



October 4, 2016

feeding...gathering...carrying...leading. (Isiah 40:11)

Dear Church Family,

What a great privilege it was to bring our hearts and bend our knees at the banqueting table of our Lord Jesus Christ this Sunday! "You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love..." (Nehemiah 9:17). Our time together was a biblical exhortation and testimony of God's mercy and power as it is expressed in the context of healing, particularly physical healing. There is a sensitivity to this topic, especially in a corporate setting, as we know that healing is not always received when we have asked for it. As a body we have chosen to press on and continue asking, recognizing the mysterious sovereignty of God, and choosing to be like the persistent widow - praying always (Luke 18).

Healing prayer is a mercy ministry and a channel of God's mercy to His people. Mercy and grace are often interchangeable in scripture, however, they are distinct sides of the same coin, God's manifest love.

- **Grace** gives us what we do not deserve. **Mercy** delivers from something we may or may not deserve.
- **Grace** often fills an empty space, bringing something welcome. **Mercy** often empties a space, removing something unwelcome.
- **Grace** is a response of God towards us. **Mercy** is an action of God for us.
- **Grace** means favor. **Mercy** means pity.
- **Grace** is a result of God's cognitive will. He decides to bestow grace. **Mercy** is a result of God's emotions. Mercy is an expression of God's affections.

The best way to examine the attributes of God's mercy and power is to take an overview from Genesis to Revelation, recognizing this is WHO HE IS and how He wants to express Himself through us. May we make this an intercession, declaring these truths of scripture over our church, invoking God and asking Him to impart these attributes to us all.

GOD IS MERCIFUL

The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The Lord is good to all and his mercy is over all that He has made. (Psalm 145:8-9) This repeated refrain in scripture (Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 103:8, Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2) teaches us that mercy is a break on the speed at which God gets angry, mercy is an expression of His love, and a reminder that He will not forsake us. This is who we need God to be in every healing prayer situation!

David experienced God's mercy at moments of greatest public and private failure. *I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercy is great; but let me not fall into the hand of man. (2 Samuel 24:14, 1 Chronicles 21:13)*. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1). David experienced the mercy of God when he deserved judgement. It is therefore not surprising that we see the theme of crying for mercy throughout the Psalms (Psalm 4:1, 6:2, 41:3-4).

Mercy is the bedrock of the Incarnation. The mercy, manifest love of God the Father gave us the Son. *His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation...He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy. (Luke 1:50, 54)*. Further this incarnational mercy is declared through Zechariah in Luke 1:68, 69, and 72.

Jesus responded to the appeal for mercy throughout the gospel! *Have mercy on us Son of David (Luke 18:38-39). Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me. My daughter is demon possessed (Matthew 15:22). "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:47-38).*

Let us also appeal to Him for mercy as a church. *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). My God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes ... For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy (Daniel 9:18).* We are in total dependence on the leading of the Holy Spirit, the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and the great mercy of the Father every single time we approach for healing.

POWER OF GOD

Genesis opens with the incredible power display of Creation, and regardless of your interpretation of the first two chapters of Genesis the message is the same: God is powerful! In Revelation the Bible ends with these words, *Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.*

Power belongs to our God... (1 Chronicles 29:11-12) *To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are His (Job 12:13). Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God (Psalm 62:11).*

But God shares His power! *Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High (Daniel 7:27). You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you (Acts 1:8). So just as with the mercy we see Jesus uses power for healing. The power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal (Luke 6:19). When Jesus had called the twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and cure diseases, and He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick (Luke 9:1).*

These are all the ways God wants His Power to be at work in and through us! *I will not venture to speak of anything except what Chris has accomplished through me ... by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God (Romans 15:19). For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power (1 Corinthians 4:20). The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4).*

So how do we receive more power? By asking our God to whom all power belongs. *I pray that the eyes of our heart may be enlightened in order that we may know the hope to which He has called us, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength He exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fill everything in every way (Ephesians 1:18-23).*

We want to continue to avail ourselves of everything Jesus died for – by His wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53).

In Christ,
Celia