

A CRY FOR MERCY PART I

A FEARFUL HEART

There is so much fear in us. Fear of people, fear of God, and much raw, undefined, free-floating anxiety. I wonder if fear is not our main obstacle to prayer. When we enter the presence of God and start to sense that huge reservoir of fear in us, we want to run away into the many distractions which our busy world offers us to do abundantly. But we should not be afraid of our fears. We can confront them, give words to them and lead them into the presence of Him who says: *“Do not be afraid, it is I”*. Our inclination is to show our Lord only what we feel comfortable with. But the more we dare to reveal our whole trembling self to Him, the more we will be able to sense that His, which is perfect love, casts out all our fears. Henri Nouwen *“A Cry For Mercy Prayers from the Genesee”*.

Mercy is a “love that responds to human need in an unexpected or unmerited way.” At its core, mercy is forgiveness and compassion that flows from the heart of God as seen in Christ death on the cross for our sins.

Jesus told this parable about a man who cried out to God for mercy and one who told God how self-righteous He considered himself. Luke 18:9-14 *He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortionist, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

1. **To Receive Mercy We Must Confess We Need Mercy..** if we think we are fine the way we are or we are good compared to others we will see our need to be saved, to be redeemed and we will never know the mercy of God.
2. **The Merciful Receive Mercy And Give Mercy...** *Matthew 5: 7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”* Only one who has received the mercy and compassion of God can give mercy and compassion to others. If you have never known what it means to be forgiven, to be loved by God and to be the object of God’s great grace, you will be easily offended, hold grudges and seek pay back from others who have offended you.
3. **The Unmerciful Are Arrogant...** They see others as less than themselves. Less righteous; Less worthy of their time; Less worthy of their respect.
4. **The Unmerciful Are Cruel...** no one has shown them compassion so they do not show compassion to others.
5. **The Merciful Are Forgiven....** Their sins are taken away.
6. **The Merciful Are Free...**to love God, to love others, and to serve them without recognition or applause.

Holy Father, Thy wisdom excites our admiration, Thy power fills us with fear, Thy omnipresence turns every spot of earth into holy ground; but how shall we thank Thee enough for Thy mercy which comes down to the lowest part of our need to give us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and for the spirit of heaviness a garment of praise? We bless and magnify Thy mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. A.W. Tozer Knowledge of the Holy