**Sermon Title: The Gift of Mercy for Christ-mas Salvation**

**Sermon Text: Titus 3:4-7**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to realize that mercy has and does relieve the misery of sin.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 3 aspects of the incarnation to focus on to live misery free.**

**Introduction:** The New Testament explodes with the theme of God’s mercy in light of Christ, who is the supreme expression of God’s love, mercy and grace.

[**Baker Theological Dictionary of the Bible, Walter A. Elwell, p. 521**]

Mercy (eleos) is closely related to grace. Man needs both mercy and grace in order to be saved. (Grace takes away the guilt of sin; mercy [takes away] the misery of sin. From a human viewpoint, grace proceeds mercy. We accept God’s grace through faith, before we can have our misery removed. (**1 Peter 1:3**)

**Isaiah 54:7** "For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you.

**Isaiah 55:3** Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you-- The sure mercies of David.

**Luke 1:72** To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant,

**Luke 1:78** Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visitedus;

**Matthew 9:13** "But go and learn what *this* means:`I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

The Old Testament picture of God’s mercy is the “Mercy Seat.”

**Exodus 25:17** "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits *shall be* its length and a cubit and a half its width.

It is the lid or cover of the ark, which was the place at which atonement took place. Between the Shekinah glory cloud above the ark and the tablets of the law inside the ark was the blood that was sprinkled over. Blood from the sacrifice stood between God and the broken law of God. Mercy Seat means “place of atonement.” It is thus named because it was where God manifested Himself for the purpose of atonement.

The reason God provided a glorious salvation for mankind is that He is merciful. Sinners need God’s mercy because they are in a pitiful, desperate, wretched condition as sinners.

**Ephesians 2:4** But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

**Exodus 34:6** And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth,

**Psalm 108:4** For Your mercy *is* great above the heavens, And Your truth *reaches* to the clouds.

**Isaiah 27:4** Fury *is* not in Me. Who would set briers *and* thorns Against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.

**Lamentations 3:22** *Through* the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. **Micah 7:18** Who *is* a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights *in* mercy.

The incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God with us, into the world God comes is a truth of Scripture. But the truth of the incarnation of Christ into the life of a sinner, changing everything about the sinner, is often a truth not preached, therefore, not understood. Therefore, it is not practiced as a lifestyle, which informs every aspect of the Christian living in a secular culture. (**John 10:9-10; Matthew 1:18-25**)

**Galatians 4:3-5** Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. **4** But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, bornof a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

**John 1:1-5** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. **4** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehendit.

**John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

**1 John 1:1-4** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- **2** the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- **3** that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. **4** And these things we write to you that yourjoy may be full.

**I. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the kindness and love of God. V.4**

**II. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the provisions of God. Vv.5-6**

**III. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the goodness of God. V.7**

**I. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the kindness and love of God. V.4**

 Kindness … Paul is referencing Jesus Christ, who is the kindness, loving kindness (the mercy of God) and love appearing in human form.

**II. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the provisions of God. Vv.5-6**

 “Sinners come into relationship with God, and experience continued fellowship only because God shows mercy to them. Mercy forgives and liberates those who have no right to such blessings.

 [**Ibid., p. 522**]

 **Romans 9:15** For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion1."

 **1 Timothy 1:13** although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

 **1 Timothy 1:16** However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

 **2 Corinthians 4:1** Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.

 Throughout the New Testament it is clear that God’s mercy is displayed to the world in Christ.

 In view of all the Scriptures have to say about God’s mercy, it is no exaggeration to believe that life in Christ Jesus is not only an awareness of being recipients of God’s mercy in salvation, but also of being daily recipients of fresh “mercies” of God every day, which is a testimony to His ownership of us and care for us, which is expressed in every greeting of the New Testament.

**III. The mercy of the incarnation reveals the goodness of God. V.7**

 A. The **justification** provided by God’s mercy. V.7a (**Romans 3:21-5:21; Galatians 3:6-22**)

 **Philippians 3:8-9** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

 B. The **adoption** provided by God’s mercy. V.7b

 As adopted children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, believers become “heirs of God and joint hers with Christ.”

 **Romans 8:17** and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

 **1 Peter 1:3-4** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,