

Sunday, March 6, 2011

Mercy

- + Mercy is one of the most important Christian virtues. It is the key without which we cannot enter heaven, *“For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy”* (James 2:13)
- + Any acts of mercy we do are a stockpile for us in heaven, *“For I was hungry and you gave Me food... Thirsty and you gave Me drink... Stranger and you took Me in... Naked and you clothed Me... Sick and you visited Me... In prison and you came to Me... Inherit the kingdom prepared for you...”* (Matthew 25:35-36).
- + The lack of compassion means that we don't love God. (Anba Isaiah)
- + A wise man buys for himself the kingdom with a fragment of bread.
- + He who has compassion toward his brother will have the door of the Lord open to his supplication at all times. (The Spiritual elder)
- + One of the spiritual fathers once told the following story regarding the importance of the acts of mercy to his disciples:



“Once someone was summoned to be questioned before the king, so he grew worried and asked for help from his three friends. The first said to him: ‘I can only take you to the outer door of the palace, but I can't help you beyond that point.’ The second said to him: “I'm willing to go with you and enter into the King's room with you till you stand before him, and at that point my role ends.” And the third said to him: ‘Don't worry, I will go with you and enter with you before the king, I will even speak on your behalf and defend you before him such that you will not be harmed.’

The audience asked their spiritual father about the meaning of the story. He said to them: “The three friends are as follows: the first is strife and asceticism, the second is purity, and the third is mercy. When we are summoned before the King on judgment day, the first friend will accompany us until the doorsteps of heaven, the second will take us inside to see God (Hebrews 12:14), while the third will intercede on our behalf before Him and gives us favor with Him. My children, the acts of mercy will speak on our behalf on judgment day.”

And we too, my brethren, have many opportunities to perform acts of mercy:

- Giving to the needy is an act of mercy.
- Caring for the sick is an act of mercy.
- Providing advice and guidance to any person is an act of mercy.
- Consoling and comforting someone sad is an act of mercy.
- Helping someone in any useful work is an act of mercy.
- Forgiving those who trespassed against us is an act of mercy.
- Reaching out with a word of love to the lost souls in this world, and inviting them to church and repentance is an act of mercy.



Let's pay attention, my beloved, to the acts of mercy so we may win the kingdom..

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