

Week Ten

David, Mephibosheth, and the Kindness of God

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: 2 Sam. 9:1-13; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 2:7; 4:32; Titus 3:4-5; Col. 3:12

§Day 1

- I. **Second Samuel 9:1-13 is a record of David's showing kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan:**
 - A. **David felt obliged to show kindness, for the sake of Jonathan, to any remaining descendant of the house of Saul and asked a servant of the house of Saul, saying, "Is there yet anyone at all of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?"—v. 3a.**
 - B. **The servant told David that there was still a son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, who was crippled in his feet—v. 3b.**
 - C. **David told Mephibosheth that he would show kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan his father and promised Mephibosheth that he would restore to him all the land of his grandfather and that he would eat at the king's table continually—vv. 7, 13.**
 - D. **King David preserved his life, restored to him all his inheritance, and invited him to feast with him at the same table—vv. 7, 9.**
 - E. **David gave to Mephibosheth all that belonged to Saul and to all his house; Mephibosheth ate at the king's table continually, and "he was crippled in both his feet"—vv. 9, 13.**
- II. **Mephibosheth had no ground to receive grace, yet he received it; the same is true with regard to us and God:**

A. Mephibosheth had no position at all before David—vv. 1-6:

1. He received kindness not because of himself but because of another person—v. 7.
2. This is true for a sinner before God—Rom. 2:4.

§Day 2 & Day 3

B. Lo-debar, the place where Mephibosheth lived, is a Hebrew word that means "a place without grass, without pasture"; the world today is a "Lo-debar"—2 Sam. 9:4:

1. Mephibosheth, who ran away from David, was living in a place without grass, without any life supply—v. 4.
2. A sinner far away from God is also living in a place without grass.

C. Mephibosheth did not seek after David, but David sent men to fetch Mephibosheth—vv. 4-5.

D. When David said, "Mephibosheth," there was a compassionate feeling in his heart, and there was a pleasant tone in his voice—vv. 6-7:

1. Underneath this word was a heart that expressed God's heart—1 Sam. 16:7.
2. David's heart was full of kindness and compassion—20:14-15.

§Day 4

III. Spiritually speaking, we all are like Mephibosheth, the grandson of King Saul (2 Sam. 4:4), who was crippled in his feet:

A. Although Mephibosheth dined with the king often, his two feet still remained lame—9:7.

B. After Mephibosheth received grace from David, he looked only at the riches on David's table; he did not look at his crippled feet underneath the table.

C. Like Mephibosheth, we can dine at the King's table even though we are still crippled—v. 13:

1. Our two feet are lame, but they are under the table.

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- 2. After we have been saved, we should forget about our "crippled feet" and sit at the table of our King, Jesus Christ, to enjoy Him—v. 7; Rom. 14:17; Neh. 8:10:
 - a. Whenever we look at ourselves, we discover that we are lame, and we become discouraged—cf. S. S. 2:8—3:5.
 - b. We should look only at the riches on the Lord's table and enjoy them—Eph. 3:8.
 - 3. What God has spread out for us is wonderful, rich, and sweet; we simply need to eat—John 6:50-51, 53-57; Matt. 8:11; 22:2; Rev. 19:9.
- D. We need to turn away from self-introspection and look away unto the Lord—Heb. 12:2; 2:9.**
- E. When we look only at the riches and the grace that God has spread before us, we will be peaceful, and our hearts will be satisfied—Matt. 5:6; 14:20.**

§Day 5

IV. David's kindness to Mephibosheth signifies the kindness of God—2 Sam. 9:3; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4-5:

- A. Kindness is a benevolent goodness that issues out of the mercy and love of God—Eph. 2:4, 7.**
- B. It is the kindness and the love of our Savior God that saved us and made us different from others—Titus 3:4:**
 - 1. The grace of God brings salvation to man; we have been saved by the grace of the Lord—2:11; 3:7.
 - 2. Titus 3:5 says that according to His mercy God saved us:
 - a. God's mercy reaches farther than His grace—Rom. 9:15-16, 18, 23; Heb. 4:16.
 - b. Our pitiful condition created a wide gap between us and God's grace.
 - c. It was God's mercy that bridged this gap and brought us to His salvation of grace—Rom. 2:4; 9:23.
 - 3. In Titus 3:4 and 5 Paul speaks not of grace but of kindness, love, and mercy:
 - a. Love is the source of grace; in 1 John we touch the love of God the Father

as the source of grace—3:1; 4:9-10.

