

Finding the Way Back to Mayberry

Episode # 93, “Dogs, Dogs, Dogs”

Introduction:

Opie brings a little, hungry dog into the courthouse and wants to adopt him. After the dog gets Barney’s sandwich and Mr. Cookie Bar, then he runs away. Opie is sad until the little pup comes back . . . and this time he brings more with him! A State Investigator is coming, and Barney is afraid he will think they want extra funds to take care of the dogs. Barney and Andy try to find them new homes before he arrives.

Lesson Points:

Mercy - Micah 6:8

God’s Mercy Upon Us – Matthew 5:7, Psalm 28:6

Our Mercy Upon Animals – Genesis 1:26-30

Our Mercy Upon Others – Luke 10:27, James 2:12-13

Serving Others – 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

Gifts of Food, Shelter, and Clothing – Psalm 55:22, Isaiah 46:4

Donations of Money and Services – 2 Corinthians 9:7

Other Cardinal Acts of Mercy – Zechariah 7:9-10

Seeking Our Responsibility – Matthew 18:33

Getting Over Our Own Selfishness – Mark 10:15

Taking the Initiative – Matthew 23:23-24

Attitude of Humility and Compassion – Colossians 3:12, Proverbs 28:13

Perseverance, Dedication, Devotion, and Hard Work – Hebrews 3:13-14

Doing the Right Thing – Philippians 2:3-4

For the Right Reasons – Ephesians 4:31-32, Matthew 9:12-13

Making the Best Decision – Proverbs 1:1-7

Trusting in Good Results – Jude 22-23, Luke 6:36

Giving Generously – 2 Corinthians 9:6

Receiving Heart-Warming Satisfaction – Matthew 25:37-40

Discussion:

- 1) How was Andy an example of mercy for Opie? What are some examples when someone showed you mercy? What “cardinal acts of mercy” have you done for others?
- 2) Otis said he had finished his breakfast and then ate the last bite. Barney reluctantly parted with his sandwich and Mr. Cookie Bar to feed the hungry dog. What does this tell you about our attitude toward others’ suffering? Why do we often fail to help others?
- 3) Andy told Opie not to worry about the dogs. Barney rationalized how dogs can take care of themselves and their own kind. Could this ever have a negative effect on a child’s desire to help others? Don’t we make the same arguments about others and decide they’ll be fine or that someone else will surely help them? Are we like Barney’s selfish giraffes?
- 4) Opie was quick to want to help the dogs. The others gradually pitched in. Why did they change their attitudes? Is it just possible that we can learn a lot from children? Exactly what prompted Opie, Andy, Barney, Otis, and the investigator to show mercy?
- 5) The “kennel” grew from one to eleven dogs. No matter how much we help, there always seems to be more that can be done. Does this fact discourage you, and why?

Final Thought:

Barney: ‘The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven’ You’re not talkin’ to a jerk, ya know!

Matthew 5

⁷Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Psalm 28

⁶ Praise be to the Lord ,
for he has heard my cry for mercy.

Genesis 1

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

²⁹ Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so.

Luke 10

²⁷He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'^[1] ; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

James 2

¹²Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,
¹³because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.
Mercy triumphs over judgment!

2 Corinthians 8

¹And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ²Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, ⁴they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. ⁵And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. ⁶So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. ⁷But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us --see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

Psalm 55

²² Cast your cares on the Lord

and he will sustain you;
he will never let the righteous fall.

Isaiah 46

⁴ Even to your old age and gray hairs
I am he, I am he who will sustain you.
I have made you and I will carry you;
I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

2 Corinthians 9

⁷ Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Zechariah 7

⁹ "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.'

Matthew 18

³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'

Mark 10

¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Matthew 23

²³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law--justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴ You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

Colossians 3

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Proverbs 28

¹³ He who conceals his sins does not prosper,
but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Hebrews 3

¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. ¹⁴ We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

Philippians 2

³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Ephesians 4

³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Matthew 9

¹²On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Proverbs 1

¹ The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

² for attaining wisdom and discipline;
for understanding words of insight;

³ for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life,
doing what is right and just and fair;

⁴ for giving prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the young-

⁵ let the wise listen and add to their learning,
and let the discerning get guidance-

⁶ for understanding proverbs and parables,
the sayings and riddles of the wise.

⁷ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,
but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

Exhortations to Embrace Wisdom

Jude 1

²²Be merciful to those who doubt; ²³snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear--hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

Luke 6

³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

2 Corinthians 9

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Matthew 25

³⁷"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'