

Moments of Inspiration

Be Merciful

by Sonia Edwards

Proverbs is regarded as the Book of Wisdom. It holds lots of practical advice on how we can carry out our daily living. Proverbs 3:3 instructs us to incorporate mercy into our loves and relationships. One definition of mercy describes it as “compassion or forgiveness shown towards someone...”.

In what has come to be known as the Beatitudes, Jesus taught “Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy”. Similarly Proverbs 3:3 admonishes us to hold on to this same mercy. We are guided to put it around our neck, like a decorative necklace; like a symbol of commitment and to stamp it on the table of our hearts. These two metaphors underscore the importance of this attribute.

I recently had an experience where a roadworks employee who was charged with directing traffic through a detour, was very abusive to me. The language he used to address me when I did not move my vehicle along fast enough, is not appropriate to be expressed here. I was indignant and very upset that he dared to mete out that type of treatment to me. I immediately pulled off the road to find his supervisor and lodge a complaint. Boy, was I steaming! Over the next 24 hours I must have recounted this story to my family and friends at least 8 times. But as the hours wore on, I began to gain a different perspective. What if this individual were never trained how to properly interact with the

Proverbs 3: 3

Do not let mercy and truth forsake thee, bind them about thy neck, write them upon the table of your heart. (KJV)

Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck; Write them on the tablet of your heart. (NASB)

road travelers? What if his life circumstances never allowed him the privilege of understanding respectful interactions between humans? My disdain slowly started turning to mercy and I found myself whispering a prayer for the offender. I am sure that was the working of the Holy Spirit.

Fast forward to the next twenty-four hours. An independent technician came to my home to complete a job requested. It took him thirty minutes to complete, but I am very much aware of how much technical professional service can cost. There is normally a minimum fee regardless of how little time is used up to provide the service. When I inquired of the charges he said, “No charge, that’s ok”. I thanked him and said goodbye. Five minutes later the reality of what had just happened sunk in. I couldn’t help but reflect on scripture that encourages us to be merciful, neither could I help but remember the young man who had offended me, but to whom God’s Holy Spirit had convinced me to show mercy. Jesus taught that when we show mercy, we too will receive mercy. Let us heed the instruction in Proverbs 3:3 today and seek opportunity to show mercy

Prayer: Dear God – In this fast paced and demanding life, we live, please help me to readily embrace the opportunities to show mercy to those whom I encounter daily. Amen.