- b. In the heart of God the Father there is love; when this love is expressed through the Son, it becomes grace—John 1:14, 16-17.
- c. Kindness is God's attitude in giving us grace—Eph. 2:7.
- d. When we have mercy, love, and kindness, we automatically have grace—Titus 3:4-5, 7.
- e. Our God and Father has shown us love, mercy, and kindness; it is by this that He saves us—vv. 4-5.

\$Day 6

C. In the ages to come—the ages of the millennium and eternity future—God will display "the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus"—Eph. 2:7:

- 1. It is in God's kindness that the grace of God is given to us—v. 8.
- 2. The riches of God's grace in His kindness surpass every limit—v. 7:
 - a. These are the riches of God Himself for our enjoyment—3:8.
 - b. The riches of God's grace in kindness will be publicly displayed for eternity—2:7.

D. One item of the fruit of the Spirit is kindness—Gal. 5:22:

- 1. Having put on the new man (Col. 3:10), as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, we need to put on inward parts of compassion and kindness (v. 12).
- 2. The apostle Paul was a minister of God in kindness, and he charged us to continue in the kindness of God—2 Cor. 6:4, 6; Rom. 11:22.
- 3. Love is kind (1 Cor. 13:4), and we need to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave us (Eph. 4:32).

WEEK 10 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

2 Sam. 9:3 And the king said, Is there yet anyone at all of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?...

7 And David said to [Mephibosheth], Do not be afraid, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan your father; and I will restore to you all the land of your father Saul, and you will eat food at my table continually.

Second Samuel 9 is a record of David's showing kindness to Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan. David felt obliged to show kindness, for the sake of Jonathan, to any remaining descendant of the house of Saul. A servant of the house of Saul, whose name was Ziba, was called to David, and David asked him, "Is there yet anyone at all of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" (v. 3a). The servant told him that there was still a son of Jonathan, one who was crippled in his feet. When Mephibosheth came to David, David told him not to be afraid, for he would surely show kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan his father. David went on to tell him that he would restore to him all the land of his father Saul and that he would eat food at his table continually (v. 7). (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 208-209)

Today's Reading

Mephibosheth's grandfather, Saul, was David's enemy. Many times he persecuted David and wanted to put him to death. He was a great enemy of David. When Saul and Jonathan were killed, Mephibosheth's nurse took him and fled quickly. She thought that since both his grandfather and father were dead, David might come to avenge and kill Mephibosheth if they did not flee fast. The boy fell on the ground and became lame because she was running too fast. Consider for a moment: does this not look like the picture of a sinner before God?

Man has misunderstood our God! Because man has devious thoughts

about God, he thinks that God also has devious thoughts about him.... Mephibosheth thought, "My grandfather was David's enemy; therefore, David must hate me. I have no love for David; therefore, David must have no love for me." This is the way we also think.... But God is not the same as we. Mephibosheth had no ground to receive grace, yet he received it. The same is true with regard to us and God.

God is also asking, "Is there yet any that is left of Adam, that I may show him grace?" David showed Mephibosheth kindness for the sake of Jonathan; God graced the sinners because of His Son Jesus. People make a great mistake in thinking that God hates man. They think that man has to do a great deal of good before God's face will be turned to them. Yet they are not sure how much good should be done before God will stop His wrath, consider them, and be pleased with them. But Mephibosheth had no position at all before David. David did not know Mephibosheth. David only knew Mephibosheth's father, Jonathan. He was gracious to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake. Mephibosheth did not have to do anything good before he could receive David's favor.... He received kindness not because of himself but because of another person. This is true for a sinner before God. Many people think, "I must do something good before I can please God." But the Bible tells us that God loves us without a reason. We did not have any position before God, and we should not have obtained His grace. But we have our Jonathan, Jesus Christ. God has graced us because of Him. We are saved because we have the Lord Jesus before God. With the Lord, we can come before God.

