



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC The God Who is Merciful

SPEAKER Ps Ng Hua Ken

THEME Minister the Grace of God/ Blessing Others

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

PAY IT FORWARD

Ps Hua Ken encouraged us to be channels of blessing, paying forward the blessings that we receive from the Lord. He went on to advocate that we should inculcate a lifestyle of blessing others and that the heart and awesome love of our Father God should be our motivation to bless others.

The worldwide influence of the 18th century Moravian missionaries was extraordinary. They were responsible for the conversion of John Wesley, founder of the Methodists. In 1727, the Moravian Community commenced a round-the-clock prayer watch that lasted a hundred years. 65 years after the start of the prayer vigil, the tiny community had sent out 300 missionaries. Their prayer sensitised them to attempt the then, unheard-of mission to reach others for Christ. They faced danger and persecution; some even sold themselves into slavery. The zeal in these missionaries was amazing and it was because they were committed to Jesus Christ and His purposes.

THE GOD WHO IS MERCIFUL

God is a merciful God who loves to be merciful to us. His mercy is a blessing in itself and we should be thankful for it. Our motivation to show others mercy should be because we have tasted of His mercy towards us. When we have received God's mercy, we can then be a blessing.

Jesus showed mercy towards tax collectors and sinners. Matthew was a tax collector yet Jesus saw it fit to call Matthew his disciple. Tax collectors in those days were despised members of society. First, they were seen as traitors because they were seen as betraying the Jews – they were hired by the Romans to collect taxes for Rome. Second, tax collectors wringed more money out of taxpayers than the amount owed and pocketed the extras. But Matthew received the mercy and forgiveness of Jesus and left his profession when Jesus called him.

As an act of paying it forward, Matthew held a large feast and invited other tax collectors and sinners to feast with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees who were present could not understand why Jesus was with these ceremonially unclean sinners. But Jesus said: "Healthy people do not need a physician, but those who are ill. Go, then, and learn what this means: 'I want mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners." (Matthew 9:12, 13).

HOW DOES OUR HEART BECOME MERCIFUL?

Mercy comes from a heart that has first felt its spiritual bankruptcy and has come to grief over its sin. It has learned to wait meekly for the timing of the Lord and to cry out in hunger for the work of his mercy to satisfy us with the righteousness we need. Ps Hua Ken says this means having a heart that is broken for the Lord – knowing that nothing in us is good enough but it's only through Christ that we receive mercy.

THE OPPOSITE OF MERCY:

1. Sacrifice

Hosea uses the analogy of an unfaithful wife to speak God's rebuke over the children of Israel who worshipped other gods while continuing the ritual of the sacrifices. God described their goodness as a morning dew, which evaporates once the sun is out. He desired their love over religious sacrifices.

2. Religious Trivia

In Matthew 9:11, the Pharisees missed the point about showing mercy as their focus was only on the spiritual cleanliness of the tax collectors and sinners. Another example outlined where God showed undeserving mercy is in the story of Jonah.

CONCLUSION

Ps Hua Ken summarised the message by stressing the importance of showing mercy as the mercy we show to each other comes from God's mercy to us. He outlined 2 applications of the message:

1. Show mercy, do not judge others. It is important for us to extend our hearts to those who are needy as highlighted in James 2:12-13 "Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom ... Mercy triumphs over judgment."
2. Start prayer groups! Remember the example of the Moravians. By starting these prayer groups in our schools and workplaces, we can eventually reach out to others who are facing difficult situations and demonstrate the mercy of God to them.

QUESTIONS

1. What is God's mercy? How have you experienced it in your life?

2. How does an understanding of God's mercy transform us to become a blessing to others? Reflecting on this understanding, have you lived in such a way that reflects His mercy? Share about how it has transformed your life.

3. Is there someone whom you can bless this Chinese New Year? How you will do so?