

GOD WHO IS RICH IN MERCY

Part 2 Ephesians Chapter two

Ephesians 2:4-5 **SLIDE**

[We were dead in sin and were by (our) nature the children of wrath]

*⁴**But God**, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).*

BUT GOD ... (The conjunction 'but' suggesting a contrast)

THE TWO MOST POWERFUL WORDS EVER SPOKEN TO A HOPELESS SOUL

BUT GOD!

We were beyond any hope. We were deemed to be corrupt to the core. We were proven to be guilty as charged ... and judgement was pending under the wrath of God.

Nobody could help us ... nothing that we did could change anything. There was no future – no salvation.

But then we read the two most wonderful words ... **'BUT GOD'!**

THIS IS WHERE GOD STEPS INTO OUR DEATH-STATE ... INTO OUR LIFELESS CONDITION & OUR SATANIC DOMINATION ... AND GOD DOES FOR US WHAT WE CANNOT DO FOR OURSELVES

THIS IS THE DEFINITION OF GRACE – THIS IS HIS SOVEREIGN GRACE. This is the very heart of Salvation where we see that Salvation belongs to Our God (Psalm 3:8) ... And we are SAVED BY GRACE & GRACE ALONE.

NO RELIGIOUS WORK COULD SAVE US

It is futile to think by giving all we have to the poor ... by praying ... fasting ... meditating ... separating ourselves from the world to live like a monk ... by afflicting our flesh ... by trying to be pure of heart ... that any of that could do anything to help us get saved ...

There was no hope.

BUT GOD ...

SLIDE ROCK OF AGES (A M Toplady)

Not the labour of my hands
Could fulfil Thy law's demands
Could my zeal no respite know
Could my tears forever flow

**All for sin could not atone
Thou must save and Thou alone**

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling
Naked come to Thee for dress
Helpless, look to Thee for grace
Foul, I to the fountain fly
Save me, Saviour, or I die.

IF YOU KNOW NOTHING ELSE, KNOW THIS - THAT YOU WERE WITHOUT ANY HOPE & BOUND FOR DESTRUCTION ... 'BUT FOR GOD'.

THANK GOD THERE IS A 'BUT GOD'

The "but" is very emphatic and wonderfully reverses the picture. The sovereignty of God is very apparent on its gracious side. It interposes to rescue those who would otherwise plunge into irretrievable ruin.

Pulpit Commentary

SO GOD STEPS IN,

BUT WITH THE SPECIFIC QUALITY NEEDED

Ephesians 2:4-5 **SLIDE**

But God, **who is rich in mercy**, because of His great love with which He loved us ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).

GOD STEPS INTO OUR PLIGHT WITH MERCY

Mercy - *eleos* (Greek)

It is releasing someone indebted to you ... It is cancelling a debt that someone owes to you.

It is annulling a sentence that has been pronounced against you. It is discharging you from a punishment imposed.

Dictionary Definition

Mercy: compassion or forgiveness shown towards someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm

SO WHY MERCY & NOT LOVE OR GRACE?

**MERCY WAS THE ACTUAL ATTRIBUTE NEEDED
TO SET US FREE**

You see mercy is far more than a feeling of compassion ...

**MERCY IS A SPECIFIC QUALITY THAT CAN ACTUALLY OVERTURN A
LEGAL CONVICTION.**

AND WE HAD A LEGAL CONVICTION AGAINST US ...

**MERCY CAN TRIUMPH IN A COURT OF LAW OVER ALL JUDGEMENT –
IT CAN OVERTURN JUDGEMENT.**

The president of the USA has the power to pardon a person's legal sentence and usually does so before he leaves the office of president.

Donald Trump granted clemency to 143 people the night before he left office.

**NB: MERCY DID NOT ONLY TAKE US OUT OF OUR
CIRCUMSTANCES – OUR DEATH-STATE**

**MERCY FIRSTLY HAD TO OVERTURN THE CONDEMNATION
WRITTEN AGAINST US**

Let's read again our text but starting from verse 3

Ephesians 2:3-4 (v3) Berean Literal Bible, (v4) NKJV **SLIDE**

*... We were by nature **children of [God's] wrath** even as the rest*

*⁴But **God who is rich in mercy**, because of His great love with which He loved us ...*

DID YOU NOTICE THE TWO SIDES OF GOD?

