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Mercies I've Received

by Matthew Henry

The following was written by a very young Matthew Henry, one of the earliest memorials we have of him after leaving seminary. He wrote it on his 20th birthday, thanking God for the manifold mercies he'd received up to that point in his young life:

1. That I am endued with a rational, immortal soul, capable of serving God here, and enjoying him hereafter, and was not made as the beasts that perish.
2. That the exercise of my powers and faculties has not been obstructed by frenzies, lunacy, etc., but happily continued in their primitive (nay, happily advanced to greater) vigour and activity.
3. That I have all my senses, and that I was neither born, nor by accident made blind, or deaf, or dumb, either in whole or in part.
4. That I have a complete body in all its parts. That I am not lame or crooked, either through original or providential want, or a defect, or the dislocation of any part, or member.
5. That I was formed, and curiously fashioned by an All-wise hand in the womb, and kept there, nourished and preserved, by the same gracious hand, till the appointed time.
6. That, at the appointed time, I was brought into the world, the living child of a living mother, and though means were wanting, yet He that can work without means, was not.
7. That I have been ever since comfortably provided for with bread to eat, and raiment to put on, not for necessity only, but for ornament and delight, and that without my pains and care.
8. That I have had a very great measure of health (the sweetness of all temporal mercies), and that when infectious diseases have been abroad, I have hitherto been preserved from them.
9. That when I have been visited with sickness, it hath been in measure, and health hath been restored to me when a brother dear, and companion as dear, hath been taken away at the same time, and by the same sickness.
10. That I have been kept and protected from many dangers that I have been exposed to by night and by day, at home and abroad, especially in journeys.
11. That I have had comfortable accommodation as to house, lodging, fuel, etc., and have been a stranger to the wants of many thousands in that kind.
12. That I was born to a competency of estate in the world, so that, as long as God pleases to continue it, I am likely to be on the giving, and not the receiving hand.
13. That I have had, and still have comfort, more than ordinary, in relations; that I am blessed with such parents as few have, and sisters also that I have reason to rejoice.
14. That I have had a liberal education, having a capacity for the knowledge of the languages, arts, and sciences; and that, through God's blessing on my studies, I have made some progress therein.
15. That I have been born in a place and time of gospel light; that I have had the scriptures and the means of understanding

ding them, by daily expositions, and many good books, and that I have had a heart to give myself to and delight in the study of them.

16. That I have been hitherto enabled so to demean myself, as to gain a share in the love and prayers of God's people.

17. That I was in infancy brought within the pale of the visible church in my baptism.

18. That I had a religious education, the principles of religion instilled into me with my very milk, and from a child have been taught the knowledge of God.

19. That I have been endued with a good measure of praying gifts, being enabled to express my mind to God in prayer, in words of my own, not only alone, but as the mouth of others.

20. That God hath inclined my heart to devote and dedicate myself to him, and to his service, and the service of his church in the work of ministry, if ever he shall please to use me.

21. That I have had so many sweet and precious opportunities, and means of grace, sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, and have enjoyed, not only the ordinances themselves which are the shell, but communion with God the Kernel.

22. That I have a good hope through grace, that, being chosen of God from eternity, I was in the fullness of time called, and that a good work begun in me, which I trust God will perform.

23. That I have had some sight of the majesty of God, the sweetness of Christ, the evil of sin, the worth of my soul, the vanity of the world, and the reality and weight of invisible things.

24. That when I have been in doubt I have been guided; in danger I have been guarded; in temptation I have been succoured; under guilt I have been pardoned; when I have prayed, I have been heard and answered; when I have been under afflictions they have been sanctified, and all by divine grace.

25. That I am not without hope, that all these mercies are but the earnest of more, and pledges of better in the kingdom of glory, and that I shall rest in Abraham's bosom, world without end.

26. Lastly, thanks be to God for Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all mercies. Amen, Hallelujah.