

## MERCY and JUSTICE<sup>1</sup>

“**God's mercy is completely just.** God says to the sinner, "I know you have done terrible things, but I love you and by My mercy I forgive you." He can do that and be completely just because He came into the world in human form and paid the price His justice requires for our sin by His death on a cross. **When Jesus died, God's justice was satisfied.** God had said there could be no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Lev. 17:11). **There had to be a perfect sacrifice to bear the sin of the world, and Jesus was that sacrifice.**

“**God's mercy is not a foolish sentimentality that excuses sin.** Too much of that kind of thinking exists today-*even in the church*. **The only time God ever extends mercy to anyone is through Christ.** He paid the price for our sin.

“**Some people think mercy overrides demands of justice and means that people don't need to pay for wrongdoing.** King Saul showed that kind of mercy by sparing King Agag (1 Sam. 15:9). After David's son Absalom killed his brother Amnon, David showed a false and sentimental mercy toward Absalom by letting him off easy. David thus sowed seeds of rebellion in Absalom's heart (2 Sam. 13-14). **God never violates His justice and holiness in being merciful.** He extends His mercy only because His justice has been satisfied.

“There are people in the church who sin against God and don't acknowledge their sin. Nevertheless, they expect Him to be merciful to them. However, **James 2:10-11** says,

*"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Do not kill.' Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law."*

**James meant that if you break only one of God's laws you've broken them all.**  
Verses 12-13 continue,

*"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment."*

**There is a merciless judgment awaiting those who do not accept the sacrifice of Christ.** God won't show sentimental mercy to those who never acknowledged His Son. If we want God to be merciful to us, we must confess our sins and turn from them.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted from John MacArthur, Jr., *Study of the Beatitudes*. (online notes). Compiled by Mike Edwards