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CHRISTIAN FAMILY VALUE SYSTEM
MOTIVATION

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Creating A Winning Attitude In A Dark World – Part 5

“God’s Reality Check!”

Matthew 5:7

Reality TV is a genre of television programming that has taken the world by storm. It presents unscripted realistic, sad, dramatic or humorous situations that are actual events in the lives of ordinary men and women. Reality television has brought the personal, private lives of people into our homes and has allowed us to look at how messed up other people are so we can feel better about ourselves. Say what you will but we often feel better when we find out that there are others out there that have the same struggles as we do. Many people sit glued to the tube salivating over the secret sins of society and all of its dirty laundry being aired on Reality TV. Most of the Reality TV shows that are popular have an underlying theme of *scandal*. You can find some good scandal, lies and malicious gossip on Reality TV. Whether it is the *Real Housewives of Atlanta*, *Salt Lake City* _____ (*place which ever one here you watch. Lol*), *Survivor*, *Real Ink*, *Love and Hip Hop*, *Hell’s Kitchen*, *90-Day Fiancé*, *Couples Court* or any other court, *Hoarding* or *Pimple Popper*. We have become enthralled and fascinated with

uncovering scandals, secrets and embarrassing moments in other folks lives.

Reality television publicizes it for all of the world to see. If you have ever watched reality court television it can be a reality check that is both settling and sobering particularly in criminal cases. The whole world observes through reality court television the process in which a person receives sentencing for crimes committed. No doubt, there have been many guilty persons that have in some way received mercy and *let off the hook* even though there was damaging evidence that has proven their guilt. I have my speculations of a few -- but here is my point! When you are guilty and know you are guilty don't throw stones at other guilty people especially when you have been *let off the hook!*

We all have been let off the hook more times than we can realize. We may not have the scandals in our lives uncovered by a judge on reality court television; thank God but... we are all under surveillance by the Just Judge on High! Oh yes my brothers and sisters, the cameras are rolling in heaven and each day of our lives God has us under surveillance looking at the scandals, slip ups and secret affairs that prove us to be guilty. The evidence is against us and the cameras in eternity are rolling. God has His own Reality Television and Him being a just and fair God shows us Mercy for our sins instead of punishment. If we believe that He loves us and sent His son to die for us and raised His son, Jesus from the grave, He justifies us. That means he acquits us of our sins but don't move too fast -- the cameras are still rolling! He still keeps the cameras rolling to see if we will return the same kindness to others that have hurt us like we have hurt Him. God has been merciful to us yet there is live footage stored in the archive of God's memory

concerning all of our lives that reveals that we often do not return mercy to others.

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Big Idea: If God has overlooked your faults – *do that for someone else!*

Jesus says in **Matthew 5:7** – *Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.* This verse is a reality check! God wants to remind us of His Mercy when we have the unmitigated gall to be hard, hypocritical, high minded and hateful to others who need mercy. When you show mercy on others for their offenses against you -- God will show mercy to you. Jesus gave the disciples the fifth winning attitude in a dark world, *Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.* Notice that the first four attitudes deal with the individual's attitude about them self. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, and they that hunger and thirst* all address the aspects of individual attitudes but now Jesus shifts the attitude that we have about ourselves to the attitude that we have or project on to other people.

The religious right wing of Jesus' day appeared to be super righteous but they were merciless. They wore righteous clothes and said righteous things. However, they were indifferent, arrogant and self-serving and did not care about the poor. They had no conscience for mercy. They had their own self-interest at heart. They were the type of people that were passive-aggressive. They looked holy and sometimes were soft spoken but deep inside they were ravenous wolves craftily working against every one else to make sure that they came out on top. They were the merciless, right wing conservatists of that day that would condemn immoral acts with a hidden agenda that worked to their benefit. They would frown upon health care reform that made health care affordable. They would condemn abortion but do nothing to care for the child after he or she was born. There was no compassion for the poor and they would make sure the CEO's of The First Bank of Jerusalem kept their bank accounts healthy even at the expense of the

poor. They showed no mercy. Jesus said this about them in **Matthew 23:27** - *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.* They were egotistical, self-righteous, and condemning towards others and although God had been patient with them they were not patient with others. They glorified justice but no mercy.

What is mercy? It is the Greek word *eleemon*. This translation of merciful is only found twice in the New Testament, here and in **Hebrews 2:17**. *It means compassion.* The Greek of the New Testament as we possess it goes back to an original Hebrew and Aramaic. The Hebrew word for mercy is *hesed*; and it is an untranslatable word. It does not mean only to sympathize or to feel sorry for someone that is in trouble. It means *to get right inside the other person's skin* until you can see things with his eyes, think things with his mind, and feel things with his feelings. True mercy is a genuine need to help someone that you can help. To be merciful to someone means that you experience what the person is going through. Mercy is compassionately withholding judgement. Mercy is to our misery what grace is to our guilt. Mercy always deals with pain and distress, which are the results of sin. However, grace deals with sin itself. Mercy is God stepping in at the nick of time!

Questions

1. What is mercy?
2. What is the benefit of being merciful?
3. How does **Matthew 9:36** apply here?
4. How does **Hebrews 4:16** apply here?

5. What does it mean to receive mercy?
6. How does **Matthew 18:23-33** apply here?

Thought: *When we treat others with mercy we win on different levels!*

*We win in the sight of Heaven
We win in our struggle with humanity
We win over the strategies of hell*

Make It Plain – Life Application Question

1. How does this lesson apply to government and society?
2. What is our motivation to apply this lesson in a dark world?