



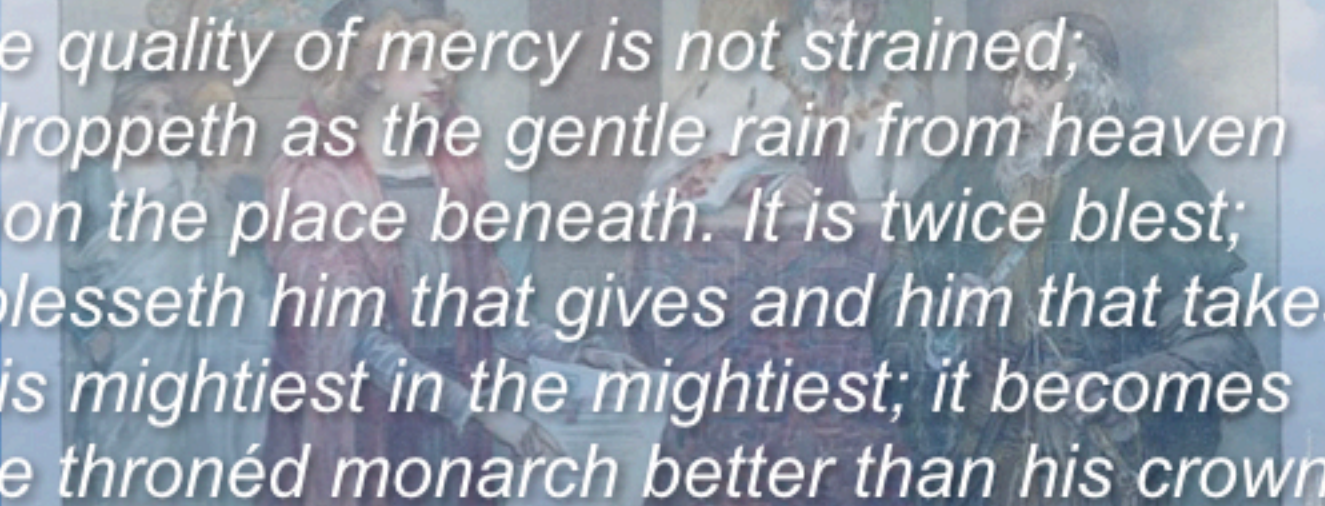
THE HIGHEST GOOD

a series in the Sermon on the Mount

“Twice Blest”

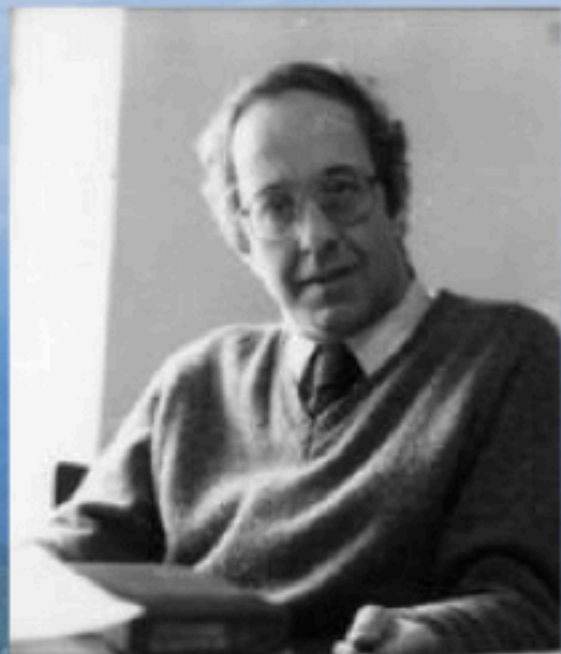


From Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*
Illus. by Ernest Nister



*The quality of mercy is not strained;
it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
This mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronéd monarch better than his crown. . . .*

Portia to Shylock



Henri Nouwen

Pity connotes distance, even looking down upon. When a beggar asks for money and you give him something out of pity, you are not showing mercy. Mercy comes from a compassionate heart; it comes from a desire to be an equal.

Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to you.

For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Isaiah 30



Paul Tripp

We're simply not that good at Mercy because we tend to see ourselves as more deserving than the poor and needy.... To the degree that you forget the mercy you have been given, it is easier for you to not give mercy to others.

I desire mercy more than sacrifice.