There is no place in the Bible that says that God wants to be reconciled to us. The Bible only says that we need to be reconciled to God. God is reconciled to us already!...Someone said, "It is fortunate the Lord Jesus died so that God could love us." But there is no such thing. He gave His Son to us because He loved us. (CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 279-281)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, msg. 32

WEEK 10 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Rom. 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that God's kindness is leading you to repentance?

2 Cor. 6:4, 6 But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God,...in pureness,...in unfeigned love.

“...And Ziba said to the king, There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet. Then the king said to him, Where is he? And Ziba said to the king, He is just now... in Lo-debar” (2 Sam. 9:3-4). Lo-debar is a Hebrew word which means “a place without grass.” The world today is a “Lo-debar”; it can never fill up man’s hunger or quench man’s thirst. “Lo-debar” can never satisfy our heart. Brothers and sisters, do you know that we are created for God and not for ourselves? All those who have not turned back to God will never be satisfied. You may dream about how your future will be so beautiful and restful. But after a while, you will find that the promises of the world are all unusable currencies.... The world only brings you discouragement and disappointment. Time after time, the world puts you into a dream; everything is just a mirage and a dry place without grass.... A life outside of God can never be satisfying. Mephibosheth, who ran away from David, was living in a place without grass. A sinner far away from God is also living in a place without grass. (CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 281-282)

Today's Reading

What did David do when he heard that Mephibosheth was living in a place without grass? Thank and praise the Lord! “Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar” [KJV] (2 Sam. 9:5). Fetch in the original text is “bring.” Romans 3:11 says, “There is none who seeks out God.” Luke 19:10 says, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.” Some people think that because we are so evil, we should surely seek after God. Since we are so

fallen, surely we should seek after God. But this is not how things work! If God had to wait for us to seek Him before He saved us, we would probably never be saved because we would never seek after Him.... Mephibosheth did not seek after David, but David sent men to fetch Mephibosheth. We did not seek after God, but God sent His Son to seek us and bring us back to His presence.

On Mephibosheth's side, he dared not seek the king because his grandfather was the king's enemy. In addition, he was not able to seek the king because he was lame. We may think, "Perhaps someday I will become better, seek after God, and earnestly plead to Him to forgive my sins. Perhaps then I will be saved." But...the Bible says God wants you, calls you, and sends men to tell you that He wants you. Romans 10:6 and 7...tell us that no man can go to heaven to ask the Lord to die for him and that no man can go to Hades to ask the Lord to resurrect from death. The following verses say, "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart...; for with the heart there is believing unto righteousness, and with the mouth there is confession unto salvation" (vv. 8, 10).... If there is a man here who is not saved, it will not be because God does not save him but because he rejects God's grace.

"Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he said, Your servant is here" (2 Sam. 9:6). Here is the most pleasant music! "Mephibosheth." David did not say anything more when he saw Mephibosheth. He did not say, "Mephibosheth you are here"; he did not say, "Saul's grandson Mephibosheth"; he did not say, "Jonathan's son Mephibosheth"; he did not say, "Who are you?" "Mephibosheth." Have you ever considered, when David said, "Mephibosheth, " what kind of feeling was in his heart, and what was the tone of his voice? Underneath this word was a beating heart, a heart that expressed God's heart. "Mephibosheth" shows that God does not hate man, that He wants man, and that He loves man. (CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 282-283)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 279-283

WEEK 10 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

1 Sam. 20:14-15 ...Do show me the lovingkindness of Jehovah, that I may not die; and never cut off your lovingkindness from my house...

Col. 3:12 Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, inward parts of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering.

Mary the Magdalene...thought the Lord was a gardener. When she asked the gardener where Jesus was, the Lord did not answer, "I am not the gardener," or "I did not take His body away," or "You are a woman; how can you get the body?" The Lord only said, "Mary!" As soon as she heard this very familiar voice, she said, "Rabboni!" We know that when someone calls another by name only, there must be considerable meaning behind it. On that day David saw his enemy's grandson, and he only said, "Mephibosheth." This shows that David's heart was not only without hatred but also full of compassion. (CWWN, vol. 18, p. 283)

Today's Reading

Mephibosheth did not know David's heart. When he went to David, his heart might have been beating fast, and he might have been thinking, "Today I am going to see the king of Judah; maybe he will kill me." When he saw David and heard him call, "Mephibosheth," he should have known that David had only compassion and no bad intention toward him. But with a heart full of fear, he said, "Your servant is here" [2 Sam. 9:6]. He might have thought, "Formerly I was a king's grandson; now I humble myself to be a servant. Perhaps by this I will gain David's favor, and he will not kill me." I must tell you that no one can please God by relying on himself becoming a servant.

