

The Marvels Of Mercy

Introduction. The Seven Wonders of the World was a list made by the ancient Greeks of the most amazing structures of the ancient world. When one pictures the great pyramid of Giza, the hanging gardens of Babylon, the statue of Zeus at Olympia, the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the colossus of Rhodes, the lighthouse of Alexandria or the mausoleum at Halicarnassus one cannot help but have a sense of awe at man's abilities. But no matter how dazzling the Seven Wonders of the World are, there is something which is seventy times seven times better.

Titus 3:4-7 attributes our salvation to the wonderful mercy of God. In the New Testament, mercy is "the outward manifestation of pity." It assumes need on the part of him who receives it and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it.

Now if we understand more about the mercy of God, perhaps we can use that information to be more faithful Christians. This lesson will discuss five marvels of mercy as God has dealt with mankind.

I. ***It Is Marvelous That God Would Forgive At All***

- A. Man sinned in the beginning without a cause. The devil came in the form of a serpent and deceived Adam and Eve right after God expressly told them not to eat of that tree (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:4-5). Why should we expect a God who is willing to forgive? He could have dealt with us according to law and justice (Psalm 103:10-13).
- B. Everyone who sins deserves to die (Isaiah 53:8; Romans 6:23; 7:9-11). The Law and perfect justice require the death of anyone who breaks the Law, but God was gracious to us.
- C. The Lord showed us mercy and will show mercy to anyone who is willing to follow His commandments (Exodus 20:5-6). God is love, and love compels God to want to forgive man and bring him back into His fellowship (1 John 4:8; John 3:16; James 4:5).

II. ***It Is Marvelous That God Would Forgive Everything***

- A. Everyone today and from now on will be forgiven if they accept this invitation. Not only is God willing to forgive, but He is willing to wipe the slate clean. This is our chance to live pure and undefiled in the sight of God again.
- B. Peter stressed that God was not slow in bringing the world to an end, but that He wanted everyone to repent (2 Peter 3:9). He does not want to see anyone perish in their sins. He has repeatedly invited us to "come," but generally speaking, man refuses God's call (Proverbs 1:24; Zechariah 7:9-11; Romans 10:21). Therefore, He is willing to forgive everything to all who will trust and obey.

- C. Ezekiel 33:11 says, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked."
The Lord wants to see you following His will, not perishing because of unbelief.

III. ***It Is Marvelous That God Would Condescend To Reason With Sinners***

- A. Man is but the "dust" of the earth (Psalm 8:3-4; 103:14). The fact that God offers to reason with us shows how unreasonable we have been in turning away from His will and His ways (Isaiah 1:18). God has made rich provisions for our salvation (Ephesians 2:4).
- B. God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, cared for them, and blessed them by allowing them to inherit the promised land. He was more than gracious with those people, but they stubbornly refused His will.
- C. This shows the fundamental difference between how determined man wants to go his own way and how determined God wants to save man (Romans 3:11; John 3:16). God was so determined that He allowed His Son to undergo the agony of crucifixion.
- D. When God is compelled to reason with us, it shows the deep well of love that is able to cover the mountain of sins which we have (Romans 5:18-21).

IV. ***It Is Marvelous That God Would Be Willing To Transform The Sinner***

- A. God promised that although our sins were like scarlet, He would make them as white as snow (Isaiah 1:18).
1. "Scarlet" means "double-dyed" or "twice-dipped," signifying the deep-fixed permanency of sin.
 2. Only the blood of Christ can remove the deep, fixed permanency of sin in man (Isaiah 64:6; 1 John 1:7).
- B. God is willing to transform us from a person who is bent on sin to a person who is considered "new" (Ephesians 4:22-24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 7:1). Paul the apostle was once Saul the sinner and so it goes with all those who obey God (Acts 26:9; 1 Timothy 1:15).
- C. Revelation 3:20 pictures obedience to the gospel as an invitation to be heeded. Isaiah 43:25-26 begs for the sinner to argue his case before God, so that he may be justified. Obeying the gospel is not a difficult task. We need to hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized. After this baptism, we start living like people who have been changed (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

V. ***It Is Marvelous That God Would Be So Longsuffering***

- A. Perhaps the greatest marvel of all is the longsuffering mercy of God (Matthew 23:37; 1 Peter 3:20). That is what Peter was speaking of when he said that the Lord is not slow concerning His promise.
- B. Since the Lord overflows with longsuffering and patience, so are we to show forbearance to one another (Psalm 86:15; Ephesians 4:1-2).
- C. It is very important to remember that grace belongs to God and we can obey at any time. However, the danger involved is that we do not know how long we will have the opportunity to obey (Job 7:7; Psalm 39:5; 144:4). If I have learned one thing in my life, it is the fact that anything can happen.

Conclusion. Will you deny the wonderful marvels of mercy? With all that is stacked in your favor, will you walk away without obeying the gospel? Will you fall away from God after you have had so many wonderful blessings? Eternal life is ours if we are willing to accept the mercy of God (Jude 20-21). He has blessed us with so many marvels of mercy (Micah 7:18-19). The better we understand God's mercy, the better we can understand our place in the world. Grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ, but so does judgment (Acts 17:31).