

THE MERCIFUL





Blessed Are the Merciful

Where Does Mercy Come From?

Today's Beatitude is "blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Mercy is a very important topic, and a word you hear a whole lot around the church. So today we are going to ask, where does mercy come from? How can I become merciful? What is mercy? (*Write these questions on the board.*)

We get mercy when we are humble before God and when we want to be forgiven of our sins. Please understand that we can't earn God's mercy, though. It isn't something we can buy by being good or going to church or saying the right things. Mercy is a gift from God.

Let's look at it this way. If you are outside playing on a hot summer day, you will probably get pretty thirsty. Your mom will know that you are thirsty, but she isn't going to chase you down, sit on you and force you to drink water. She will offer you a drink, but she will not **MAKE** you drink the water, even though she knows it's what you really need. She also isn't going to make you beg for water or do one hundred jumping jacks before giving you a drink. All you have to do is ask, and your mom will give you the water you need. Only what you need though, if you ask for remote control cars when you need food, you won't get anything. God's mercy is like that. He knows we really need his mercy to live healthy, happy and full lives, but He will never **FORCE** his mercy on us. He also does not make us beg or work for mercy. All we have to do is ask for it. So now we have answered our first question, "where does mercy come from?" Mercy comes from God. (*Write "free gift from God" on the board next to the question "Where does mercy come from?"*)

We ask for mercy after we realize we need it, when we realize we are sinners who deserve to be punished for all the wrong we do. We become humble, broken over our sins, and we don't fight back when people wrong us, and we thirst for a right life with God. Basically, we see all the Beatitudes we have studied so far fall into place in our lives. That's when we become merciful. People who show mercy are the ones who are broken before the Lord.

Game: Mercy Tag

Clear a large space in your room (*or take the kids outside*). Mark off the boundaries of this game of tag. You have two people who are "it" in this timed game of tag. One is "Mean" and one is "Mercy." It may help to have Mean wear a hat or scarf of one color and Mercy another color. When you say go, everyone starts running around like crazy within the boundaries of the game. If Mean tags you, you must freeze. Mercy will come and unfreeze you. It is important that you keep moving unless you are tagged, so Mercy doesn't try to unfreeze you when you are just standing around for no reason! Play continues for two minutes, then you see who came out on top, Mercy or Mean. How many kids were frozen by Meanness? How many were set free by Mercy? Choose new "its" and continue play for as long as you have time. If too many people are getting tagged and staying frozen, have two kids be Mercy. If Mercy is unfreezing kids too fast, have two people be Mean. (*If you would like, have the kids pretend to be bees. Mean stings and Mercy heals.*)

Say: Mercy is not receiving from God something unpleasant that we deserve.



Power Point

People who
show mercy
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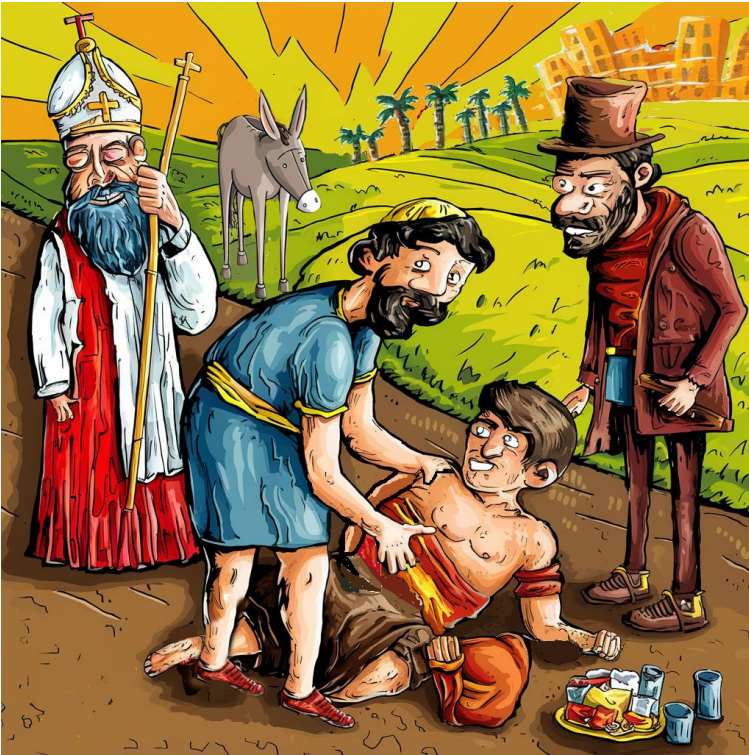
MEMORY VERSE

Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good... To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."



