

“A Clean Slate” - - Aug. 25, 2021

Beginning of school year. Fresh start. Clean slate.

1 – Clean Slate

1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse** us from all unrighteousness.”

Clean – free. This is Redemption. An exchange... 2 parts.

Why? It happens because God is love, compassion and mercy:

Psalm 86:15 – “But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient, **always** faithful and ready to forgive.” [God’s Word Tr]

- God’s mercy never runs out. No ‘empty’ on mercy tank of heaven:
Lamentations 3:22-23 – “The Lord’s kindness never fails! If he had not been merciful, we would have been destroyed. 23 The Lord can **always** be trusted to show mercy each morning.”

God really knows how to cleanse: It’s gone. 100%

Psalm 102:12 – “He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.”

- In His mercy, He doesn’t keep bringing it up to us. Past is erased.

We aren’t good at mercy or clean slates.

2 – choose mercy.

Mercy is: compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish.

To be better at giving each other clean slates:

1) Stop bringing the past into the present.

Stop reminding another of their weakness/failures/mistakes

1 Cor. 13:5 - “Love is patient... kind... it keeps no record of wrongs.”

2) Learn to see another thru eyes of mercy.

At it’s core – mercy is forgiveness. But it’s more than that...

- **Mercy: God’s love cleansing us - free us - to be person destined to be.**
- Jesus always looked beyond a person’s past to see their future:
 - o Peter wasn’t a fisherman; he was the rock of the church.
 - o Matthew wasn’t a tax collector; he was disciple, not.

Matt. 9:9-13 – Jesus eats at Matthew’s house w/tax collectors & sinners. Pharisees question Him. “It’s not the healthy who need a doctor.” Jesus said: “*But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’* For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” [Berean]

- Jesus is quoting **Hosea 6:6** – “For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.”
- Too busy being religious to be compassion, love & mercy.

3 – Cultivate Relationships

- Our religious rituals are worthless if we don’t have relationships
- Heart for God has to be Heart for People
- Jesus hung out with sinners; heard their stories, knew their names.
 - Pharisees couldn’t conceive of that kind of camaraderie.

Micah 7:18 – “Who is a God like you? You forgive sin and overlook the rebellion of your faithful people. You will not be angry forever, because you would rather show mercy.” [God’s Word Tr]

- God is our example; He’s love, not condemn. Second chances.
- Don’t stay angry forever & don’t keep bringing up the past.

Become like Jesus: **choose** mercy, give **clean** slates & **cultivate** relationships.

- **MERCY:** **My Eyes Really seeing the Clean You.**
- Build relationships with outcasts, not just the in crowd...
- Be a friend to sinners instead of looking down at them.
 - We’re all sinners in need of mercy. There’s no “them”- it’s us.
 - If everyone in your circle is like you... circle is too small.

Song of the Week: “Mercy” by Elevation Worship