

# Complete Identification with Others

*Matthew 5:7*

**Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

## Introduction:

1. ILL: Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matt 18:23-35).
2. The king's cancellation of that tremendous debt is a picture of God showing mercy to you.
3. The servant's lack of mercy shows you how the world works.
  - a. "Dog eat dog" attitude; step on whoever you have to in order to get ahead.
  - b. Life is like a giant game of Monopoly where in order to succeed in life you crush the others to become the "winner". This is the opposite of what God wants!
4. The last verse states, **This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart. - v35.**

## I. Showing Mercy Affects Your Relationship with God

### A. The Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:12-15.

1. Ends with, **Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. - v12.**
2. Then, tacked on to the end, is a commentary of what this means: **For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. - v14-15.**

### B. You are saved by grace. This is a free gift given to you from the cross!

1. Eph 2:8 - **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.**
2. However - receiving Jesus as Savior implies surrendering to Him as Lord!
3. Surrendering to Him as Lord means allowing the Lord to mold these character traits into your life.
4. Lord Jesus wants you to be a merciful person! **Jam 2:13 - Judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.**

## II. What Does Merciful Mean?

### A. Mercy (ἐλεήμων) = compassion.

### B. Since Jesus spoke this in Aramaic, He used the word **Loving Kindness** (ܬܘܚܝܢܐ) = empathy, steadfast love.

1. It means more than sympathy or feeling sorry for someone. It means to crawl under that person's skin & experience what he experiences, to see what he sees, to think what he thinks.
2. Our American expression is to step into that person's moccasins & to walk where they walk.

### C. An illustration of the difference: **Mary Listening at the Lord's Feet (Lk 10:38-42).**

1. The Lord needed rest & solitude knowing He would be executed in less than a week.
2. Martha - Expressed her love by being the perfect hostess, cleaning the house, making the beds, fixing the best meals she could afford, etc. "Doing her thing" was being insensitive to the Lord's real needs.
3. Mary - simply available to listen & obey. Later her sensitivity resulted in her anointing Him (Jn 12:1-8).

### **III. What Happens When You Really Try to Do This?**

**A. You make forgiveness & the understanding of the tolerance of others much easier.**

**1. ILL: Supervisory Chaplain in Germany.**

a. My complaints about not having a Chaplains Assistant & (later) not having a typewriter fell on deaf ears.

b. When his supervisor questioned him, I was unjustly “called on the carpet”!

**2. How empathy helped me to understand and forgive.**

a. He & his wife were perpetually sick - his wife seriously.

b. Rather than retire, he chose to remain on active duty & did a poor job.

c. So, anyone who made him look bad (Me!) got the mean treatment.

d. It made it easier for me to forgive & tolerate when I understood his condition.

**B. You make the incarnation of Christ easier to understand.**

**1. You eat the bread during the Lord's Supper to remind you that God became a man.**

a. God took on flesh & became one of us: our weaknesses, our limitations, our emotions.

b. Jesus lived God's life as a human being to show you it could be done!

c. That's empathy! That's identification with us!

**2. You drink the cup during the Lord's Supper to remind you that He suffered on the cross as a man.**

a. God experienced real pain, real suffering, real rejection.

b. This was His ultimate identification with you!

c. When you understand what the Lord did for you, it becomes easier for you to love Him, praise Him & obediently serve Him!

**God wants to mold into you a merciful attitude;  
one in which you identify with those around you;  
then contribute to their needs as you are able.**

**That's mercy!**

**That's forgiveness!**

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