Then David testified of God's heart. He said to Mephibosheth, "Do not be afraid, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan

your father; and I will restore to you all the land of your father Saul, and you will eat food at my table continually" (v. 7).... I do not know how many among us realize that God loves us.... If we only knew that God loves us, our lives would be changed greatly. I know the kind of heart that He has.... He loves you and wants you to be saved.... Many people say, "God does not tell me that He loves me." But please take a look at the cross, and you will know that He has already loved you. You should have received the punishment of the cross, but He made the Lord Jesus suffer it for you because He loves you. What is love? Love is not words. The deepest kind of love cannot be expressed in words. The prodigal son was prepared to say to his father, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants" (Luke 15:18-19). But when he was yet a great way off, his father had compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. A father's heart shortens the distance of sin.... His father did not say, "I love you," but as soon as he kissed him, the prodigal son knew his father's heart. He could not say the words, "Make me like one of your hired servants." He could only say in his heart, "My father loves me." Please do not misunderstand God's heart. Please come to the cross. Jesus has already died for you; this should show you what is in God's heart already. When you see the blood of the Lord Jesus, you will know how much God loves you.

"The king called Ziba, Saul's attendant, and said to him, All that belongs to Saul and to all his house I give to your master's son. And you shall work the land for him, you and your sons and your servants; and you shall bring in the produce that your master's son may have food to eat.... And Mephibosheth, said David, shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons" (2 Sam. 9:9-11). How marvelous that there is not one condition, not one commandment; there are only promises. It does not say how much one should work. Everything was given. This is grace. If we understand God's heart, we cannot but believe in Him. (CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 283-284, 286)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, pp. 101-104

WEEK 10 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

2 Sam. 9:13 And Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem because he ate at the king's table continually. And he was crippled in both his feet.

Heb. 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

All of us are like Mephibosheth, the grandson of King Saul (2 Sam. 4:4). Mephibosheth was lame; he was unable to walk. King David preserved his life, restored to him all his inheritance, and invited him to feast with him at the same table (9:1-13). After Mephibosheth received grace from David, he only looked at the riches on David's table; he did not look at his two lame legs underneath the table. Whenever we look at ourselves, we discover that we are lame, and we become discouraged. After we have been saved, we should forget about our two lame legs and sit at the table of our King, Jesus Christ, to enjoy Him with all His unsearchable riches. We should only look at the riches on the Lord's table and enjoy them. By our enjoyment of the unsearchably rich Christ, He will transform us. (CWWL, 1965, vol. 2, "The Tree of Life," p. 200)

Today's Reading

Before Mephibosheth knew of David's love to him, David already loved him; after Mephibosheth knew of his love, David still loved him. God is the same toward us.... God loves you just the way you are. Come to God just as you are.

Now someone may say, "...We are saved by grace and not by works. God treats me in the same way that David treated Mephibosheth. But after I am saved, should not my behavior become better? Why do I still feel that I am sometimes high and sometimes low, at times good and at times bad?" In

order to answer this question, please read 2 Samuel 9:13. "Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem because he ate at the king's table continually. And he was crippled in both his feet." We were saved by grace initially, and we are also kept in this salvation by grace. Many mistakenly have a concept that they were initially saved by grace but they are kept in this salvation by work. However, there is no such thing. We should realize that the condition for salvation is the condition for preservation. We are saved by Jesus, and we are kept by Jesus to the end. Although Mephibosheth dined with the king often, his two feet still remained lame. If one foot is lame, one can still jump. But if both feet are lame, it is not only inconvenient but also ugly. We can dine at the king's table, and both feet can still be lame. The king would not allow a lame person to dine at his table on the first day and then drive him out after a few days because his feet were still lame. There is no such thing.

