

Theology Proper

The Attributes of God's Goodness (part 2) – Lesson 9

⇒ **Lesson overview: Attributes of God's Greatness** – Mercy, Grace, Faithfulness, Righteousness, Goodness (pg.181), Longsuffering (pg.183), Jealousy, Will (pg.185-188), Blessedness (pg.188), Glory (pg.188).

I. _____

A. Meaning:

1. Mercy speaks of God's _____, tenderness, and _____ toward mankind. Mercy focuses on the _____ of the recipient. The idea is of God's disposition to kindness; His longing to treat with _____ those who deserve punishment.
2. Mercy usually relates to guilt, and it is that attribute of God which leads Him to seek the welfare of the sinner at _____ own personal expense.
3. Mercy (Gr. eleos) is very difficult to translate with one word – it refers to one who is actively compassionate; it involves both _____ and _____. The idea is that they possess a compassionate heart leading one to acts of mercy, the purpose of which is to relieve the suffering and misery of the object of that compassion.
4. One of the best translations of mercy is "loving-_____"; because that shows both motive and action.
5. The basic idea of eleos is to give help to the wretched, to relieve the miserable. Thus, the synonym for mercy is _____.
6. **The Hebrew words for mercy:**
 - a. **Racham** – means to show love for, to love deeply, to feel, show or have compassion on, to be compassionate, show pity or mercy. It is used 45 times and is derived from the Hebrew root word "Chanan" which means the _____. The word for mercy then comes from the word for the womb which is considered to be the motherly organ and source of greatest connection to compassion.
 - 1) **Isaiah 49:15** — *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have (racham) compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*
 - 2) **Psalm 103:13** — *Like as a father (racham)pitieth his children, so the LORD (racham)pitieth them that fear him.*
 - b. **Hesed/Chesed** used _____ times is the idea of God's love being faithful and steadfast in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel.
 - 1) **Hesed in the OT speaks of God as having a loyal love**, a steadfast and faithful love; in the Bible you will also find mercy often translated as, "lovingkindness" (30x's in OT):
 - **Psalm 51:1** — *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness (hesed): according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

- 2) **Hesed** surpasses ordinary kindness, it runs deeper than any social expectations, responsibilities, or fluctuating emotions; it is built upon a love that comes to life in real action.
- 3) **William Barclay** noted the Hebrew word (*hesed*) for "merciful" has the idea of ***"the ability to get right inside the other person's skin until we can see things with his eyes, think things with his mind, and feel things with his feelings."*** (William Barclay's *Daily Study Bible* commentary on Matthew).

B. Examples of God's Mercy

1. **God's Mercy is clearly illustrated in the OT in how God granted mercy to the nation of Israel.**
 - a. What was the name of the place where God's Shekinah glory descended in the Holy of Holies – _____.
 - b. Once a year on the day of atonement God received an offering by the High Priest to atone for the sins of the nation and God looked upon the people who were in the misery of their sin and impending judgment and accepted that offering and had mercy on them by forgiving them.
2. **When God gave the 10 commandments** – which people may feel was heavy and strict; it was actually merciful; in Exodus 20:3-17 (which records the giving of the 10 commandments) – it says in verse 6 just after He gives the 2nd command:
 - **Exodus 20:6** — *"And shewing mercy (hesed) unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."*
 - When Moses broke the two tablets containing the 10 commandments when he came down because the people made a golden calf to worship God mercifully gave them the 10 commandments a second time in Exodus 34:
 - **Exodus 34:5-7 — 5;** *And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. 6; And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, **The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7; Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,** and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.*
3. God was merciful in delivering lot out of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - **Genesis 19:16** — *And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.*
4. Jeremiah declares a very clear display of this interaction of man's miserable condition and God's mercy extended to fallen man:
 - **Lamentations 3:19-23** — *Remembering **mine affliction and my misery,** the wormwood and the gall. 20; My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. 21; This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. 22; **It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed,** because his compassions fail not. 23; **They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.***

5. Paul declared in the opening of 2nd Corinthians:

- **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** — *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the _____ of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

