

Mercy combined with justice



Agreeing With God (Day 30)
by Derek Prince

Another attitude of God which I believe is characteristic and important, is, and I could describe it this way, "As mercy combined with justice," or you could use "severity," - "mercy and severity." So many people today cannot see these two things combined in God. In my thinking, they're like the two opposite sides of the same coin and unless each of them is there, you do not have a valid coin. So it is with God, mercy combined with justice or severity.

In Exodus 34, the Lord descended in a cloud for the benefit of His servant, Moses and He proclaimed His name. Now the name of God or the name of any person in Scripture always is a key to their nature. And so when God proclaimed His name to Moses, He was also revealing His nature to Moses. And so it's important to read the name of God as it's proclaimed there in Exodus 34, verses 5 through 7. It says this:

> "Then the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with Moses there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and fourth generation.'" (NKJ)

There we see so clearly the two opposite sides of God's single nature - first on the one side, His mercy - on the other side, His severity or His sternness. And there are seven aspects of His mercy unfolded for us there.

1. He's merciful.
2. He's gracious.
3. He's longsuffering or patient.
4. He abounds in goodness which is sometimes translated "steadfast love."
5. He abounds in truth which is also faithfulness.
6. He keeps mercy for thousands.
7. He's willing to forgive iniquity, transgression and sin.

So there's seven aspects to God's mercy. But let none of us ever be blinded to the fact that this does not set aside God's judgement and His severity. And that is unfolded in the two last parts of that statement of God's name. He by no means clears the guilty and He visits the iniquity of one generation to the following three generations if they're wicked toward God. So you can dwell on the mercy of God forever and His saints and His redeemed are going to. The psalmist said, "I will sing of the mercy of the Lord forever." But at the same time you must never be blinded to the fact that there is another side to God which is manifested when He sees fit. And that's His severity and His judgment.

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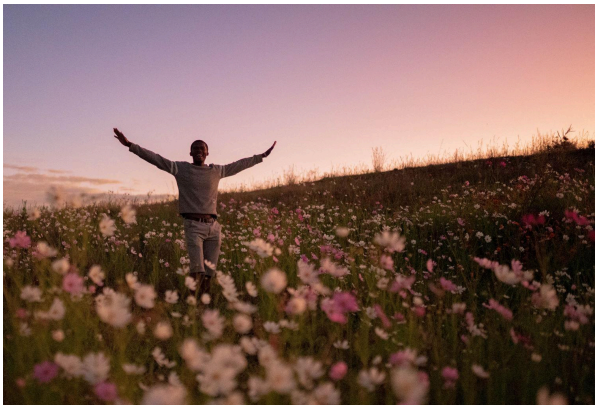

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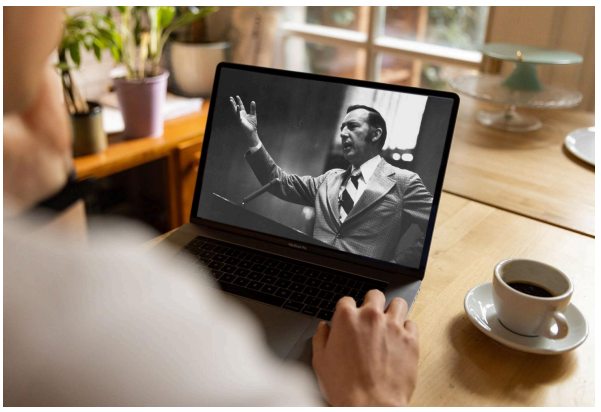

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