

The Path to Mercy: Repent and Look to Christ

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[0:00] Father, this time, in these few moments, when I come to your word, we're praying that you would move in our hearts please move in my heart and we say collectively together, Lord, move in my heart.

Move. I come to you with repentance, with contrition. I look to Christ. We pray this in your name, Jesus.

Amen. Would you please be seated? Amen. Please, if you would take your Bibles and go to the book of Exodus.

Exodus chapter 33. If you're visiting with us or accidentally left your Bible there at home or left your cell phone at home, that black Bible in the chair in front of you, you can pull that out and start Genesis, then the book of Exodus and find page 67.

Page 67, Exodus chapter 33. We'll do the first 11 verses. Exodus 33. Exodus 33, 11.

[2:11] 1 through 11. I'm reserving my pastoral prayer for later, so if you notice, I did not do my pastoral prayer.

It's going to be reserved for later in the service. I'm going to read Exodus, the first 11 verses, then we'll do our study. Here's what God's word says.

Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, to your descendants I will give it.

I will send an angel before you. I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivites, and the Jebusite. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey, for I will not go up in your midst, because you are a stiff-necked people, lest I destroy you on the way.

When the people heard this sad word, they mourned, and none of them put on his garments, his ornaments, excuse me, because Yahweh had said to Moses, say to the sons of Israel, you are a stiff-necked people.

[3:34] Should I go up in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. Now therefore put off your ornaments from you, that I may know what I will do with you. That's why the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments from Mount Horeb.

Verse 7, Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came about that everyone who sought Yahweh would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp, and it came about whenever Moses went out to the tent, went out to that tent, that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of this tent, and gaze after Moses until they entered the tent.

And it came about whenever Moses entered that tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the Lord would speak with Moses.

When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of that tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. Yes, Yahweh used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.

When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent. I had a friend of mine.

[5:08] I would take him to mental health court. He got caught with drugs and other things. So if a friend, not a believer, I would take him to mental health court.

And I'd watch different people, because there would be not just him, but there would be other people that would stand before the judge. Her. It baffled me how people thought they could just do whatever they wanted.

I mean, my friend, he would follow through with everything the judge said. But I would almost get embarrassed for other people. The judge would say, do X, Y, Z, right?

They would do F, M, and Q. Totally different from what the judge said. And they thought it was okay. It was almost comical, but yet embarrassing at the same time.

And then they would argue with her. Oh, that was even better. So I'd be sitting there, oh my goodness, are you kidding me? What in the world?

[6:24] And then, she wouldn't take it. She would say, I told you to do this, this, and this. You did that, that, and that, and that, and that.

I told you not to do that. But I did do that. Really? And a couple times, she just, she wouldn't have it. And she just said, that's it. Ba, ba, ba, ba, ba. \$5,000 bond. And they would say, and they'd be like, but, but, but, but, but, but, but, but, but, but, you know, the person, and she's like, done.

Bela comes out. Come on. And they stand up, and they're all wide-eyed. I'm thinking, what were you thinking? You're, but you didn't do that.

I, I don't know. It was, it never ceased to amaze me, and embarrass me. And they thought they could just do things the way they wanted to do things.

[7:27] Their own way. You should do things on the terms set by the judge. Did it go out?

That's okay. Her terms. Not yours. So we have an almighty judge.

God is the almighty judge. The holy, righteous judge. Yet he's also merciful, gracious, loving, ready to forgive sinners.

Don't worry about that. He'll, he'll bring it back up because Aaron is good at pushing that button, right? So he, way to go, Aaron. He's merciful, gracious, and loving. Our God is a almighty, holy, righteous judge, but he's gracious, and tenderhearted.

He's ready to forgive sinners. How do you receive it? What's the road, the path to mercy?

[8:42] I will tell you. This is what we're gonna see today. This is the path to mercy. There's the title. The path to mercy. Repent and look to Christ.

Repent. Repent and look to Christ. That's the path to mercy. How can we receive God's merciful, gracious love?

We are called to repent and look to Christ. Oh, thank you, Aaron. You're great. We are called to repent and look to Christ. Or we need repentant contrition and merciful intercession.

We respond in repentance and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ who is our merciful intercessor.

Repent and look to Christ. In order for us to receive God's gracious, merciful love, we must come to him with repentant contrition.

and through a merciful intercessor. We come to God on his terms.

[9:58] You don't come to God on your terms. You don't come to God how you want to. You don't come to God doing F, R, and Q. You do X, Y, Z.

