

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 40)

SPIRITUAL COMPASSION. “Blessed are the merciful” (Matthew 5:7). Oswald Sanders makes an important observation on mercy. “Mercy can be exercised only to the underserving.” A key aspect of mercy is a willingness to forgive. According to Hendrickson, “Mercy is love for those in misery and a forgiving spirit toward the sinner.” Mercy is another chance. David prayed, “I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,’ and You forgave the iniquity of my sin” (Psalm 32:5). Proverbs 28:13 could be rendered, ‘He that covers his sins shall not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them shall have another chance.’ Eugene Peterson paraphrases this proverb: “You can’t whitewash your sins and get away with it;; you find mercy by admitting and leaving them.” Jesus is referring to mercy in Matthew 7:1-2 when He says, “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be to you” (Matthew 7:1-2 (NIV)). A person with no mercies does not give second chances. A prayer for mercy is a request for another chance. Radical disciples give second chances. The blessing: “They shall obtain mercy” – another chance for the underserving.