



Take It Home

Applying the Preached Word
Marriage and the Mercy of God
15-17 January 2009
Women's Break-Out Session

Speaker: Betsy Ricucci
Title: God's Mercy and My Marriage

II. INTRODUCTION

A. Mercy Defined

“there is perhaps no word in our language precisely synonymous with mercy” Noah Webster's Dictionary of 1828

“mercy implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity, or compassion, and clemency, **but exercised only toward offenders**”
Noah Webster's Dictionary of 1828

“Just as we don't change all at once, so we don't swallow all of truth in one gulp. We are simple people. You can't remember ten things at once. Invariably if you could remember just ONE true thing....you'd be different.” David Powlison

B. Our Need for the Gospel

“Reminding ourselves of the gospel is the most important daily habit we can establish... we should create ways to immerse ourselves in these truths every day. No days off allowed... Your audience is your own heart. And the message is simple: Christ died for your sins. It's a matter of sitting down, grabbing your own attention, and telling yourself, 'Hey, listen up!' This is what matters most: 'You're forgiven! You have hope! Your hope is based on the sacrifice of Jesus.' So let's not view this day any other way. Let today be governed by this *one defining truth*.” Living the Cross Centered Life, C.J. Mahaney, page 132-133

“God did not give us His gospel just so we could embrace it and be converted. Actually, He offers it to us every day as a gift that keeps on giving to us everything we need for life and godliness... We extract these benefits by being absorbed in the gospel, speaking it to ourselves when necessary, and by daring to reckon it true in all we do.” The Gospel Primer, Milton Vincent, page 5



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III. MARRIAGE AT ITS INCEPTION: MERCY EXPRESSED!

Gen. 2:18-25

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’” Genesis 2:18

“The incompleteness of the man without the woman is now satisfied by the gift of one from his side, to be at his side”. The Message of Genesis 1-11, David Atkinson, page 70.

The Hebrew word “translated ‘helper’, implies someone who assists and encourages. ‘Help’ provides support for what is lacking in the one who needs help”. The Message of Genesis 1-11, David Atkinson, page 68

“The word helper (used here in Genesis 2:18 in describing our role) is used for God 16 of the 19 times it appears in the OT.” Genesis, A Commentary, Bruce Waltke, page 88.

IV. EMBRACING MY ROLE AS HELPER: MERCY AT WORK!

“He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.” Proverbs 18:22

“the wording...suggests that after wisdom itself, the best of God’s blessings is a good wife” Proverbs an Introduction and Commentary, Derek Kidner, page 130

A. Help Make His Leadership Successful

1. Which are we quicker to do: criticize or commend our husbands for their efforts to lead us? Where can we begin to thank our husbands for their endeavors to lead us?
2. What unique help can I bring to my husband? How can I participate in making my husband’s leadership successful and effective?



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B. Help Him See God at Work

“Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, **working in us that which is pleasing in his sight**, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20-21

“Too many Christians are more readily aware of the absence of God than they are of the presence of God, and they are more aware of sin than they are of grace.” Humility: True Greatness, C.J. Mahaney, page 104

“Everyday God is placing divine post-it notes as reminders of His presence and provision”. C.J. Mahaney

“Obedience is the opener of eyes.” George MacDonald

“When you find a spark of grace in the heart, kneel down and blow it into a flame.” Morning and Evening, September 17, C.H. Spurgeon

C. Help Him Overcome Sin

1. Patience and Forbearance:

Forbearance: “the exercise of patience or restraint especially when provoked.” Webster's Third New International Dictionary

“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.” I Peter 4:8

“He who grows in grace remembers that he is but dust, and he therefore does not expect his fellow Christians to be anything more. He overlooks ten thousand of their faults, because he knows his God overlooks twenty thousand in his own case. He does not expect perfection



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in the creature, and therefore, he is not disappointed when he does not find it.” C.H. Spurgeon

“He said that a wife, if she is very generous, may allow that her husband lives up to perhaps eighty percent of her expectations. There is always the other twenty percent that she would like to change, and she may chip away at it for the whole of their married life without reducing it by very much. She may, on the other hand, simply decide to enjoy the eighty percent, and both of them will be happy.” Love Has a Price Tag, Elisabeth Elliot, quoted in Feminine Appeal, Carolyn Mahaney, page 41

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:21

2. **Correction**

“Let a righteous man strike me---it is a kindness; let him rebuke me---it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it.” Psalm 141:5

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.” Proverbs 27:6

“Rebuke, kindly, considerately, and prayerfully administered, cements friendship, rather than loosens it.” Proverbs, Charles Bridges, page 505

- a. **Correct Kindly:** for my husband's benefit and help. It is to be for him not at him...assisting him not attacking him.

Proverbs 12:18 “There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”



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Proverbs 18:21 “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

“Through each and every interaction however casual, however brief, I want to impart grace through my words, for that’s God’s purpose in granting us this gift of speech.” Humility: True Greatness, C.J. Mahaney, page 118

b. Correct Considerately:

Humbly and thoughtfully. How? By remembering who we are. By remembering what helps us.

“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost” I Timothy 1:15

“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye’, when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” Matthew 7:3-5

c. Correct Prayerfully:

“Prayers are instantly noticed in heaven.” Morning and Evening, Nov. 3, C.H. Spurgeon

“As an encouragement cheerfully to offer intercessory prayer, remember that such prayer is the sweetest God ever hears, for the prayer of Christ is of this character...Believer, thou hast a



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mighty engine in thy hand, use it well, use it constantly, use it with faith, and thou shalt surely be a benefactor to thy brethren." Morning and Evening, Feb. 6, C.H. Spurgeon

"Prayer is the forerunner of mercy...Prayer is always the preface to blessing. It goes before the blessing as the blessing's shadow....we may rest certain, if we are much in prayer, our pleadings are the shadows of mercy." Morning and Evening, Feb. 19, C.H. Spurgeon

"Prayer girds human weakness with divine strength, turns human folly into heavenly wisdom, and gives to troubled mortals the peace of God. We know not what prayer cannot do! We thank thee, great God, for the mercy-seat, a choice proof of thy marvelous lovingkindness. Help us to use it aright throughout this day!"
Morning and Evening, Oct. 11, C.H. Spurgeon

V. **MARRIAGE TRANSFORMED/REDEEMED BY THE GOSPEL: MERCY DISPLAYED! Ephesians 5:22-32**

"This is how Christians testify to the truth of the Gospel. The idea that Christians testify by getting up and speaking in a meeting is not found much in the New Testament, if at all. The testimony was borne in their ordinary daily lives...True marriage is an illustration of the New Testament teaching about love....That is the place where it should be seen if anywhere;..in the home, what they are there...so that anybody who comes to visit you will be staggered, will be taken aback by this, and ask, What is this? There is no greater recommendation to the truth and power of the Christian faith than a Christian husband and wife, a Christian marriage, and a Christian home." Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Work---An Exposition of Ephesians 5:18-6:9 by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, page 227