



Showing Mercy, Spiritual Gift

The gift of showing mercy is a permanent spiritual gift and is found in Romans 12:8. Showing mercy is an expression of unconditional love for all believers, but the spiritual gift of showing mercy is quite different. Romans 12:8 implies that the believer that has been given the gift of mercy will automatically show mercy, but only if there is virtue love in their soul through spiritual advancement.

"or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." (Romans 12:8, NASB)

In Romans 12:8, "shows mercy" is the present active participle of ἐλεέω (eleeō) and means to have mercy on, to help one afflicted or seeking aid, showing mercy. The word "cheerfulness" is ἡλαρότης (hilarotēs) and means cheerfulness, readiness of mind. This is grace in action in the sphere of cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is not translatable. This is a believer with an optimistic mental attitude, a divine enablement, one who is not discouraged, is clear minded, and is able in their mental attitude to grace out another believer.

Many believers often show mercy to others as an expression of virtue love, but this is actually a spiritual gift that goes beyond this normal function of the spiritual life. This gift is similar to the gift of helps, except it is applicable primarily to the afflicted, to the persecuted, and to those believers and even unbelievers who are victims of tyranny. Therefore, it can be more dramatic than the gift of helps. In the first century, the gift of showing mercy was helping Christians who were under persecution or imprisoned. This put the one showing mercy in situations dangerous to their own well-being. Hence, this spiritual gift is always related to courageous acts of mercy.

Those with this gift have that special spiritual ability to let you know that you have been forgiven any offense you may have given them or others. They make it very evident they are merciful. Some believers can make the doctrine of forgiveness clear. This is God's grace in action. He has forgiven and cleansed us and we all should be merciful. We are to forgive others on that same basis.

Some people have the ability to communicate this truth in the exercise of this very important spiritual gift. When schisms take place in the congregation, these people can come forth and help those involved to understand that they are all part of the local church and the Body of Christ. It is a wonderful spiritual gift and these people do it cheerfully. No matter how many times it seems necessary, they do it as an expression of their inner happiness.

This is a very practical spiritual gift. This is the divine ability to see humor in a very grim situation. It is an encouragement at its maximum without being human viewpoint in its application. These believers can show mercy without pity. This spiritual gift keeps a balance in a local congregation between grace as a principle (fact and existence) and grace as a function. There must be grace thinking followed by grace action in a local church. This spiritual gift is illustrated in and seen to function in Romans 12:14-15.

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Romans 12:14-15, NASB)