That's what he calls us to do. People think that you just come to Yahweh God however they wanted to come. But it doesn't work that way. He's the judge.

He will punish sin. But he calls for contrition. He demands a merciful intercessor.

And then he grants mercy. He grants compassion. And his mercy is deep. You're just saying it.

Depth of mercy. And because our Lord Jesus Christ has taken the punishment and is our constant merciful, gracious intercessor.

We saw that last week, right? And we saw that the week before. We can receive God's merciful, gracious love. And this is a message for sinners.

[11:06] You're looking at one and I'm looking at a bunch of others. We are sinners. We need constant mercy and grace which means the Christian life is a life of constantly repenting and constantly looking to Christ.

And he grants us his goodness. Restoring the marred relationship brought about by our disobedience. Brought about by our idolatry. Do you see it?

Here is the covenant. Here is the idolatry. Chapter 32. The covenant. Chapter 20 to 31. Here is the idolatry.

And yet here is the punishment that comes. And yet here is the repentance. Our passage before us. And then here is God displaying his goodness and mercy. Next week. Chapter 33 verses 12 through chapter 34 verse 9.

And then he renews the covenant with us. The great part is that there is no Moses. There is a better one. A superior one. We looked at that last week.

[12:12] Who is that? Jesus. Christ. Our Messiah. Our Redeemer. Yahweh forgave Israel. He did. But notice he told them he was not going to go with them. Which impelled Israel to repent. Asking Yahweh for mercy. And then you see more intercession from Moses.

So. There is your two points. Two points. The first point. Repent. Or repentant contrition. And then merciful intercession. Preachers love to do things like that.

Repent. Verses 1 through 6. This is interesting because you notice Yahweh spoke to Moses.

Depart. Go up from here to the land.

Verse 2. I will send an angel before you. Etc. Etc. A land full of milk and honey. I will not go up in your midst. You are stiff-necked people.

[13:14] Verse 4. The people heard the sad word. They went into mourning. Then notice verse 5. Yahweh said to Moses. Say to the sons of Israel you are stiff-necked people. Excuse me.

I will not. I am not going to go up in your midst for I will destroy you. Put off your ornaments. So they stripped themselves of their ornaments. Notice. Yahweh spoke.

Israel removed their jewelry. Yahweh spoke again. Israel removed their jewelry. So wait. Did Yahweh speak twice and they removed their jewelry twice? Is that what's going on? No.

Yahweh. Yahweh. He speaks twice. And then Israel's response is in the middle of the declarations. There's actually two sections describing Yahweh's sending his word through Moses.

There were stiff-necked people stubborn. And within the middle is Israel removing their jewelry. So really there's only one message from Yahweh and there's only one response from Israel.

[14:14] But why is it split up into two like this? Why is it putting you got Yahweh speaking and then Yahweh speaking and then they didn't. Why is it like this? It gave greater significance to Israel's great mourning, repentance, and obedience to Yahweh.

They responded in a positive way to Yahweh because of his merciful discipline. They were broken over their sin of idolatry. That's why it's put like this. To emphasize Israel's repentance.

To emphasize Israel's brokenness and contrition. They really wanted to make things right with God. And the first step was repenting contrition. They really wanted to make things right with God. And they realized they realized they needed Yahweh to be with them.

They were broken over the fact that Yahweh wasn't going to be with them. Because it wasn't about receiving the gifts from God.

[15:39] It's about receiving Yahweh himself the giver of gifts. Or I'll put it in a different way. It's actually a title of a book. God is the gospel.

The best part about salvation is that we receive God himself. A right, personal, loving relationship with the creator of all things.

You know, you've heard the question, have you come to a place in your spiritual life where if you were to die today you're going to go to heaven? It goes farther than that.

It's not so much where you go to heaven, it's this, where you'll be with God. Some people are very, very happy to go to heaven. I'm going to live forever. I'm going to have the way my body was when I was 25.

You know, I'll be able to eat anything I want and do anything I want. Oh yeah, this whole God thing, that's fine. But I can do this and this. What if you went to heaven and God was not there?

[16:45] Then it wouldn't be heaven. They got that. This is vital. They wanted his presence.

You know the feeling. You know the feeling when there's sin. And you feel God is far away from you, don't you? You feel like God has left you.

You know that feeling. You want his presence close again. And there's more. The Egyptians and other ancient areas people, they wore jewelry not just for cosmetic reasons.