Our two feet are lame, but they are under the table. We should just eat what is on the table. Why do we put our two feet, which should be under the table, onto the table? We should just pay attention to what is on the table. What God has spread out here is wonderful, rich, and sweet. We just need to eat. We should not look at ourselves. Instead, we should look at the riches God has given us. Every time we look at ourselves, we will not have peace. Our eyes are for looking outside, not inside. Self-introspection is not our portion. If we keep our eyes upon the Lord, we will go from glory to glory and be transformed into His image. If we look at ourselves, we will be just like Mephibosheth with two feet lame. After we are saved, we receive a new life, and the Holy Spirit lives within us; we become entirely new. The self that comes from Adam never changes. How did a man as holy as St. Augustine feel when he was dying? He said, "Most of this world's seeds of sin are within my self." As long as we are still in this body, our two feet are still lame. We should not look at ourselves. We should only look at the riches and the grace that God has spread before us. When we do this, our hearts will be satisfied. (CWWN, vol. 18, pp. 287-288)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 8, 10-11

WEEK 10 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Titus 3:4-5 But when the kindness and the love to man of our Savior God appeared, not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

The New Testament reveals the divine attribute of kindness.... Romans 11:22, speaking of the kindness of God and His severity, emphasizes the attribute of God's kindness. Furthermore, Ephesians 2:7 declares, "That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Kindness is a benevolent goodness which issues out of mercy and love. It is in such kindness that the grace of God is given to us.... It is the kindness and love of our Savior God that has saved us and made us different from others. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 107-108)

Today's Reading

[Romans 2:4] says, "Do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that God's kindness is leading you to repentance?" The apostle seems to say, "On one hand, you condemn others, and on the other hand, you commit the same sins. What do you mean by doing this? Do you think that God will not judge you, or do you despise the riches of His kindness, forbearance, and long-suffering? You think that God will not judge you. You seem to not know that He surely will judge you. He has not judged you yet because He is kind toward you. His kindness causes Him to forbear you, and His forbearance causes Him to be long-suffering toward you. He is so kind to you because He wants to lead you to repentance. He is forbearing and long-suffering toward you because He is waiting for you to repent. His judgment has not come upon you because His kindness causes Him to forbear you and be long-suffering toward you, waiting for you to repent. This is what you should know and

must not despise." (CWWL, 1952, vol. 2, pp. 205-206)

In Titus 3:4 Paul says, "But when the kindness and the love to man of our Savior God appeared." In verse 5 Paul continues, "Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit." Titus 2:11 says that the grace of God brings salvation to man, and 3:7 says that we have been justified by the grace of the Lord. But verse 5 says that according to His mercy He saved us. God's mercy reaches farther than His grace. Our pitiful condition created a wide gap between us and God's grace. It was God's mercy that has bridged this gap and brought us to His salvation of grace.

In 3:4-5 Paul does not speak of grace, but speaks of kindness, love, and mercy. Love is the source of grace. In the heart of God the Father there is love. But when this love is expressed through the Son, it becomes grace. For this reason, 2 Corinthians 13:14 speaks of the grace of Christ and the love of the Father. In John 1:16 and 17 we have grace; however, in 1 John we touch the love of God the Father as the source of this grace.

What, then, are mercy and kindness? We have pointed out that mercy always reaches farther than grace. When we are in a proper situation, God's love will come to us as grace. However, we were all in a pitiful situation and may still be in such a situation today. Therefore, we need God's mercy to reach us. The mercy of God can come to us even in our pitiful situation.

Kindness is God's attitude in giving grace to us. It is possible to give a gift to a person without having a proper attitude. For example, I may give a valuable gift to a brother but give it in a rather crude, insensitive manner. On the other hand, I may give him a gift in a way that expresses an attitude of kindness.

When we have mercy, love, and kindness, we automatically have grace. Our God and Father has shown us love, mercy, and kindness. It is by this that He saves us. (Life-study of Titus, pp. 40-41)

Further Reading: Life-study of Titus, msgs. 4-5; CWWL, 1952, vol. 2, pp. 205-206; Life-study of Matthew, msg. 52

WEEK 10 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 2:7-8 That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.