6. Jesus was a constant living example of divine mercy (Matthew 9:27, 15:22, 17:15-18).

7. The ultimate display of God's mercy was Christ's death in place of the guilty and helpless sinner. When man deserved death and hell for our sins (Romans 3:10-23, Revelation 21:8), God in mercy extended salvation at the sacrifice of Himself.

a. **Ephesians 2:4-5** - *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5; Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

b. **Romans 5:6-8** — **6;** *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7; For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8; But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

c. **Titus 3:5** — *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his _____ he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

d. **2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 1:16**

C. God calls believers to reflect mercy in their lives.

1. **Micah 6:8** — *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

2. **Luke 6:36** — *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.*

3. **Matthew 5:7** — *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

4. **The Good Samaritan** – Luke 10:27-37

- **Luke 10:36-37** — **36;** *Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? 37; And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*

5. **Forgiveness is an act of showing mercy – Matthew 18**

- **Matthew 18:32-33** — **32;** *Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33; Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?*

II. God is _____

A. Meaning

1. The concept of "grace" springs from an Old Testament word (chen) which means to literally "_____"
2. The idea of the word is the superior one does good to one who is _____; although the inferior is _____.
3. *It denotes the stronger coming to the help of the weaker who stands in need of help by reason of his circumstances or natural weakness. He (the stronger) acts*

by a voluntary decision, though he is moved by the dependence or the request of the weaker party." (Ray Pratt, DNTT, 2, 116)

4. The N.T. term is "charis" – it is used about 100 times by Paul – 24 times in Romans.

a. *Charis is used in the N.T. of that spontaneous act of God that came from the infinite love in His heart, in which He stepped down from His judgment throne to take upon Himself the guilt and penalty of human sin, thus satisfying His justice, maintaining His government, and making possible the bestowal of salvation upon the sinner who receives it by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who became a sin-offering for him on the cross.*" (Wuest – pg. 4 Soteriology notes, Pratt)

b. Grace is God's favor to sinners who do not merit it, do not earn it, cannot repay it, and didn't even seek it.

5. Grace carries the idea of God's undeserved, unmerited favor toward condemned sinners.

6. Grace is a forensic term; it deals in the _____ realm.

7. Difference between mercy and grace:

a. Grace is God's solution to man's ____; Mercy is God's solution to man's _____.

b. Grace covers man's sin; mercy removes the _____.

c. Grace takes away the fault, mercy takes away the _____.

d. Grace gives us what we do not deserve (forgiveness/salvation); mercy does not give us what we ____ deserve (death/hell).

e. Grace is unearned favor which saves us; mercy is undeserved favor which _____ us.

f. Grace deals with the _____ of sin; Mercy deals with the _____ of sin.

g. Grace pardons the crime; mercy relieves the _____.

h. Grace cures the disease; mercy removes the _____ of the disease.

B. Examples

1. **NOAH – Genesis 6 - The first-time grace us used in the Bible is found in Genesis 6.**

2. **Read Genesis 6:5-8**

a. _____

1) The word means to "change one's mind that results in a change of action".

2) This doesn't mean God made some kind of mistake He needs to go back and redo; rather it is used throughout the Scriptures in reference to God's dealings with men; that He "changes His course of action" based upon the action of man.

• _____ – *"If so, be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings."*

b. When God was going to destroy mankind – God "stooped down and condescended" to Noah; and the superior did good to the undeserving inferior one – and gave Noah and his family what they didn't deserve – _____.

3. **Grace came in bodily form when Jesus stepped onto this earth.**

a. **John 1:16–17 — 16;** *And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace (grace heaped upon grace).* **17;** *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

- b. Jesus Christ was the expression of God condescending to man, to come down to those who are undeserving sinners; the superior One who came to the inferior to deliver them from what they could not deliver themselves of, namely their sin.

C. Expressions of God's Grace.

1. _____ Grace

- a. _____ - *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and _____, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*
- b. _____ - *For by _____ are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9; Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

2. _____ Grace.

- a. This is God's free gift of enablement that allows us to live the Christian life.
- b. **2 Corinthians 9:8** — *And God is able to make all _____ abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*
- c. When Paul was dealing with the great burden of a thorn in the flesh that he prayed 3 times for God to remove from his life, how does God respond?
- **2 Corinthians 12:9**; *And he said unto me, My _____ is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

D. How should this affect me?

1. Realizing you did nothing to earn salvation, but rather were given salvation only by God's grace should cause you to be _____.