I mean, those of you women, you're wearing jewelry and things like that. You know, those are pretty earrings. I want to get those, right? I mean, that's why you're doing it. Oh, those would look cute with my outfit. You know, Travis says that all the time.

Oh, Jim, those would look cute with my outfit. Okay, I think you should ask Karen that question, not me. But anyways. We're at the store at Shepherd's Conference. He's like, do you think that would look cute with my outfit?

[17:57] I'm like, Travis, I don't know. Why are you asking me that question? But for them, in the ancient Near East, they would wear these jewelry not just simply for cosmetic purposes, but to serve as emulets, to ward off evil spirits.

People wear stuff like that today still, right? They wear stones, specific type of necklaces, right? Right? To bring them good luck so I don't have to face misfortune.

No doubt the Israelites picked up on this bad habit from the Egyptians wearing the same kind of amulets, the same kind of jewelry. It's like the rabbit's foot. It's like the lucky charm. And they wore it for the same purpose because they wanted to obtain a blessing.

This is why it's put twice. Take off your ornaments. They did it. They said again, to strip of themselves of their ornaments and they did it again. But it wasn't again. It was once, but it's being emphasized because this is a big deal.

For them to get rid of their jewelry was not just ridding themselves of vanity. They were eliminating any aspect of paganism that was still clinging to them.

[19:17] Or to which they were clinging. This is why repentance goes along with looking to Christ or you could even say cling to Christ. Do you cling after other things to get God's acceptance and have Him be pleased with you instead of Christ?

The ancient people like today depended heavily upon their emulets for safety, for security.

So just so to go without it it was like you might as well just kill yourself. You wouldn't do something like that. So for them to respond this way toward Yahweh display great faith and trust in Him.

they were letting go of the things upon which they rested and decided to rest or trust in Yahweh.

And friends that's what we need to do. That's the response with our desires.

Our desires that have turned into idols because these desires they bring out what we value what we love what we crave it reveals our goals our hope our fears our worries it shows where we find refuge comfort pleasure security safety is it money is it sex is it pleasure is it people is it power is it control what is it and then we don't get those things we end up believing God has let us down and we get depressed because really our idol has let us down because the focus is the idol somebody Garrett sent me a picture somebody put on I love Satan no you don't you love yourself and you want to use Satan to get what you want

[21:18] I don't I don't I don't think he's gonna do that for you see that's what our idols do right we're fine with the idol as long as it serves us but the idol it don't work that way what ends up happening you end up serving the idol and you become enslaved alcohol drugs sex Satan it or he enslaves you and then we get angry because things don't go our way or people don't do things the way we want them to do so what's the first step repentant contrition because our sin is first against God and Yahweh told them I'm not going with you you're stubborn you're stiff necked I'm gonna send my angel he would not be able to tolerate their evil ways and so she

Israel responded in mourning repentance repentance doesn't bargain with God you don't bargain with God I mean think about that bargaining with God repentance doesn't try to make excuses for what's been done bargaining with God God who has everything and can just go and then you stop existing your heart will stop and you'll drop dead really you want to bargain with God with that person repentance doesn't bargain with God repentance doesn't make excuses that's why we sang that song again we sang that song two weeks ago yeah I know but we sang it again depth of mercy can there be mercy even reaching me God the just his wrath forbears me the chief of sinners he spares so many times my heart is straight

I am a sinner you're blameless Lord my sins against you can't be ignored they will be punished I know they must your law demands it for you are just if you would count everything that I've done wrong who could stand but there's what forgiveness with you God have what mercy on me that's why we sing those songs repentance is a change of mind it's a change of ultimate loyalty and a behavior whereby a person turns from sin to God you turn away from sin you turn to God repent and trust repent and look repent and cling to Christ so there's intellectual your mind it's emotional involves your emotions and volitional it involves your will all a gift from God there's a confession of known sins and you forsake them one writer put this it consists of acknowledgement of personal guilt remorse for sins forsaking evil thoughts and deeds turning to the

Lord with one's entire being and bringing forth fruits indicative of a changed heart that's repentance that's what we're called to do as Christians so we repent when it comes to our addictions our idols desires that take the place of God's supremacy in our lives that's what we do remember we sang this prone to leave the God I love if food alcohol people drugs money success comfort pleasure takes place takes God's place in our lives God calls us to repent yes yes even chocolate even chocolate and we care about food but it's true food can do the same thing so then you have this whole thing taking place in verses one through six there's repentance

