

Introduction

The verse says that Paul and his co-workers have a ministry, which is basically equated to having received mercy. This extends out from Paul to all believers of all time. This mercy was provided—it was not generated within any man, but God gave it.

The verb is one of the so-called “divine passives” in the NT. This kind of passive voice verb does not have the agency of it expressed in the text, but it is obvious from what is being said. For instance, God is the obvious agent in these verses:

1. Rom. 3:28 - a man **is justified** by faith
2. 1 Cor. 3:10 - the grace of God which **is given** unto me
3. 1 Cor. 7:23 - You **were bought** with a price
4. Gal. 5:13 - you **have been called** to liberty
5. Eph. 2:5 - by grace you **are saved**

Obviously, God is at work “behind the scenes,” even when His name is not specifically mentioned!

Mercy

But to shift the focus a bit, let us look at some of the NT teaching on the mercy of God in its various manifestations.

1. God is Rich in Mercy

Eph. 2:4 – But God, who is rich in **mercy**, for his great love wherewith he loved us

James 5:11 – Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender **mercy**.

2. God’s Mercy is Sovereignly Bestowed

Rom. 9:15-18, 23 – For he saith to Moses, I will have **mercy** on whom I will have **mercy**, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ¹⁶ So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth **mercy**. ¹⁷ For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. ¹⁸ Therefore hath he **mercy** on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth... ²³ And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of **mercy**, which he had afore prepared unto glory,

3. Salvation is One Huge Way God Shows Mercy

Rom. 11:30-32 – For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained **mercy** through their unbelief: ³¹ Even so have these also now not believed, that through your **mercy** they also may obtain **mercy**. ³² For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have **mercy** upon all.

Rom. 15:9 – And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* **mercy**; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

1 Tim. 1:13 – Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained **mercy**, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.

1 Tim. 1:16 – Howbeit for this cause I obtained **mercy**, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Titus 3:5 – Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his **mercy** he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

1 Peter 1:3 – Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant **mercy** hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Peter 2:10 – Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained **mercy**, but now have obtained **mercy**.

Jude 21 – Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the **mercy** of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

4. Mercy can be Received in Health Concerns

Php. 2:27 – For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had **mercy** on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

5. Mercy is Available in All Kinds of Situations

Heb. 4:16 - Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain **mercy**, and find grace to help in time of need.

6. The Privilege of Ministry is a Result of God’s Mercy

2 Cor. 4:1 – Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received **mercy**, we faint not;

Conclusion

Salvation, good health, ministry, and anything else that we receive demonstrates God’s mercy toward us in withholding punishment and providing such good things. Let us praise Him for such lovingkindness! MAP