

*CALL TO WORSHIP: PSALM 50:7–15

One: Hear this, O people of God—our Lord speaks and calls us to listen. He testifies against us, saying, “I am God, your God.”

All: We come before You, Lord, to listen and to worship.

One: The Lord does not rebuke us for our sacrifices,
for our offerings are always before Him.

**All: Yet we remember that You do not need what we bring—
for all creation already belongs to You.**

One: Every creature of the forest is His, and the cattle on a thousand hills. He knows every bird of the mountains, and all that moves in the fields belongs to Him.

***CALL TO WORSHIP: PSALM 50:7–15**

All: The world is Yours, O Lord, and everything in it.

One: If God were hungry, He would not tell us, for the earth and all it contains are His. He does not delight in offerings as if He needed them.

All: Instead, we offer You our gratitude and praise.

One: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and fulfill your vows to the Most High.

All: We call on You in times of trouble, trusting that You will deliver us.

*CALL TO WORSHIP: PSALM 50:7–15

One: And you will honor the Lord.

All: We worship You with thankful hearts, giving You glory and praise!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

MBW 731

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

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PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Psalm 50:7-15

Hosea 5:15 -6:6

Romans 4:13-25

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

MESSAGE

“Mercy Over Ritual: Faith That Responds to God”

Pastor Bruce

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

1. God Desires Relationship Over Ritual (Psalm 50:7–15)

- God rebukes empty religious performance.
- God reminds Israel: *“I do not rebuke you for your sacrifices... I have no need of a bull from your stall”* (Psalm 50).
- He is not impressed by outward offerings without inward devotion.
- True worship is:
 - Thanksgiving
 - Trust in God
 - Calling upon Him in trouble

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

1. God Desires Relationship Over Ritual (Psalm 50:7–15)

2. God Calls for Repentance and True Love (Hosea 5:15–6:6)

- God allows hardship to draw people back to Him.
- *“In their distress they will earnestly seek me”* (Hosea 5:15).
- The people show **shallow repentance**—quick words without lasting change.
- God’s response:
 - *“Your love is like the morning mist... I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”*

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

¹³ It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. ¹⁴ For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, ¹⁵ because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

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3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

¹⁸ Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” ¹⁹ Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. ²⁰ Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

²¹ being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. ²² This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” ²³ The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, ²⁴ but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

- Abraham was justified by faith, not works.
- The promise came through **faith**, not law.
- Abraham believed:
 - Against all odds
 - Without weakening in faith
- *“It was credited to him as righteousness.”*

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

3. Faith, Not Performance, Brings Righteousness (Romans 4:13–25)

- **Theological Anchor:**

- . Our standing before God is based on:
 - . Faith in Jesus
 - . Not our ability to perform

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

The Calling of Matthew

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

The Calling of Matthew

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

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

¹⁸ While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, “My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹ Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

²⁰ Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹ She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.”

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

²² Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed at that moment.

²³ When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, ²⁴ he said, “Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.” But they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶ News of this spread through all that region.

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

- **1. The Calling of Matthew**

- A tax collector—social outcast.

- Jesus says: *“Follow me.”*

- Religious leaders are offended.

- **Jesus’ Response:**

- *“I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”*

- *“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

4. Jesus Demonstrates Mercy Over Legalism (Matthew 9:9–13, 18–26)

- **2. Miracles of Faith**

- . A woman touches Jesus’ cloak—healed by faith.
- . A leader believes Jesus can raise his daughter—and He does.

- **Spiritual Pattern:**

- . Faith → Response → Transformation

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Theme	Scripture Emphasis
God rejects empty religion	Psalms 50
God wants steadfast love	Hosea
God honors faith	Romans 4
Jesus practices mercy	Matthew 9

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LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

- Church attendance, giving, and service are good—but not enough alone.
- God desires:
 - Gratitude
 - Dependence
 - Relationship

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

- Repentance must be:
 - Sincere
 - Sustained
 - Heart-centered
- Ask: Is my devotion consistent or seasonal?

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

- Stop striving to “earn” God’s favor.
- Start trusting:
 - In God’s promises
 - In Christ’s finished work

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LIVING IN GOD'S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

- Jesus welcomes:
 - The broken
 - The rejected
 - The faithful risk-takers
- Mercy > Judgment

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LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Across these scriptures, we see a consistent call:

- Not sacrifice without sincerity
- Not ritual without relationship
- Not law without faith
- Not judgment without mercy

God is inviting us into something deeper: A living, active, trusting relationship grounded in faith and expressed through mercy.

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LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Ask yourself:

Is my faith routine or relational?

Am I relying on performance or trusting in Christ?

Do I extend mercy as God has shown me mercy?
immediately when Jesus calls—like Matthew did.

“MERCY OVER RITUAL: FAITH THAT RESPONDS TO GOD”

LIVING IN GOD’S LIGHT

What exactly does this mean for US?

Practical Steps:

- . Spend time daily in honest prayer (not just formal words).
- . Practice mercy intentionally (forgive, serve, uplift).
- . Trust God in one area where you’ve been relying on yourself.
- . Respond