- **IN VERSE 3 WE ARE TOLD WE ARE UNDER GOD'S WRATH**
- **IN VERSE 4 WE ARE SHOWN GOD'S MERCY TOWARD US**

TWO SEEMINGLY OPPOSING FORCES

- *On one hand we have the intense anger of God **against all sin***
- *On the other, we have the mercy of God **toward the sinner***

THESE ARE TWO ASPECTS OF THE SAME GOD

THIS WAS A DILEMA THAT ONLY GOD COULD SOLVE AND STILL REMAIN TRUE TO WHO HE IS

SLIDE Let's explain it as if this were played out in a court of law where the Law of God presides ...

THE LAW OF GOD

THE WRATH
OF GOD

Romans 1:18 **SAME SLIDE**

*For **the wrath of God** is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*

Wrath = 'Orge' The strongest of all emotions ... strong passionate controlled emotion ... a settled and abiding condition of the mind.

WE WERE IN THIS POSITION: UNDER THE WRATH OF GOD & CONDEMNED BY THE LAW ... WITHOUT HOPE

SLIDE BUT THEN 'ENTER STAGE RIGHT' THE MERCY OF GOD

THE LAW OF GOD

THE WRATH
OF GOD

THE MERCY OF
GOD

THIS COMPASSIONATE QUALITY OF GOD INVADED THE UNFORGIVING LEGAL REALM.

*THIS FOREIGN ENTITY CALLED **MERCY** WALKED IN ... FULL OF STRENGTH ... AND CRIED, 'POINT OF ORDER YOUR HONOUR'.*

*Mercy says, 'YES there is a great debt owed ... YES there is a great offense made ... YES there should be a final judgement given. '**BUT I MERCY, AM HERE TO OVERTURN IT ALL**'*

THE LAW SAYS, 'MERCY DOES NOT BELONG IN THE COURT OF LAW. WHAT RIGHT HAVE YOU GOT TO OVERTURN MY JUDGEMENT?'

SLIDE

'AH' SAYS MERCY ... 'I HAVE EVERY RIGHT', POINTING TO JESUS ON THE CROSS ... 'THIS MAN HAS PAID FOR ALL CRIMES OF

HUMANITY & THIS MAN HAS ALREADY BEEN JUDGED FOR THEM.'

HERE, THE MERCY OF GOD TRIUMPHED OVER THE LAW,
OVERTURNED OUR JUDGEMENT & SATISFIED THE WRATH OF GOD.

YOU SEE, MERCY IS MORE THAN GOD'S EMOTION ...

*It is not some sickly-sweet **excuse** which 'The Left' propagates ... which the 'woke' culture preaches ... where they change the law and tolerate each other's sin ... where sin is called righteousness and where God's righteousness is changed to a **pathetic sickly human niceness!***

(No Honey was allowed in the Sacrifice - Lev 2:11 ... No Human Sweetness is acceptable to God)

NO, GOD'S MERCY HONOURS THE LAW ...

God's mercy has a legal basis – the death of Jesus.

God's mercy stands strong in the face of divine law and states, **'THIS MAN HAS PAID FOR ALL CRIMES'**.

Colossians 2:13-14 NIV **SLIDE**

*When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. **He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us. He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.***

**MERCY USHERED IN COMPLETE FORGIVENESS
AND CLEARED OUR DEBT FOREVER**

Mercy triumphed over judgment when Christ died for sinners, to rescue us from the condemnation we surely deserved. -CARE for AIDS - Anna Wilke (Intern).

Titus 3:5 **SLIDE**

He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

THE GLORY OF GOD'S MERCY

We also find that the guilt and condemnation of mankind was all in God's eternal plan in order that He would **be able to apply his mercy ...**

Romans 11:32 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

*For God has consigned [convicted] everyone to disobedience **so that He may have mercy on everyone.***

YOU SEE, THERE IS NO NEED FOR MERCY UNTIL GUILT HAS BEEN PRONOUNCED.

*Mercy applies only to debt, condemnation, execution ...
If there is no debt, no conviction, no judgement, then Mercy does not apply.*

So, if you are one who has never accepted your guilt before God, YOU WILL NOT UNDERSTAND THIS MERCY.

