

## Week 8 Day 1 | *Promises in the Bible: Mercies*

Last night was a night like any other. We plowed through the normal homework-dinner-hangout-bedtime ritual common to most families. The kids were fast asleep. My wife and I chatted about the day's events. It was late and before I knew it, she was asleep too. I read for a bit, then went to bed, thinking back on my day, and making plans for tomorrow.

I woke up to a day unlike any other. We had been hit with a snowstorm. The trees appeared as if they had been dipped in white chocolate. The neighbor's old rickety fence was now trimmed in white, somehow looking quaint. The snow was not so much falling down as it was racing sideways in blurry bits. At times, the wind would pick the snow up off the ground and throw it several yards away, rearranging the landscape repeatedly . . . as if the wind were sculpting, not merely blowing.

Then, every so often, the snow slowed. From chaos to calm, the mood instantly went from a minor chord to a major. Visibility restored briefly before the fury returned. There was still beauty in the chaos, just a beauty of a different kind.

What was unique about the morning wasn't that it had snowed, because it was snowing a lot this winter. It wasn't how it snowed, in fits and starts—nothing all that uncommon about that either.

What was unique was that the snowstorm wasn't on my radar. I had no idea we were due for any snow of any kind. I certainly didn't anticipate school closings, gymnastics classes being cancelled, and poor road conditions.

The morning reminded me of probably the most famous verse in Lamentations:

*"The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each morning." —3:22–23 (NLT)*

As the NIV puts it, ". . . for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning."

There's a difference between the morning's snow and this verse. The difference is that God should be on our radar. Every day, His compassions should be expected. What comfort! Every morning, He covers our sins. Every day, He wipes our sin clean. For all time, He has made us as pure as it was outside that morning: "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18).

The snowstorm also reminded me of when I was in school. Whenever I made mistakes, which was a lot, I'd flip the pencil around to correct them. A frenzied rub of the eraser and the lead came up,

leaving behind a trail of eraser crumbs. A quick brush of the hand, a hefty blow on the paper, and specks of eraser scattered like a fast-falling snow. My paper became new again.

That is our God! That is His promise to us. We make plans, as I did the night before the snow. He then takes our plans and makes something beautiful out of them. He takes the chaos that is our fast-moving lives and makes something scenic from them. He takes the sin in our lives, erases it by the blood of Christ, and makes us new again.

God does this every . . . single . . . day. Furthermore, if He can do this with our sins, should our health present any real issue for him? When we botch our diet, we can start fresh the next morning. When we miss our workouts, we can start with a clean slate the next day. When we deprive our bodies of sleep tonight, He can give us the discipline to go to bed earlier tomorrow.

Put it on your radar. Revel in it. His mercies are . . . new . . . every . . . morning. Making us white as snow. Giving our old feeble fence character. Bringing our dormant trees to life. Covering the landscape of our lives and sculpting it into a beauty of a different kind. The kind in which God is glorified.

### Prayer

*Father, thank You, thank You, thank You for the daily renewal in our lives that You provide. Will You forgive me when I fail to remember Your mercy and compassion? Please help me to be merciful to others, as You have been so very merciful to me. Amen.*

### Meditation

Your mercies are new every morning.

### Daily Spiritual Exercise

Today, you are going to meditate for three to five minutes on Lamentations 3:22–23. As you do, think about each word and the implications it has for both your fitness and your life in general. For instance, this passage uses words like "faithful," "love," "never ends," "mercies," and "afresh," all in reference to our Father. Consider the glorious consequences these words mean for you.

As you think through this great news, you'll be reminded that His mercy doesn't stop at covering our mistakes. His mercy gives us power to not make any more of them. Every day, day after day, this can reshape our lives . . . like snow on a landscape.