

Are you merciful?

What is mercy:

A blessing that is an act of divine favor or compassion; compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm

Scripture:

Luke 6:36 "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" NIV.

James 2:12,13 "Talk and act like a person expecting to be judged by the Rule that sets us free. For if you refuse to act kindly, you can hardly expect to be treated kindly. Kind mercy wins over harsh judgment every time" The Message.

1. When another student is unintentionally doing something you know is wrong, do you:
 - a. Tell your teacher
 - b. Sit there in silence and hope that your teacher sees them
 - c. Quietly point out to them their mistake so that they don't get in trouble
2. When you see that your sister is still struggling to get her room clean so that she can go play with her friends, do you:
 - a. Point out to your mom how long it's taking your sister to clean up
 - b. Keep it to yourself and just look into her room from time to time
 - c. Help her finish cleaning so she can go meet her friends
3. The mean girl in your class who makes your life miserable drops all of her books and papers on the way out of school and the wind starts to blow them away. You:
 - a. Quickly walk away and ask your friend if she saw what happened — why would you help her when she probably wouldn't help if it were you?
 - b. Pretend like you don't see her
 - c. Chase after the papers that have blown away while she's gathering the rest of the books and papers
4. A classmate steals something from your backpack and gets caught. You:
 - a. Help the teacher figure out a good punishment — this person needs to be taught a lesson!
 - b. Allow the teacher to punish them as he/she sees fit for the circumstance but stay

out of the process

- c. Tell the teacher that you don't want them to be punished — it's enough that the person knows that what they did was wrong
5. On your way into school one day you see a student in a wheelchair ahead of you struggling to get in the door. You're already running late. You:
 - a. Go through a door farther away from where she is, hoping she doesn't see you
 - b. Open the door for her but then hurry off
 - c. Open the door for her, make small talk, and help her get to her classroom
 6. Sitting at lunch with your friends in the cafeteria, you look over and see a new girl timidly panning the room looking for a place to sit. You:
 - a. Laugh with your friends who are making jokes about her
 - b. Don't participate in making fun of her, but instead, pray that someone else steps up to invite her to their table
 - c. Tell your friends to quit being mean and go invite her to sit with you guys. Your friends just need to get to know her and they'll be fine!
 7. Your parent comes home from work, obviously stressed out and exhausted. You:
 - a. Go to your sibling's room to talk about how weird your parent is being
 - b. Tell your parent hello but then go wait in your room and hope they feel better later
 - c. Ask if your parent is okay, if there's anything you can help him/her with, and then make a point of being extra helpful around the house that evening to relieve some of the stress from him/her



Results

Mostly As: People wouldn't consider you a very merciful person. Someone who is merciful is kind and compassion to others whether the person deserves it or not. While it's not a sin to want justice to be done or to not be helpful in every single situation you encounter, just remember that you reap what you sow. If you aren't compassionate to others, people aren't going to want to be compassionate to you when you need it. Matthew 5:7 says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (NIV). So practice more mercy! According to this Scripture passage you will find yourself blessed if you do!

Mostly Bs: You're not openly unmerciful, but by standing by and taking a neutral position in your situation you're also not showing mercy. Be more open about showing mercy! It's not enough to just feel kindness or compassion towards someone — you need to act on it too. You'll be an excellent example of Jesus to the people in your life when they see your merciful actions.

Mostly Cs: You are a merciful person. You have a heart like Jesus — you not only feel kindness and compassion for people, you'll speak up and act on it. It doesn't matter if you're friends or enemies with a person, you are still willing to show them mercy when you can. People will notice this and be much more willing to show you mercy in return.

Here's a great Bible verse to memorize that talks about mercy. "No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, NLT).

Things to think about:

1. Do I know Jesus as my personal savior?
2. What one thing could I do today to show others compassion and mercy?
3. Have I hurt someone in the past because of my lack of mercy?
4. How do I feel when others don't show me mercy?

Actions Steps:

1. **Ask Jesus in to your heart and to be with you always.** Did you know that Jesus loves you and has an amazing plan for your life? John 3:16 (NIV) says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." He loves you so much that He wants to give you hope for your life and a future you can look forward to. Would you like to say "yes" to the plan Jesus has for your life? Here are three simple steps:
 - Be sorry for the wrong things you've done.
 - Pray and ask Jesus to forgive you.
 - Ask Jesus in to your heart and to be with you always.
2. **Work on showing mercy to others.** The more you work at it the easier it will become. Take the first step by changing one thing today, before you know it showing mercy and compassion will become natural.
3. **Ask for forgiveness:** Admitting you are wrong is not an easy thing. We all have times that we wish we would have done things differently. Ask the Lord to forgive you and to help you to be more compassionate and merciful in the future. Then apologize to those you may have hurt.
4. **Respond in love.** Think about how Jesus responded to others when he was treated so unjustly. He chose to take on all of the wrong things we have done so that we could have eternal life. He was beaten and crucified on the Cross because of His love for us. Matthew 7:12 (NIV) says, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." It can be very hard to respond in love when you have been treated unjustly. Your feelings are understandable and very real, but how you choose to react will determine the outcome of the future.

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