord, even if everyone else fails you, I will NEVER deny you!’ Jesus replied, ‘Peter, the truth is that before this night is over, and before the rooster crows at dawn, you will deny knowing me three times.’ Peter insisted, ‘But Lord, I would NEVER do that! Even if I have to die with you I’ll never deny knowing you!’ And all the other disciples vowed the same thing.”

MATTHEW 26:31-35

“If you think, ‘I am strong! I can handle this. I’d never fall for that temptation,’ then be careful! For you could easily fall too!”

1 CORINTHIANS 10:12

2. _____

“Peter followed Jesus at a distance to the courtyard of the high priest’s palace. He went in and sat down with the guards to see what was going to happen to Jesus . . . As he was sitting in the courtyard, a servant girl came up to him and said, ‘You were with Jesus of Galilee, weren’t you?’ But standing there in front of everyone Peter denied it. ‘I don’t even know what you’re talking about!’ he said.”

MATTHEW 26:58, 69-70

“It is a dangerous trap to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you’ll be safe.”

PROVERBS 29:25

3. _____

“Then Peter went out to the entrance of the courtyard and there another woman saw him and said to those standing there, ‘This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.’ Again Peter denied it, and this time he swore an oath and said ‘I don’t even know that man!’ But after a while, the men who had been standing there came over to Peter and said ‘We KNOW that you are one of them because your Galilean accent gives you away.’ Peter lost his temper and started cursing and swearing. He shouted ‘I don’t know the man!’ Immediately he heard a rooster crow.”

MATTHEW 26:71-74

“The tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do! Just as a tiny spark can burn up a great forest, the tongue is a flame of fire. That part of your body is full of wickedness and can poison everything else in your life. It is set on fire by hell itself and can turn our whole lives into a blazing flame of destruction and disaster.”

JAMES 3:5-6

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I FAIL?

3 THINGS PETER DID RIGHT

1. _____

*“When Peter heard the rooster crow, he remembered that Jesus had said, ‘Before the rooster crows, you’ll deny me three times.’ Then Peter went outside and **WEPT BITTERLY.**”*

MATTHEW 26:75

*“The sacrifice God wants is a broken and contrite spirit,
God will not reject a humble and repentant heart.”*

PSALM 51:17

2. _____

(Easter morning) “Mary Magdalene went and found the disciples together, grieving and weeping.”

MARK 16:10

(Easter night) "That evening the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group, and said 'Peace be with you!' . . . The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!"

JOHN 20:19-20

"A week later the disciples were together again meeting in a home."

JOHN 20:26

3. _____

"Because of his great mercy God has given us a new life by raising Jesus Christ from death. This fills us with a living hope . . ."

1 PETER 1:3

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

1 PETER 5:7

WHAT DOES JESUS DO WITH OUR FAILURES?

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned back to me again, strengthen and build up your brothers."

LUKE 22:31-32

1. _____

*"God certainly knows what we are made of.
He bears in mind that we are dust."*

PSALM 103:14 (GW)

2. _____

"Jesus is able to save us completely because (in heaven) he lives to intercede on our behalf. He is always talking to the Father, asking him to help us."

HEBREWS 7:25

3. _____

“ . . . so WHEN you have repented and turned back to me again . . . ”

LUKE 22:32

“For even though a righteous man falls seven times, he will rise again!”

PROVERBS 24:16

The Angel said, “I know you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. But he is not here—he’s risen from the dead . . . Now go tell his disciples, AND tell Peter, that he’s going ahead of you to Galilee and he’ll see you there, just as he promised!”

MARK 16:6-7

4. _____

(Two weeks later) “Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. Seven of the disciples were there and Simon Peter said, ‘I’m going fishing.’ ‘We’ll come, too’ they all said. So they went out in the boat, but even though they fished all night, they caught nothing. At dawn the disciples saw a man standing on the shore but they couldn’t see it was Jesus. He called out, ‘Friends, have you caught any fish?’ ‘Not a thing!’ they replied.’ Then Jesus said, ‘Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you’ll get plenty of fish!’ So they did what Jesus said to do, and they instantly caught so many fish, they couldn’t even draw in the net because it was so full of fish! Then John said to Peter, ‘IT’S THE LORD!’