4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

Ephesians 2:7... does not say that the riches of God's grace are His kindness toward us. It says that the riches of God's grace are given to us in His kindness. Suppose that a brother who has fallen into desolation comes to see me.... I may not like him very much, knowing long ago that he would go astray. Nevertheless, as I consider his condition, I am moved with compassion to treat him generously and be kind to him. Thus, instead of reproaching and condemning him, I treat him leniently and graciously. This is the grace that I give him, and this grace is given in my kindness toward him. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, p. 102)

Today's Reading

We were once those Who opposed God and walked according to the age of this world, according to Satan as the ruler of the authority of the air. Moreover, we also once conducted ourselves in the lusts of the flesh and were children of wrath before God. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, was full of kindness toward us. Although God is a strict and majestic God, He did not abandon us but rather had mercy on us. His mercy and His love caused Him to be kind toward us, that is, to be lenient, good, and benevolent to us. God's kindness toward us is according to His love and because of His mercy. In this kindness He gives us the riches of His grace.

Here we see mercy, love, grace, and kindness. God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, saved us so that the

riches of His grace would be displayed. Furthermore, the riches of God's grace are displayed in His kindness. God's heart is love, but we were dead in our offenses and sins. Therefore, in His mercy He came down to us, even entering into us one day to be received by us as our enjoyment. This is grace being given and reaching us, and it is in His kindness that He reaches and gives Himself as grace to us. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, pp. 102-103)

To display the riches of God's grace is to exhibit them to the whole universe publicly. The riches of God's grace surpass every limit. These are the riches of God Himself for our enjoyment. They will be publicly displayed for eternity.

[The abounding] grace has surpassing riches. It has many aspects, virtues, and attributes, such as life, light, and power. Apart from life, light, and power, God cannot save us. For example, how can you rescue a person who has fallen into a pit if you do not have the strength to lift him out? Furthermore, if you do not have love for him, you will not bother to save him. In order to save us, God needed love and wisdom. These are some of the surpassing riches of God's saving grace. In His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus, God has saved us by His grace. In the ages to come—in the millennium and eternity future—God will display this grace publicly to the whole universe.

Only the enjoyment of Christ as our life supply and as our joy can make our hearts tender. If we are tenderhearted, we shall forgive others [cf. Eph. 4:32]. In our daily walk, we need both to forgive others and to ask others to forgive us. This is necessary because we are easily offended and we easily offend others. If we have offended someone, we need to ask for forgiveness. But if we have been offended, we need to extend forgiveness to others, even as God in Christ has forgiven us.

In his exhortation in this section, the apostle presents God as the pattern of our daily life. By the life of God, in His Spirit, we can forgive as God forgives. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 182-184, 411)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msgs. 21, 48

<< WEEK 10 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #26 God, we praise Thee for Thy mercy

Worship of the Father — His Mercy

- 1 God, we praise Thee for Thy mercy,
 'Tis so great and so profound!
In our weakness and our failures;
 With its greatness it abounds.
We adore Thee! we adore Thee!
 With such mercy we've been crowned!
- 2 How we marvel at this mercy
 So far-reaching and so vast!
It has reached us, e'en the sinners,
 And will ever hold us fast.
From this mercy, from this mercy,
 What can cause us to be cast?
- 3 For Thy mercy we are grateful,
 'Tis so rich, so plenteous!
Thru Thy mercy in redemption,
 Thou hast richly favored us.
If without this, if without this,
 How could we be favored thus?
- 4 Oh, Thy mercy, so inspiring!
 Gentle, tender, dear and sweet!
With Thy patience and Thy kindness,
 Us in all our need it meets.
It we treasure, it we treasure,
 Nothing can with it compete.
- 5 Father, we enjoy Thy mercy,
 Ever fresh and ever new;
Every morning shed upon us,
 It refreshes as the dew.
How we taste it! how we taste it!
 Giving Thee the praises due.
- 6 We can never cease to praise Thee,
 As Thy mercy e'er endures;

All Thy grace and all Thy favor,
Ever for us it secures.
Trusting in it, trusting in it,
Thy sure mercy us assures.