

He Gives Mercy to Those Who Ask

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. **—Exodus 33:19**

The only way to be saved is to ask God for mercy. Mercy, to be mercy, can be given or withheld and justice be done in either case. Jesus described two people in prayer: one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself; the tax collector begged God for mercy. Jesus warned us, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

If you want to compare yourself with others, God says you are lost. You should climb down from your pride and say, “God be merciful to me a sinner. I’d be so grateful.”

God sometimes chooses to withhold His mercy.

Edom may say, “Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins.” But this is what the Lord Almighty says: “They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the Lord. You will see it with your own eyes.” **—Malachi 1:4-5**

That is enough to bring us to our knees.

This word at the beginning of the Book of Malachi was an oracle to the people of Israel. You say, “Well that is fine. God loved Israel, but I am a Gentile.” But in Romans 9:6, Paul says, “It is not as though God’s word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.” God has widened the family. His family was not to be continued along racial lines but through those who would hear the gospel and respond to it.

Because God decides to whom to show mercy, it makes all the

difference in the world how we approach Him. He is sovereign. When you know that He has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy" (Exod. 33:19), you come to your knees and say, "Will You be gracious to me?"

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