

Compassion

Scripture:

Matthew 9:35-38 “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. ³⁶But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, “*The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.*” ³⁸Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.”

Introduction:

The word compassion from our text is the Greek word “splanchnizomal” (pronounced splangkhnid-zom-ah-ee) which means to have the bowels yearn, in other words, to feel sympathy, to pity, to have or be moved with compassion. One conference speaker said, “The present-day type of Christianity will never win the world for Christ.” Perhaps the reason a statement like this holds so much credibility and causes so much concern from devoted believers is because not enough of us are allowing ourselves to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:29) We actually note that Christ was moved with compassion in this verse because of the condition of the people around Him and the fact that there were not enough men and women doing the work of ministry. Because of this, Christ sends a challenge to laborers and charges us to pray that they will respond to the needs of those around them.

I. Compassion is more than pity.

- A. Pity is a feeling for someone in distress; compassion is feeling plus action.
- B. The Good Samaritan. Both the priest and the Levite had pity, but the Samaritan had compassion.

Luke 10:30-37 “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’ ³⁶So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?” ³⁷And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

- C. We must have compassion if we are to bring our world to Jesus Christ.
- D. Compassion is an essential part of any revival.

II. The Bible is filled with stories of compassion.

- A. Pharaoh’s daughter had compassion on the baby Moses.
Exodus 2:6 “And when she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”
 1. One woman’s compassion opened the door to one of the greatest revivals in Israel’s history.
 2. She heard the cry, responded, and a great man of the future was able to fulfill his destiny.

- B. Jesus had compassion on the multitude of hungry people.
Matthew 15:32 *“Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.”*
1. Many people have been searching for spiritual reality but have run out of the sustenance they provide for themselves.
 2. Christ is looking for those who will have His compassion and bring spiritual (maybe even natural food) to the hungry.
 3. When compassion moved Jesus, he ministered to their need.
Matthew 14:14 *“And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.”*
 - a.) This was following the beheading of John and Jesus wanted to have some time alone.
 - b.) His compassion was greater than His need for solitude in a time of distress.
- C. The father of the prodigal had compassion for his son.
Luke 15:20 *“And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”*
1. Compassion leads to forgiveness and restoration.
 2. We’ve got to begin to feel compassion for the prodigals, not condemnation or just pity.
 3. Compassion brings the prodigal back into the family circle. There’s no suggestion that we’ll wait and see how they do.
 4. They immediately receive the kiss, the best robe, the ring the fatted calf and the feast of rejoicing.

III. When does compassion come?

- A. When Pharaoh’s daughter “saw” and “heard” the child Moses.
- B. When Jesus saw the hungry crowds.
- C. When the Samaritan saw the wounded man.
- D. When the father saw his prodigal son.
- E. We must begin to see the needs of and hear the cries of the abandoned, the hungry, the lost and the hurting.

IV. Compassion takes away our selfishness.

- A. It causes us to go out to “seek and to save that which was lost”. (Luke 19:10)
- B. Compassion makes the phrase “until he find it” in the parable of the lost sheep a reality in our lives. (Luke 15:4-7)
- C. It makes us “sweep diligently until we find” as the woman with the lost coin. (Luke 15:8)
- D. Compassion causes us to check out our motives and get involved in those things that reach lost and hurting people.
 1. City Wide Outreach
 2. Cell Ministry
 3. Jail and Prison Ministry
 4. Nursing Home Ministry
 5. Children’s Ministry
 6. Each person should be convinced in his own spirit where he/she can make a difference.