BUT IF YOU HAVE ... HIS MERCY IS YOURS.

MERCY IS DECREED ONCE & ESTABLISHED FOREVER

*Being brought up as a Catholic I had to learn the script of 'The Mass', part of which had this mantra, '**Lord have Mercy, Christ have Mercy**' repeated over and over again while striking our chests.*

We were pleading for Mercy without having faith ... without understanding ... and never thought anything would change.

People still believe they have to plead for mercy to a reluctant God. A stern judge who frowns on us for our sins, but this is not true.

FRIENDS, WE NEED NEVER PLEAD FOR MERCY AGAIN, BECAUSE MERCY HAS BEEN DECREED FOR US AS A RESULT OF THE CROSS. IT IS AS COMPLETE & FINAL AS JESUS DEATH ON THE CROSS.

Ephesians 2:4 **SLIDE**

*But God, **who is rich in mercy**, because of His great love with which **He loved us ...***

LOOK AT HOW GOD LOVED US - HE LOVED US WITH HIS MERCY.

• GOD LOVED US WITH RICH MERCY

NOTICE ALSO THAT 'HE LOVED US' IS THE AORIST TENSE ... IT HAPPENED ONCE AND STANDS FOREVER.

• **GOD LOVED US ONCE & FOREVER**

THIS MERCY OUT OF LOVE ONLY HAD TO BE DECLARED ONCE JUST AS JESUS OFFERED UP ONE SACRIFICE FOR SIN ... SO MERCY ONLY HAD TO BE GRANTED ONCE & WE WERE DECLARED FORGIVEN.

1 Peter 2:10 NIV **SLIDE**

*Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now **you have received mercy.** [RECEIVED LEGALLY – AORIST TENSE]*

NB: MERCY WAS GIVEN AND DECREED AT THE CROSS ... BUT WHEN WE BELIEVED ... WE RECEIVED THIS MERCY THAT WAS GIVEN

RECEIVING PERSONALLY WHAT WE'VE BEEN GIVEN LEGALLY

Hebrews 4:16 Berean Study Bible **SLIDE**

*Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may **receive mercy** and find grace to help us **in our time** of need.*

WE ALREADY RECEIVED MERCY THAT WAS DECREED ETERNALLY & LEGALLY FOR US

But here at the Throne of Grace we receive it **in our time.**

The Throne of Grace is God's provision for ongoing grace.

NB: WE DO NOT APPROACH IT & PLEAD FOR MERCY

SLIDE Here His mercy freely flows from His throne and we simply have to receive what we've already been given legally.

WE APPROACH THE THRONE OF GRACE TO PERSONALLY RECEIVE MERCY ALREADY GIVEN LEGALLY ...

TO EXPERIENCE IT EMOTIONALLY ... INTELLECTUALLY ... AGAIN & AGAIN ... FOR OUR DAILY FAILINGS ... OUR ONGOING SINS ... IN OUR TIME OF NEED ...

IT WASHES & REFRESHES & REASSURES OUR SOUL.

THIS IS MY EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE OF HIS UNDESERVED MERCY

- This is the washing of my soul based upon the regeneration of my spirit.
- This is the wiping away of the feelings of guilt and condemnation which God has already taken away but which I inadvertently keep taking back.
- This is the fresh revelation of His righteousness and divine assurance of my position with Christ in God.
- This is **the shedding of tears** and release of so much earthly pressure and responsibility that has been building up in me without me realising.
- This is the renewed feeling of acceptance after not feeling good enough ... a feeling that creeps up in us insidiously day after day ...
- This is 'words of assurance' that cancel my doubt ...
- This is the cleansing of worldliness ...
 - The unrestricted invitation ...
 - The happy welcome ...
- **This is seeing the smile of God** ...
 - Feeling the touch of His hand ...
 - **Hearing the song of His heart** ...
 - **Falling into the hug of His understanding** ...
 - Embracing the gentleness of the Holy Spirit ...
 - Being carried by His strength ...
 - Being separated into the beauty of holiness ...

THIS IS HIS MERCY & LOVINGKINDNESS WHICH FREELY FLOW FROM THE THRONE OF GRACE. **THIS IS WHAT 'MERCY' MEANS.**