



Deacon Michael Kenny 5815 82<sup>nd</sup> St. #145 PMB 162 Lubbock TX 79242 4/24/22

Dear brothers in Christ, this Sunday we celebrated Divine Mercy Sunday. We have a picture of Jesus and the words under it saying, "Jesus, I trust you". God's Mercy is the forgiveness of our sins and the Love he showed us by dying on the cross for us. So, our God is really a wonderful God who gave us a free will to choose Him and do Good or; choose evil and do bad. He wants to save people who trust Him and believe in him through faith. It is really, pretty simple to say but extremely hard to do. Because we must really trust Him and really have faith. Not with our lips but with our heart and action. So, telling God I love you and I believe in you is good, but it will not get you into heaven. You must love Him with your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole mind and your whole strength. This is really hard, and it take a lifetime and we really never achieve it totally but we just keep trying and do our very best.

So here is a big way to measure how much you love God and how strong your faith is. Do you have mercy on those who have harmed you? Or do you "forgive those who have trespassed against you". God's words not mine from the Lords Prayer. From the Letter of James "There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when he judges you." You are required to forgive your brother. Jesus said in Matthew 5 "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." All of us have family, and former friends, and guards, and inmates whom we are still angry with. Many of you were done wrong by the system and the law. Many of you were hurt by family and other people. So, it is easy for us to still hold a grudge and be angry with others. Like me you have good reason to be upset with people, but you must forgive them. When you accept Christ and become a Christian you must do away with your old self and that includes your anger. Ephesians 4-22 "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."

You have to forgive you brother; in fact, you have to forgive everyone everything. Man, I know that is hard. But when you do not forgive you are really hurting yourself. That anger and hatred can eat you alive. It is the devil's tool and will torment you and cause you to be separated from God. It takes a real strong man to be able to forgive everyone everything, but when you do, you are forgiven, and you obtain a great peace in your heart. You sleep better and you feel better. The apostle Paul wrote in Colossians, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Now I want to give you a practical tool for forgiving people who have done you wrong. It works well for us big sinners. You and me. Because we are the person that so many people have to forgive. Because we have hurt people, physically, mentally, and emotionally. We have broken God's commandments and done things that other need to forgive us for. Remember the prodigal son, Luke 15 "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. <sup>19</sup> I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."

Because he was very sorry for his sins, he was begging for his earthly father to forgive him. He would be happy to forgive anyone who ever hurt him because he wanted his Father to have mercy and forgive him. His father did forgive him, just like your heavenly father forgives you. He was a sinner and need mercy. We are sinners and need mercy, and God is willing to completely forgive us, (IF and this is a big IF,) we are willing to forgive our brother. Now it is interesting in the story that the prodigal son's brother is not willing to forgive his brother or father because of his jealousy. Read the story in Luke. So, who are you going to be the wayward son who went off with the devil and then repented and came home to God, or the angry brother who refused to forgive his brother and is on his way to hell. Seems pretty straightforward to me....

So, I beg you my brothers in Christ "forgive those who trespass against you" be angry with no man, and God will have mercy on your souls. I send you God's love and Blessing and my prayers at 7 pm. michael