



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Matthew 1–13 Sermon Series

Supports Session 8: Mercy Extended

Sermon Title: “Unexpected Mercy” (2 Samuel 9:1-13)

Connection to Session 8

In Session 8, Jesus showed mercy to all who came to Him in faith. We can trust that when we come to Jesus, we will not receive condemnation but mercy and grace, even if we do not deserve it. In 2 Samuel 9, we see a picture of mercy displayed in the lives of David and Mephibosheth. This picture of mercy will help us see the mercy of Jesus more clearly.

Introduction/Opening

The definition of mercy is that we don't receive the consequences or punishment we deserve, but instead, we receive pardon or kindness. Mercy is not something we can expect to receive; it must be given. Have you ever received mercy? Perhaps you disobeyed your parents as a child and instead of receiving a just punishment, they “let you off easy” as a display of mercy. All earthly expressions of mercy have a limit. But God's mercy goes above and beyond our displays of mercy and truly astounds our sensibilities. We will see an incredible picture of the mercy of God in the story of David and Mephibosheth.

Outline

1. God desires to show mercy (2 Sam. 9:1–5).

- a. After Saul and Jonathan's deaths, David began to reign as king without a threat to his rule. However, he remembered his friend Jonathan. The king desired to show kindness to any remaining family members of Jonathan's house. Rather than wait for someone to come to him, he actively pursued Jonathan's son.
- b. Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, was the only remaining relative of David's beloved friend Jonathan. He was injured in both feet and was residing in a place called Lo-debar, which is intended to communicate that he lived “in the middle of nowhere.” Mephibosheth's state apart from King David was helpless. He was lame and destined to live out his existence not knowing the kindness of the king.
- c. Mephibosheth is a picture of all who are separated from God. We are lost in a no-name place and spiritually helpless. Mephibosheth also might have feared the king, not knowing whether he would be killed for being of the house of Saul. Actively pursuing the king was last on his list and making the trek would have been near impossible given his condition. Yet, like David, God desired to show us mercy and sent Jesus to rescue us.

2. God shows us mercy for the sake of another (2 Sam. 9:6-7).

- a. Once Mephibosheth arrived at the king's house, he fell facedown and demonstrated reverence to the king. Undoubtedly, Mephibosheth was unaware of why the king called for him in the first place. Yet, instead of receiving punishment, he received a great blessing because of another, his father Jonathan.
- b. David repeated a phrase God often said to his people: "Don't be afraid" (v. 7). Though Mephibosheth expected the worst, David explained that he intended to show kindness toward him because of his father. Mephibosheth had done nothing to earn this kindness; his relationship to Jonathan created a new relationship with David, the king.
- c. Similarly, we receive the mercy of God because of another, Jesus Christ. Our relationship with Jesus supplies us with access to the mercy and kindness of God. Because of our faith in Jesus, His death, and resurrection, we now have a new relationship to God where He pours His blessing on us.

3. God shows us mercy beyond our greatest expectations (2 Sam. 9:7-10).

- a. When Mephibosheth came to David, he probably did not expect to be shown mercy. He probably prepared for the worst outcome. Perhaps, at best, he hoped David might let him live. But because of Jonathan, he was blessed beyond any expectation.
- b. David told Mephibosheth that all that was Saul's fields would now be restored to him. Beyond that, he would be treated as family, having a place at the king's table.
- c. What a picture of the gospel! Because of another, Jesus, we have been given great mercy and have been welcomed as members of God's family. God does not merely permit us to live, but He grants us true life to be lived with Him.

4. Our response to God's mercy should be worship and enjoyment (2 Sam. 9:7,8,10).

- a. Mephibosheth correctly responded to David. In verses 6-8, Mephibosheth demonstrated reverence and paid homage to David twice. In his response to David's kindness, he asked, "What is your servant that you take an interest in a dead dog like me?" (v. 8). This is not a declaration of low self-worth; it is a recognition of his position before the king and the magnitude of David's blessing.
- b. Mephibosheth's posture before David provides us with an example of how to respond to God's mercy—with reverence and enjoyment of His blessings.

Conclusion

God's mercy is both undeserved and amazing. Like Mephibosheth, we have received the favor and mercy of God because of another, Jesus Christ. Through Him, we have received an unexpected mercy. We should respond in worship and enjoyment of God's mercy through Christ.

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