Israel's broken and then all of a sudden it goes now Moses used to take this tent and pitch it outside the camp what it's almost like a building a crescendo of repentance now Moses used to take his tent outside the camp it's like why is there a break in like that why is there like a break in all of a sudden there's a narrative like Moses used to do this and this and this why because this explains to us how exactly Moses would intercede for them and this is where we come to look to Christ merciful intercession next week we're going to see what he actually said here we're told this is what he was doing and I emphasized verse 9 wait verse 9 no verse 10 no I lost it oh yeah verse 8 one of those verses you'll find it the end of verse 8 they would gaze after Moses they would gaze upon [27 : 23] Moses as he was entering the tent they would watch him and gaze that's where we get this the point of look gaze upon Christ this is Moses his personal tent he called it the tent of meeting this is before the tabernacle was built and once it was built he no longer used his private tent but he used it to speak to Yahweh face to face it was pitched away from the camp rocks and everything around and Moses would privately speak with God and this sight what is it in verse 10 Moses going into the tent the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent all the people would arise and worship each at the entrance of his tent it provoked the people to worship

Yahweh interesting how would they worship what were they doing well they were singing careful doesn't say that it says they were worshipping don't link worshipping with singing people do that all the time we're going to worship then we're going to look at God's word wait so wait so look at God's words not worship wait what how does that work that doesn't tell us but notice I mean it was it was so impacting if we gaze upon Moses and they would worship Yahweh wow but the main point that's trying to be told here in verses 7-11 is this relationship this access that Moses had put on the screen Moses had direct access to God and he received clear explicit distinct flawless messages from him nothing hindered

Moses from having access to God and nothing spoiled the communication between Yahweh and Moses crystal clear that was their intercessor and this shows us how Moses alone needed to intercede on their behalf on behalf of Israel when Yahweh said he wasn't going to go with him that's why it's put here that's why this explanation 7-11 it's put here this is what Moses used to do and so it's telling us Israel's repenting and then they have to look to their intercessor we want God we want him we're broken we're so put into a misery because of our sin Moses we gaze upon you only you can intercede for us that's what they're doing this was how Moses met with

Yahweh in the wilderness with all the rocks and all the cliffs this is the kind of relationship he had notice it says the end of verse 11 Yahweh used to speak to Moses face to face as a man his friend or even you can translate it like this as a man would with his equal notice how this shows us as well how personally involved Yahweh was with the nation and how Yahweh God felt about sin and we cannot be around sin it's magnifying his holiness and magnifying our sin he'll also magnify him next week we'll see how mercifully gracious he was to decide to go with them and I just read to you verse 11 which

I say this is actually the focal point how Yahweh spoke to Moses face to face God and no one no one had a relationship with Yahweh like Moses not even Aaron Aaron was like second place even though Aaron was the high priest it was Moses who spoke to Yahweh face to face Moses was a real true intercessor mediator no other Israelite had this kind of relationship with Yahweh God and because Moses did this on behalf of the people Yahweh would renew his covenant with them chapter 34 verse 10 what an intercessor what a mediator yet even this intercessor could not look directly upon God else he would die 3320 we'll see that next week no man can see me and live no face to face still a barrier

[32 : 50] I mean we see I mean it's just so apparent you have this the relationship that Moses had and yet there was a barrier you had the fact that the people gazed upon Moses and they would worship I mean we see Moses truly was an Old Testament figure who points us to Christ Christ sufficiency as Moses was the only way they were able to come into God's presence and the only intercessor for the people so Jesus Christ who is superior to Moses always comes before Yahweh look to Christ Christ this gospel truth is right here repent and look to Christ repent and trust Christ repent and cling to Christ this is a message for you if you're here and you don't know

Jesus you're not a follower of Jesus you're not a Christian this is for you repent look to Christ you'll find forgiveness you'll find mercy and compassion for your sins notice how in Christ we have total access to Yahweh through our Lord Jesus Christ nothing hinders us from coming to the Lord we have a constant immediate access to God through Christ our mediator and intercessor in the spirit

that's what Paul says in Ephesians chapter 2 we all have access to the Father through him and the spirit so we gaze upon and we look to Christ and though no person can see his face and live what does John say John 1 18 no man has seen him and lived but the only begotten

God Jesus who's in the bosom of the Father he explains him and the only way to have access to God the way God will ever give you the time of day is Jesus Jesus your Messiah all the time anytime 2 a.m.