Bible Story: The Good Samaritan

Being a Good Neighbor



Once upon a time, in a land where hills rolled like cozy blankets, there was a winding road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Now, this road wasn't just any road—it was a rocky, twisty path that made travelers huff and puff like little steam engines.

One sunny day, a Jewish man decided to take this bumpy journey. He hummed a merry tune, his sandals crunching on the pebbles. But oh dear! Out of nowhere, some not-so-nice men leaped out like mischievous shadows. They snatched his bag, tore his clothes, and left him all bruised and bleeding by the roadside. Ouch!

Soon, a priest came strolling along. Priests were like the church helpers, you see. But did he help our poor, hurt friend? Nope! He tiptoed to the other side of the road, pretending he didn't notice. Maybe he thought the man was taking a nap. Silly priest!

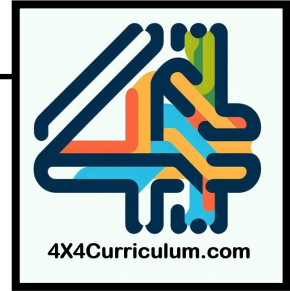
Next up was a Levite. Levites were like priest helpers. Surely he'd lend a hand, right? Wrong! He slowed down, peeked at the man, and then tip-toed away. Not very neighborly, Mr. Levite!

But wait! Here comes our hero—the Samaritan. Now, Jews and Samaritans didn't get along like peanut butter and jelly. They were more like cats and dogs. But guess what? The Samaritan didn't care. When he saw the hurt man, his heart melted like warm butter on toast.

He bandaged the man's wounds, lifted him onto his donkey, and took him to an inn. "Take care of him," the Samaritan told the innkeeper. "Here's some coins. If he needs more, I'll pay you back."

And that, my friends, is how the Good Samaritan showed love. Jesus told this tale to teach us that being a good neighbor means helping anyone, even if they're different. So, next time you see someone in need, be a Samaritan—kind, caring, and ready to lend a hand.

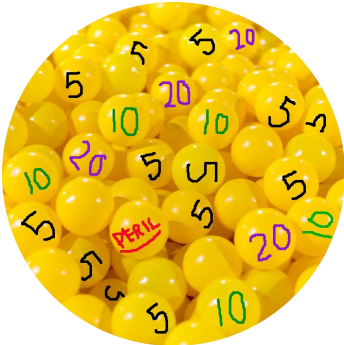




Game: Peril Ping Pong

This game is perfect for **Quiz Questions** or **Review Questions**

Prepare Ahead: Have a small bag of ping pong balls with you and write a point value on each one in various colors. For example, write in black on some worth five points, write in green the ones that are 10 and so on. You need less of the ping pong balls that are worth more. You also need one 'peril' ball with a distinctive color (eg red).



Procedure: The group is divided into teams and the leader asks the group questions. A correct answer means the child can choose a ball from the bag (without looking, of course) and their team scores the value written on the ball. If the 'peril' ball is chosen, all that team's points are lost.

The game can go as long or as short as is needed and questions can focus on a particular area of interest, like the Bible story or memory verse, or news that needs to go home to parents.

Mercy Round: For the last round of play, say that you are going to show mercy by taking out the 'peril' ball. *(For younger children, you can take out the peril ball for the whole game.)*

Activity: Sticky Note Mercy

DEFINE MERCY: Not receiving from God something unpleasant that we deserve.

MATERIALS:

Sticky notes
Handouts (See supplement page)
Markers
Whiteboard (for the "increased-difficulty" Option)

DURATION:

Approximately 10 minutes

PREPARATION:

Give each child the handout, sticky notes, and a marker.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Ask the students to come up with an expected punishment for each box on the handout. Then tell them to write the punishment on a sticky note and place it over the box. Once completed, discuss the definition of mercy (*withholding a deserved punishment in view of God's mercy on us.*) Ask the children to take each sticky note off and write "MERCY" in each box. Tell the children it is God's mercy that protects us from the ultimate penalty of our sin (*being forever separated from Him and spending eternity in hell*). Also emphasize that God's mercy gives us more time to repent, ask for forgiveness, and enter into a relationship with Him through His Son, Jesus Christ.

TIMESAVERING OPTION: Provide a list of punishment suggestions for the children to choose from.

INCREASED-DIFFICULTY OPTION: Ask the children to come up with additional ways we sin against God and write the suggestions on the whiteboard. Then discuss how God uses mercy in each scenario.



STICKY NOTE MERCY

Lying to your parents about
homework

Stealing items
from a store

Hitting someone
at school

Breaking someone's toy
on purpose

Staying outside
past curfew

Yelling at your parents

Skiping school

Sneaking out of
the house