

Streams Of Mercy

The hymn COME THOU FOUNT mentions mercy coming in "Niagra Fall-like" streams that douse us continuously with the goodness of God. His goodness is at its greatest when we consider our salvation, that we have been brought out of darkness and into the light. We were spiritually dead, and now we are alive. Peter puts it this way in his first epistle.....

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:3-5

When we think of what God has done for us, what is more appropriate than "songs of loudest praise" as the hymn writer puts it? Let's fully engage our heart, soul, mind and strength in gratitude to our merciful God.

Come Thou Fount

God is always looking for ways to show mercy. And he makes good on his promise. Zechariah (John the Baptist's dad) was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied these words: "*Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us - to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death to guide our feet into the path of peace.*"

Luke 1:67-79

His Love Endures

Psalm 116:1-14

LEADER:

I love the LORD, for he heard my voice;
he heard my cry for mercy.
Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.

ALL:

The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me;
I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.
Then I called on the name of the LORD: "O LORD, save me!"

LEADER:

The LORD is gracious and righteous;
our God is full of compassion.

ALL:

The LORD protects the simplehearted;
when I was in great need, he saved me.

LEADER:

Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

ALL:

For you, O LORD, have delivered my soul from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling,
that I may walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

LEADER:

I believed; therefore I said, "I am greatly afflicted."
And in my dismay I said, "All men are liars."

ALL:

How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me?

LEADER:

I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

ALL:

I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

**In a time of prayer from the congregation,
ask for expressions of gratitude for God's mercy
shown to them, based on the phrases in Psalm 116**

Faithful Love

PRAYER

Oh, the breadth of the riches of the mercy of God! There is no instrument that could sound its depth. Thank you for your commitment to our salvation. We have been rescued from darkness and brought into your marvelous light. You have placed in us a desire to serve you without fear in holiness and righteousness before you all our days, and forever. Thank you for the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun has come to us from heaven, guiding our feet into the path of peace. Merciful God, we love you. Amen.

The Love Of God

OFFERING

Who Is A God Like You

SERMON