2 p.m. 5 a.m. 5 p.m. anytime when there's repentance then restoration is sure to happen and you're welcomed by the Father with joy and total acceptance he greets with open arms his arms are wide open to anyone who repents we just looked at that in the first hour Luke chapter 15 I mean he's like this with sinners he loves it when sinners repent and when they repent there's a party in heaven people are just yeah that's what's going on and that's what the father he's searching for his son and he sees him and he runs to him when sinners repent and look to Christ the father embraces him and heaven celebrates the event

God shows us mercy and compassion and he's able to do that through the death of Jesus who took all the punishment all the judgment for your sin that's why you had the plague in chapter 32 there had to be judgment and notice even in the midst of that judgment God still showed mercy because he could have just went and wiped out wiped out all of Israel not said anything to Moses okay we're starting over Moses that's what we have in our Lord Jesus Christ and in Christ it's so much more important because his presence in heaven as the one who died rose and was exalted for his people that is in itself his intercession and then you throw on top of that he's actually interceding on a constant basis for you for this church lay down his life so we can have access to the

[37 : 26] Father so our response we repent and we look to you oh Christ so order for us to receive God's gracious merciful love we must come to him with repentant contrition and through merciful intercessor coming to God on his terms not on our terms Christian is sin wearing you down non Christian is sin wearing you down you feel the weight of shame and guilt is disgrace the weight that you carry come come repent look gaze upon trust Christ alone repent and look to Christ grace now let's pray righteous father we come to you with thankful hearts thankful that when we repent you grant us your merciful gracious love and compassion so we as a church repent right now that we have allowed the lust of our flesh to long for and seek after other things or other people to satisfy us instead of having you satisfy us we repent that we have not been unified in the spirit and the bond of peace but we've put our own agendas ahead of others we repent that we've rebelled against the authority you've placed over us in our homes this church the state instead of submitting to authority with joy we repent that we've not shown compassionate merciful gracious love to each other but we've held things against each other be more concerned about our feelings than about your gospel we repent that we've hurt each other cursed each other we've shown disregard for each other maybe not out in the open but definitely in our hearts lacking grace that we've not been faithful to obey your word but have instead chosen to follow the world we repent that we've withheld the gospel of grace by either not speaking the truth and love to others who need to hear the gospel or by displaying an unholy selfish almost godless lifestyle that we've not had a heart for others around the world for them to respond to christ but are more concerned about the things in our own lives we repent of that we repent that we've not prioritized your people this local church in the way you've called us to do from your word we've allowed other relationships to take precedence we repent that in some other way in other ways we've sinned against you by sinning against each

other and our families amongst each other within our families or within this church family righteous father we look to christ who made an end of all our sin we look to christ and trust him alone we look to christ in order for you to show us mercy and grace we repent and look to trust and hold on to jesus christ alone help us oh god before the throne of god above i have a strong and perfect plea the words are up there on the screen a great high priest whose name is love whoever lives and pleads for me my name is graven on his hands my name is written on his heart i know that while in heaven he stands no tongue can bid me thence depart no tongue can bid me thence depart when satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within upward i look and see him there who made an end of all my sin because the sinless savior died my sinful soul is counted free for god the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me to look on him and pardon me behold him there the risen lamb my perfect spotless righteousness that is a few would just take a few moments ponder what we've seen from god's word maybe this is a good time for you to repent as we were praying together maybe things came to your mind and you want to take some time right now between you

and the lord and repent do that ponder and think and let the word affect you and infect the deepest part of your soul and after a few moments we'll worship by giving monetarily a way for us to display what god's doing in our heart and then there's two more songs for us to sing we'll worship with singing and then we'll worship closing in prayer and then we'll worship some more in our conversations with each other at this time let let the word richly dwell within you right now and think and may it change and transform you and father as we close this service where once again we remind ourselves of these two truths first being so overwhelmed with your grace and compassion when there's repentance when there's brokenness and contrition that's the attitude we have towards each other as we come to each other with repentance and brokenness and contrition we display forgiving mercy we put away wrath anger clamor slander we're kind to one another we're tender hearted we're forgiving each other just as you and Christ have forgiven us and second being so consumed with your grace and your mercy towards us we go out and we speak to our relative we speak to our neighbor we speak to a friend we tell them you can have forgiveness you can be shown mercy you can experience the grace of God and Christ repent and trust repent and look to Jesus

Christ we proclaim speak this truth in love to them thank you our hearts are tender may they continue to be tender towards your word amen