- **Romans 3:24** — *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

2. Nothing we can do can earn more of God's grace.

- **Romans 5:20-21** — *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, _____ did much more abound: 21; That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

III.

A. Meaning: God is utterly dependable, trustworthy, and reliable; the antithesis of everything fickle and fluctuating.

B. Where is God's faithfulness seen in the Bible?

1. _____
2. _____

C. Scripture: How is God's faithfulness revealed in the following verses?

1. **Deuteronomy 7:9** – *"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the _____ God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;" _____*
2. **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24** — **23**; *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24; Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* _____

3. **1 Corinthians 1:8–9** — *Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9; God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* _____
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4. **Lamentations 3:22–23 — 22;** *It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23; They are new every morning: great is thy* _____.
5. **1 Corinthians 10:13 — 13;** *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* _____
6. **2 Thessalonians 3:3 —** *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.* _____
7. **Revelation 21:4–5 — 4;** *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5; And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.* _____

IV.

A. Meaning

1. God’s righteousness is related to but distinct from holiness: Holiness is related to God’s _____ from sin whereas God’s righteousness has to do with ____, morality, and justice.
2. In a certain sense these attributes are but the _____ of God's holiness. It is holiness as manifested in dealing with the sons of men. Holiness has to do more particularly with the character of God in itself, while in righteousness and justice that character is expressed in the dealings of God with men.
3. “By justice and righteousness, we mean the transitive holiness of God, in virtue of which His treatment of His creatures conforms to the purity of his nature; righteousness demanding from all moral beings conformity to the moral perfection of God, and justice visiting nonconformity to that perfection with penalty, loss, or suffering.” (Augustus Strong, Systematic Theology, p. 296).

B. The Righteousness and Justice of God.

- Three things may be said in the consideration of the Righteousness and Justice of God:
 1. God gives righteous laws and commands to mankind – this may be called “_____ holiness”.
 2. There is the executing of the penalties attached to those laws, which may be called “_____ holiness”.
 3. There is the sense in which the attributes of the righteousness and justice of God may be regarded as the actual carrying out of the holy nature of God in the government of the world. So that in the righteousness of God we have His love of _____, and in the Justice of God, His hatred of _____.

C. Righteousness is that attribute which leads God always to do _____.

D. How the Righteousness and Justice of God is revealed.

1. In punishing sinners for their _____.

a. **Psalm 11:4-7 — 4;** *The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. 5; The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. 6; Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. 7; For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.*

b. Exodus 9:23-27; Dan. 9:12-14; Rev. 16:5-6.

2. In rewarding the righteous

a. Forgiving the sins of those who repent.

1) **1 John 1:9 —** *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

2) Ordinarily, the forgiveness of sin is associated with the mercy, love, and compassion of God, and not with His righteousness and justice. This verse assures us that if we confess our sins, the righteousness and justice of God is our guarantee for forgiveness—God cannot but forgive and cleanse us from all sin.

b. In keeping His word and promise to His children.

1) **Nehemiah 9:7-8 —** *Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; 8; And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous:*

2) We need to recall the tremendous obstacles which stood in the way of the fulfillment of this promise, and yet we should remember the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. When God gives His word, and makes a promise, nothing in heaven, on earth, or in hell can make that promise void. His righteousness is the guarantee of its fulfillment.

c. In the rewarding of the righteous.

1) **Hebrews 6:10 —** *For God is not _____ to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*

2) **2 Timothy 4:8 —** *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of _____, which the Lord, the _____ judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

3. Further Scriptures: Psalm 119:37; Psalm 19:9, Acts 17:31; Psalm 116:5; Ezra 9:15; Psalm 145:17; Jeremiah 12:1.

- **Other attributes of God's goodness can be considered and studied in Biblical Doctrines: goodness (pg.181), longsuffering (pg.183), jealousy, will (pg.185-188), Blessedness (pg.188), Glory (pg.188).**

- **Weekly Assignments**

- Study for test over lesson 9
- Read: "Biblical Doctrine" (MacArthur/Mayhue) pages 154-160
- Read: Basic Theology (Charles Ryrie) – chapter 7 – The Names of God