

## Motivational Gift of Mercy

Romans 12:8 He who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

### Defined:

Greek - "Eleos" - Compassion by word and deed, mercy; Cheerfulness, readiness of mind

### Description:

The gift of mercy is the special ability God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals, both Christian and non Christian, who suffer distressing physical, mental or emotional problems, and the ability to translate that compassion into cheerfully done deeds which reflect Christ's love and alleviate the suffering.

Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

### People with this gift show:

- Empathy
- Attentiveness
- Caring
- Compassion
- Comfort
- Deference
- Fairness
- Meekness
- Gentleness
- Sensitivity
- Responsiveness
- Tolerance
- Kindness

### Characteristics:

1. Express love, grace and dignity to those facing hardships or crisis.
2. Have a sensitivity to what the need is - the surface *and* the root needs.
3. Desire to remove the hurts of others.
4. Serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances, and do so cheerfully in spite of the undeserving nature of the needy without grudging or complaint.
5. Serve others with extraordinary patience.
6. Concern themselves with individual or social issues in which people are treated unjustly.
7. The least noticed, but most appreciated gift (along with the ministry of helps).
8. The ability to feel genuine pity and compassion for people in trouble.
9. Have the God-given ability to sense the pain of individuals and groups, often by just walking into a room.
10. Emphasize mental and emotional relationships in helping those in need.
11. Measure acceptance by physical closeness and quality time together.
12. Those with the gift of mercy can discern, feel, and, on occasion, actually suffer the distress of other people - especially affliction or adversity which is undeserved. They identify with and adapt their own feelings to the feelings of others. They may actually take on themselves the hurts and heartaches of others.  

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.
13. The gift of *service* seeks to meet the needs of others by giving *practical* help, but the gift of *mercy* meets the *emotional* needs of those in difficulty.
14. Tolerant of personal differences.
15. Very sensitive to words and actions that may hurt others.
16. Desire to have Christians stop hating and hurting one another.
17. Enjoy being with others who are mercy motivated.
18. Attract people with motivational gifting of prophecy.
19. Are loyal in friendships and expect the same from others.
20. Easily detect insincerity or wrong motives.
21. Mercy people are attractive to those who were hurting.

Matthew 9:27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

### Scriptural Examples:

1. Jesus empathized with the needs of the crowds when He saw they were harassed and faint with their troubles. They were helpless, cast down and dejected by their affliction. They were as sheep without a shepherd to guide them out of their misery. The gospels indicate that Jesus was stirred to mercy and compassion whenever He saw people afflicted by disease, injustice, grief, hunger, or loneliness.
2. Dorcas (Acts 9:36)
3. Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33-35)
4. Apostle John (1, 2 & 3 John)
5. Onesiphours (2 Timothy 1:15-18)
6. Hosea (Book of Hosea)
7. Joseph (the "legal" father of Jesus) Matthew 1:16-24; 2:13; Luke 1:27; 2:4-5; 3:23; 4:22; John 1:45; 6:42.

Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

## Misuses:

1. Becoming an enabler to those who need to make some difficult changes in their life. Can be clouded by emotions, sympathizing with those who directly violate God's laws.
2. Need to be objective.
3. Need to guard against feeling unappreciated, since some of the people helped will not show or express any appreciation.
4. Because it is the most tender and sensitive of all gifts, it is easy to become ultra sensitive and offended. They may sever fellowship with those who reflect insensitivity or harshness, especially towards their friends. They must learn to always walk in forgiveness (Colossians 3:13)
5. They react deeply to criticism from others and tend to close their spirit to those who try to correct them, especially if they sense a lack of sensitivity and understanding.
6. Often have a lack of firmness; an inability to say "no" to others. Mothers who have this gift may have trouble disciplining their children or saying "no" to harmful things the child does. They need to be sure to follow through on discipline. Failure to be firm will cause greater harm.
7. This lack of firmness may be misinterpreted by others as indecisiveness, weakness of character, or lack of courage. Assertiveness training can help.
8. A mercy motivated person seldom confronts, yet they need to learn to speak the truth with love.
9. They can sometimes attract people who have been corrected and are rebellious toward church leadership. They may coddle, continue to listen to them, and take up their cause and offense. They must not allow themselves to be taken advantage of and become a verbal dumping ground for those walking in offense.
10. Attraction to the troubled can be misinterpreted by opposite sex as having a romantic interest rather than spiritual service. Must be sure to avoid allowing improper affections from those of the opposite sex.
11. Can take on too many issues of others and get caught up in their problems - resulting in depression. They must rely upon God's strength and give mercy with cheerfulness. They must carry other people's burdens only long enough to place them in God's hands and into His provision. They need to keep their own emotional and spiritual tank full with consistent devotions.
12. They must not allow themselves to be guided by their emotions. Their gift is to our emotions, but they must learn to control their own feelings or problems such as depression or confusion will arise.
13. Can react negatively to God's purposes in allowing people to suffer. Unlike exhorters who look at suffering as a means of growing spiritually, those with the gift of mercy find it hard to believe that God would not allow a person to suffer for a good purpose. Their main concern usually is to remove the cause of suffering as soon as possible. They need to understand God's timing. (Example: Bailing people out financially who don't have their priorities in order.)
14. Emphasis on immediate priorities may appear as disorganization.

## Practical wisdom:

1. Don't go to a prophet for mercy. While they may have it, don't place unrealistic expectations upon them. But don't go to a mercy person when you know you need to be "adjusted", corrected or exhorted.

**90% will be won with compassion. 10% need the spiritual mace**

2. Every Christian is expected to be merciful. This is a role that reflects the fruit of the Spirit.

**We are to behave mercifully, even though we may not be thoroughly motivated to do so by our own gift.**

James 2:13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

## Ministries:

- Ministering to children
- Deacon/deaconess
- Counseling
- Community services
- Hospital visitation
- Nursery ministry
- Benevolence
- Prison ministry
- Providing meals
- Healing
- Recovery groups

## Complementing gifts:

- Helps
- Hospitality
- Helps

## Job's Response to friends who lacked Mercy:

Job 16:2 "I have heard many such things; Miserable comforters are you all!"