

TREATING OTHERS GRACIOUSLY

“And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 22,23). The Lord's half-brother teaches us to exhibit the same (as closely as possible) attitude toward those around us as God has shown to us Himself. Paul would agree too, having told the brethren at Philippi and Ephesus similar things (see Philippians 2:5; Ephesians 4:29-5:1). Since it is the will of God that we be recipients of His grace, He would also have us to show this favor and love to others (see Colossians 4:6). Our welfare before God exists because of the sacrifice Jesus made for us (Matthew 20:28; Luke 19:10). It is our duty therefore that others hear and know of this benevolence made available to them also (Titus 3:5-8). This is why Paul spoke of his part in the *“gospel of the grace of God”* (Acts 20:24). Our obedience to the gracious gospel of God (Matthew 7:21) allows us to be able to show this grace toward others (Matthew 7:12). Here is a word of caution: though grace has been shown to us, we dare not boast, but be thankful that we have been called by the gospel (Galatians 6:16).

Gracious treatment of others is seen in the Old Testament, a reminder of how we are to act while living under the “new and living way,” the New Testament. The prophet Micah outlined proper behavior for us in his word to Jerusalem and Samaria saying, *“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to **do justly**, and to **love kindness**, and to walk humbly with thy God?”* (Micah 6:8). Let us take note that the first two items the prophet addresses deal with how we interact with our fellow man. These are gracious actions.

As we strive to treat others graciously, we must in turn put anger into proper perspective and use. Consider the emotion which likely was present when our Master drove the money-changers out of His Father's house (Matthew 21:12). Or the indignation expressed by Him as He upbraided the Pharisees in Matthew 23. As we experience anger, we can apply it constructively as Paul admonished in this passage:

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath” (Ephesians 4:26). There is no sin in being angry, as long as we direct it to accomplish something good. There is no sin in hatred, if we are careful to hate only such things that God hates. *“Through thy precepts I get understanding: Therefore **I hate every false way**”* (Psalm 119:104). And again, *“Do not I hate them, O Jehovah, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? **I hate them with perfect hatred: They are become mine enemies**”* (Psalm 139:21,22).

We can be gracious to even our enemies, yea we must be so, if we are to be like our Father in Heaven (Matthew 5:43-45). We can be gracious because *“Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God”* (Romans 5:1,2). Let us understand that to be arrogant and rude with knowledge will not accomplish anything for the Lord (see I Corinthians 8:1). Indeed, we can *“know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:32). But at the same time, let us *be “speaking truth in love”* (Ephesians 4:15). When we find and talk with those who are ignorant and/or disobedient, let us *“be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God”* (James 1:19,20). Let us *“not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will”* (II Timothy 2:24-26). Finally, let us always remember the wise man's words: *“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; And he that is wise winneth souls”* (Proverbs 11:30).

Sermon Notes:
“Refuge!”

- Why did these cities exist?

- Christ is our _____; conversion is our _____;
calamity is what we _____; clarity is the
_____, and if we continue in these things there is
_____.

- The cities’ names were relevant for us:
- Kadesh:
- Shechem:
- Hebron:
- Bezer:
- Ramoth:
- Golan:

Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study: 9:30 a.m.
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Evening: 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study: 7:30 p.m.

Preachers:

James Grayson
614-409-0941

Robin W. Haley
614-751-1082

RAGER ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST



5775 Rager Rd, Canal Winchester, Ohio 43110
Phone: 614-830-0110
Website: www.ragerroad.org

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Wednesday’s Wisdom:

“Let’s be thankful for our fellowship, our opportunities to worship, and our opportunities to be together.” Austin Truss

Steve Anticoli has been down in the back. Pray that he recoups soon.

Graysons are in Alabama for a family reunion. Pray for their safe travel and return to us.

Questions & Answers tonight.

Picnic today at 4 pm.

June building cleaning slot needs to be filled soon.

Sermon Preview:

- The nation of Israel had cities of refuge for protection from the avenger of blood.
- To remain safe, those who fled there must remain until the death of the high priest.
- The “holy nation” of God (the church) also has a city of refuge.
- We are safe in that city from the vengeance of God.
- We shall be forever safe, because our High Priest shall never die (Hebrews 7.25)!