



Helping Your Child Learn to Show Mercy to Others



We all want our children to be merciful and kind instead of mean and harsh, but mercy doesn't necessarily come naturally. How can we help our child show mercy to others?

First, they need to understand what mercy means. One of the best ways to understand mercy's meaning is to illustrate it. When your child has disobeyed and deserves punishment, give him mercy. Instead of dishing out the punishment, announce the punishment and tell him that you are showing mercy and he will not have to be punished. (For example, if there is an extra chore to be done, do it yourself and take the punishment he should have received.) *Mercy is compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone when it is in your power to punish or harm that person* (Oxford Dictionary). Mercy is not receiving the deserved punishment.

Help them understand why we should be merciful. The whole reason we can show mercy to others is because God is merciful to us. Read and talk about God's mercy in Ephesians 2:4-9. (How much mercy does God have? How does He show us mercy? What should be our attitude toward God because of His mercy?) To illustrate God's great mercy, give out cups and ask children if they would like a drink of water. From a pitcher full of ice cold water, give each one a small drop of water. When they ask for more, pour it to the brim and even overflow it (over the kitchen sink, of course). God is FULL of mercy—He does not give us just a tiny bit, but gives us lots of mercy every day.

Brainstorm ways to show mercy to:

- Someone who is mean to you
- A younger sibling
- Someone who hurt your feelings
- Someone who no one really likes

God lists three things that He requires in Micah 6:8 and one of these is to love mercy!

