



## Discovering Your Design:

*Preparing Christ's followers to change the world*

## MERCY

**DEFINITION: THE SPIRIT-GIVEN ABILITY TO JOYFULLY EMBRACE THOSE IN NEED, SHOWING CHRIST'S COMPASSION AND KINDNESS.**

- the gift of mercy gives what is needed - God's kindness and compassion. God's mercy keeps us from getting what we deserve (judgment).
- this gift manifests in personal ministry - it is shared one-on-one. It may function in groups but has its greatest impact working with one person at a time, over time.
- mercy is extended to those who are in misery- look at those who cried out to Jesus for mercy the blind, lepers, sick, and demonized.
- the gift is to be exercised with cheerfulness. Matthew Henry says, "A pleasing countenance in acts of mercy is a great relief and comfort to the miserable" (Gangel, 98).
- when we use this gift within the church we are doing it unto the Lord (cf. Matthew 25:40).
- this gift is similar to the gift of encouragement and giving - it is different from helps in that the person who needs help is not suffering, they simply need assistance.
- this gift may be used outside of the body and be a great entrée for the Gospel.

**Biblical References:** Romans 12:8

**Contribution:** this gift builds up the body by ministering to those in the body who are suffering and in need of special care, bringing refreshment and encouragement.

**Biblical Examples:** Jesus (Mark 5), Good Samaritan (Luke 10), Jerusalem Church (Acts 2), Philippian jailer (Acts 16), Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16)

**Characteristics** - People with this gift :

- are not put off or distracted by the externals (sickness, hospitals, etc.). They are focused on the person's misery and need for mercy
- bring God's comfort and peace in word and action
- connect people to the God of all mercy
- seek out those who are suffering and bring relief, cheer, hope
- are caring people and good listeners - a lot of mercy is done with the ears
- find practical ways to meet people's need Js 2:15,16

**Cautions:**

- watch your heart and countenance! Exercise this gift with gladness and cheer
- like the gift of encouragement, don't forget that your job is to enter into their circumstances, not pull them out of them. God in his perfect timing will do that
- watch "spans of care" you can't care for everyone, pray for wisdom, involve others

**Christian Responsibility:** we are all called to extend the mercy of God. I Corinthians 12:26 remind us that there is to be a mutuality of concern within the church. We are to contribute to the needs of God's people (Romans 12:13). Showing acts of mercy outside the church may very well bring someone to receive the source of all mercy!