

## *I Desire Mercy and not Sacrifice*

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**Introduction:** If we wish to serve God then we ought to learn what He wants of us.

- A. We must learn and be reminded that we are not like God on our own. We do not think like Him. **(Isa 55:8-9)**
  - 1. When we are moved by pride we can think we speak for God.
  - 2. One of the greatest mistakes of the proud is to substitute the outward (that which man sees) for the inward (that which God sees). **(Mk 12:32-34)**
- B. The worldly man is puzzled by this and often fights those who try to teach them.
  - 1. Sometimes the battle between the “liberal” and “conservative” is not what it appears. Men’s labels are often not accurate.
    - a. One may be called “liberal” and be on God’s path. **(Jn 7:47-49)**
    - b. One may be strict and thus “conservative” but in fact “do not know the law” of God or God Himself.
  - 2. The man who loves God and His word will be tested and will meet others who want to test him.
    - a. Satan will always win the “PR war.”
    - b. Be careful things are not always what they appear at first sight, even among those who claim to be the people of God. **(Mt 7:21-23)**
  - 3. What does really God want? Lets us ask Him!

### ***I. God’s appeal to fallen Israel***

- A. God wants us to know about Him. **(Hos 6:1-3)**
  - 1. One of the most merciful things God can do is to let us fall and suffer. We must be humbled in order to learn about our God. **(Deut 8:15-16)**
  - 2. Men need to know that our God is merciful.
    - a. **Mercy** -"the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it."
    - b. He has emphasized this to us. **(Ex 20:5-6)**
    - c. Moses had experienced this mercy and knew this about the character of God. **(Num 14:18-19)**
- B. Our failure to know God will result in frequent failures. **(Hos 6:4-6)**
  - 1. Have you been a “yo-yo” Christian? **(2 Cor 4:1)**
  - 2. When we fail to see the mercy of God then we will often be overwhelmed.
  - 3. How many hear the voice inside them say: “You cannot serve God.”
- C. God wants us to know that sacrifices cannot replace a merciful heart.
  - 1. Some of the most knowledgeable men in God’s law can be the harshest.
    - a. True mercy will teach and rebuke. Mercy is not a cowardly watering down of God’s word. **(Mk 10:21-22)**
    - b. When we learn more we are tempted to be proud. We must keep God in sight. **(1 Cor 8:1-3)**
  - 2. What does God really want? **(Mic 6:6-8)**
    - a. What God wants is not easy! Do you understand this?

- b. This is not a rebuke of sacrifices but rather a reminder of where to place the emphasis! Our worship can be for us and not for God.

## ***II. Jesus defense of His evangelism***

- A. God's power in Jesus was shown through acts of mercy to the helpless. **(Mt 9:6-8)**
  - 1. God wants us to see that we are spiritually like those with physical disabilities.
  - 2. It is this mercy that God opens the hearts of men.
- B. Jesus went to those who needed Him and who would receive Him.
  - 1. There were some who were openly sinful. Many tax collectors were covetous, dishonest men. **(Mt 18:17)**
  - 2. This group of people did not try to hide their condition. They would not be tempted to play the hypocrite. **(Mt 12:31-32)**
  - 3. Those who hid were in need of Jesus but could not see or admit it. **(Jn 9:39-41)**
- C. Matthew wanted others to find the mercy of God. **(Mk 2:14-17)**
  - 1. Jesus was doing the work of God and found strong resistance from those who called themselves God's people.
    - a. We are no different. In many groups an evangelist will face strong opposition if he has success in converting others.
    - b. It is very difficult to find a church that will truly receive and support new converts. We must still show mercy to the unmerciful.
    - c. It is not uncommon for the evangelist to be attacked for the weaknesses of the new converts or his work ignored or criticized if they fall away.
    - d. Most churches want a pastor and not an evangelist.
  - 2. Those who participate in evangelism often find themselves in a work isolated from what other Christians are truly interested in.
    - a. Do you know the God of mercy? **(Mt 9:12-13)**
    - b. Are you really merciful towards the lost? (Ex. Wed. night attire.)

## ***III. Jesus conflicts over the Sabbath***

- A. The Pharisees often had conflicts with Jesus over the Sabbath.
  - 1. Jesus welcomed this conflict because He knew these men had a fundamental problem. He did not just whisper about them in the background.
  - 2. He sought to appeal to them through mercy. **(Mt 23:23)**
- B. When we fail to see mercy we can easily miss the meaning of God's word. **(Mt 12:1-8)**
  - 1. What was the correct interpretation and application of God's word?
  - 2. Some pervert this passage to encourage lawlessness. **(Mt 7:21-23)**
  - 3. Jesus makes another attempt to appeal through mercy to their hardened hearts. **(Mt 12:9-14)**
- C. We must be careful to follow the whole counsel of God.
  - 1. Have we limited God's word to a few favorite issues?
  - 2. Are we really the people that God is seeking? **(Mt 5:7)**

**Conclusion:** What will we want in the judgment day? **(Jas 2:13)**

- A. Who are we really like? **(Col 3:12; Jas 3:17)**
- B. Will you let God's mercy move you to open your heart?