“When Peter realized that he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and swam ashore, leaving the others in the boat to pull the loaded net to the shore, for they were only out about three hundred feet.

“When they got to shore they saw that Jesus was cooking fish and bread over a charcoal fire. Jesus said, ‘Bring some of the fish you just caught.’ So Peter went back aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was filled with a 153 large fish, and yet the net had not torn. ‘Now come and have some breakfast!’ Jesus said. Now they were sure it really was the Lord! Then Jesus served them the bread and the fish. This was the third time Jesus had appeared to his disciples since he had been raised from the dead.”

JOHN 21:1-14

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23

5. _____

“When you have turned back to me, strengthen and build up your brothers.”

LUKE 22:32

“After breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord, you know I love you,’ Peter replied. ‘Then FEED my lambs,’ Jesus said. Then Jesus repeated the question: ‘Peter, do you love me?’ Peter said, ‘Yes, Lord! You KNOW I love you!’ ‘Then TAKE CARE of my sheep,’ Jesus said. Then Jesus asked the same question one more time: ‘Peter, do you love me?’ Now Peter was grieved that Jesus asked the question a third time, so he said, ‘Lord, you know everything! You know I love you!’ And Jesus replied ‘Then feed my sheep!’”

JOHN 21:15-17

Jesus: “Now I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, and all the powers of hell will not”

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

MERCY FORGIVES!

PART 4

“Forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.”

MATTHEW 6:12 (NLT)

MERCY: undeserved forgiveness & unearned kindness

1. MERCY MEANS _____ God _____ to forgive me.

“You are a God of forgiveness, always ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and full of love and mercy.”

NEHEMIAH 9:17B (TLB)

“You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.”

MICAH 7:18B (NIV)

God _____ forgives me.

“All of us have sinned . . . yet now God declares us ‘not guilty’ of offending him if we trust in Jesus Christ, who freely takes away our sins.”

ROMANS 3:23-24 (TLB)

God _____ forgives me.

“God is merciful and quick to forgive.”

ISAIAH 55:7B (TEV)

God _____ forgives me.

“ . . . God forgave all our sins. He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ’s cross.”

COLOSSIANS 2:13-14 (NLT)

“You will have mercy on us again; you will conquer our sins. You will throw away all our sins into the deepest part of the sea.”

MICAH 7:19 (NCV)

“Mercy triumphs over judgment!”

JAMES 2:13 (NIV)

2. MERCY MEANS _____

QUIZ

A person should not be forgiven until he or she asks for it. T F

You haven’t really forgiven until you’ve forgotten the offence. T F

Forgiving includes minimizing the offense & the pain caused. T F

Forgiveness includes restoring trust & reuniting a relationship. T F

When I see someone hurt, it is my duty to forgive the offender. T F

Forgiveness is not _____.

“Forgive one another as quickly and thoroughly as God in Christ forgave you.”

EPHESIANS 4:32B (MSG)

Forgiveness is not _____.

“Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message.”

2 TIMOTHY 4:14-15 (NIV)

Forgiveness is not _____.

Forgiveness IS _____.

"Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

COLOSSIANS 3:13B (NLT)

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

HOW MUCH YOU MATTER TO GOD

PART 5

“Jesus saved us, not because of the good things we did, but BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life through the Holy Spirit.”

TITUS 3:5

Jesus: “I have come to SEEK and to SAVE those who are LOST.”

LUKE 19:10

Jesus told 3 stories to explain what he meant:

“THE LOST SHEEP” (LUKE 15:1-7)

“THE LOST COIN” (LUKE 15:8-10)

“THE LOST SON” (LUKE 15:11-31)

‘LOSTNESS’ _____

WHAT DO I LOSE WHEN I’M SPIRITUALLY “LOST”?

LIKE A LOST SHEEP . . .