Hosea 6:6



Rosaria Butterfield

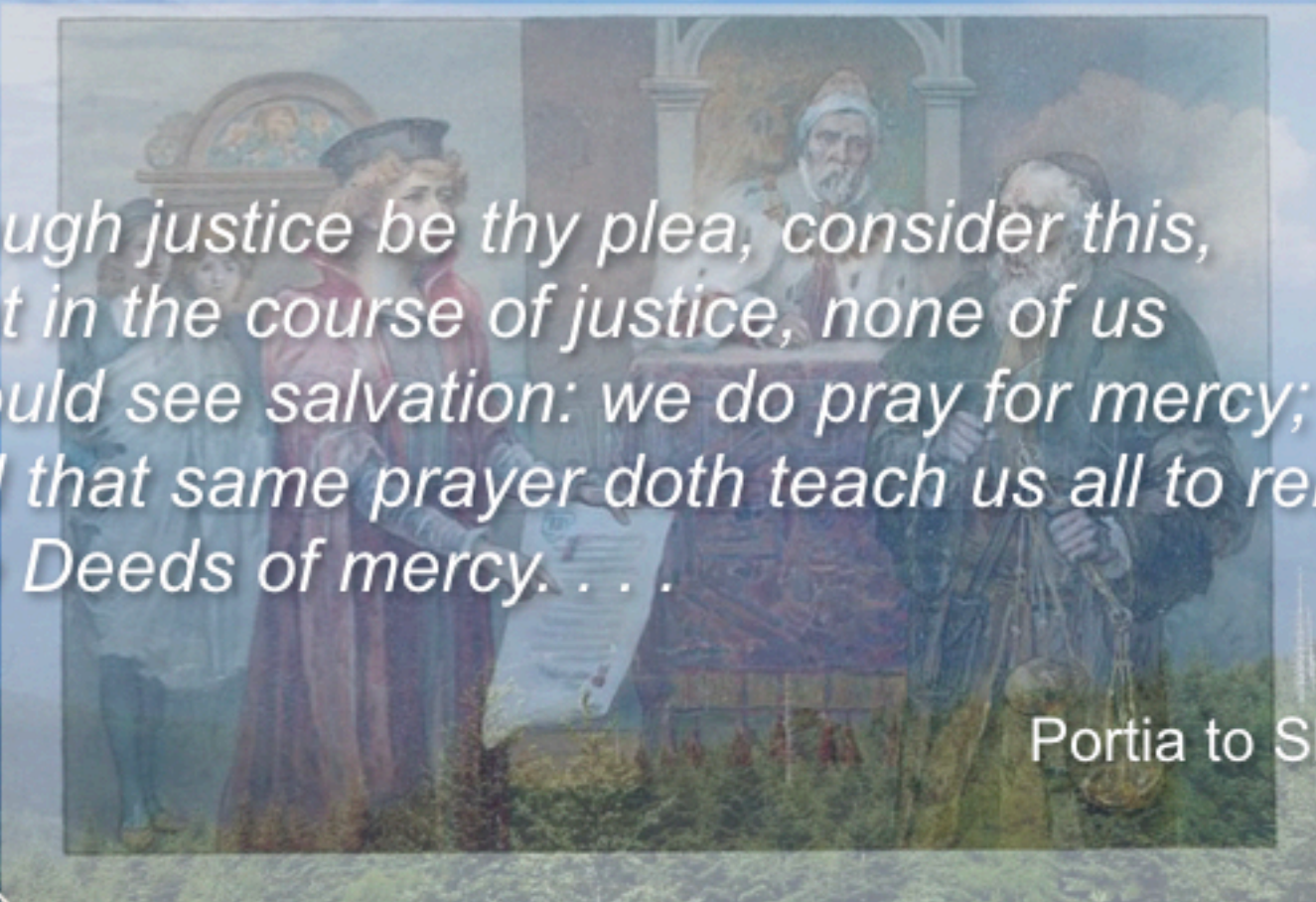
The more God-centered our worship practices, the more mercy-centered our life. We see this as an investment in community. Anything worth doing will take time and cost you something. We noticed. . .that many people in our community protect themselves from inconvenience as though inconvenience is deadly.





Rosaria Butterfield

We have decided that we are not inconvenienced by inconvenience. We are sure the Good Samaritan had other plans that fateful day. Our plans are not sacred.



*Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The Deeds of mercy. . . .*

Portia to Shylock



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