1. I LOSE _____

“All of us have strayed away just like lost sheep. We’ve all left God’s path to follow our own ways.”

ISAIAH 53:6

2. I LOSE _____

“My people are wandering like lost sheep, without a shepherd to protect and guide them.”

ZECHARIAH 10:2

LIKE A LOST COIN . . .

3. I LOSE _____

“No one has ever seen or heard or even imagined the wonderful things God has prepared and arranged for those who love him.”

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9

LIKE A LOST SON . . .

4. I LOSE _____

“The younger son wasted all he’d been given and eventually he became miserable and lonely.”

LUKE 15:14

**OUR WANDERING NATURE SEPARATES US FROM GOD
OUR CIRCUMSTANCES CAN SEPARATE US FROM GOD
OUR CHOICES SEPARATE US FROM GOD**

5. I LOSE _____

“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, if he loses his soul?”

LUKE 9:25

BUT I DON'T LOSE _____!

“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.”

JOHN 3:16

HOW DOES GOD'S MERCY "SAVE" ME?

1. _____

"Jesus is the only one who can bring us to God. He became a human and gave himself to rescue all of us."

1 TIMOTHY 2:5

"Trust me in your times of trouble, and I will rescue you, and you will give me glory."

PSALM 50:15

2. _____

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and worn out from carrying too much. Learn to trust and rest in me and you'll recover your life."

MATTHEW 11:28

"I will give you back what you lost in the years when the locusts ate all your crops."

JOEL 2:25

3. _____

"Anyone who connects to Christ becomes a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything becomes new. God has done it all! He sent Christ to make peace between himself and us."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-18 (CEV)

HOW DO I CONNECT WITH GOD'S MERCY?

1. _____

". . . he wasted it all . . . he had nothing left . . . he got desperate and hungry . . . then he finally came to his senses . . ."

LUKE 15:13-17

GOD: "You'll find me when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else."

JEREMIAH 29:13 (MES)

2. _____

*“When he came to his senses, he said . . .
‘I have sinned against God and you . . .’”*

LUKE 15:17-18

3. _____

The son drifted away saying “GIVE ME MY share . . .”

LUKE 15:12

He returned to the Father saying “MAKE ME a servant.”

LUKE 15:19

THE FATHER’S RESPONSE

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; HE RAN OUT to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

LUKE 15:20

THE **MIRACLE** OF **MERCY**

YOUR MINISTRY OF MERCY

PART 6

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”

MATTHEW 5:7 (NIV)

Mercy is _____

Compassion-ate: _____

*“A man with leprosy came to Jesus and begged him on his knees,
‘If you are willing, you can make me clean.’*

*“Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched
the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately the leprosy left
him and he was cured.*

*“Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: ‘See that you don’t
tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the
sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to
them.’ Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news.*

*As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly
but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him
from everywhere.”*

MARK 1:40-45 (NIV)

*“Compassion is about making a decision. It’s not an emotion . . .
Expressing compassion is a deliberate choice [to embrace pain that is
not your own] . . . We are most like Christ when we choose to offer the
gift of our presence and choose to absorb within ourselves the suffering
of the least, the last, and the lost. Are you looking for Jesus?*

That’s where you’ll find him.”

— KAY WARREN

"[The priest] is to slaughter the lamb in the holy place where the sin offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered . . . The priest is to take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot."

LEVITICUS 14:13-14 (NIV)

"Moses slaughtered the ram and took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. Moses also brought Aaron's sons forward and put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet."

LEVITICUS 8:23-24 (NIV)

Whether you're a priest or a leper: _____

Question: What am I willing to do? _____

Mercy is _____

"Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?"

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

"Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: 'Here am I.'"

"If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail. Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings."

ISAIAH 58:5-12 (NIV)

*And as we follow your heart
We are led to the lost
Finding there a place of praise
No matter what the cost
So we will stand with the weak
Give our most to the least
Serving you with all we have
Your kingdom, God, we seek
A Life of Love*

— DAVID GATE