

In a Word: Compassion – Psalm 86:15

Introduction

- Of all the characteristics to be had by the Christian, compassion is of the utmost importance
 - Compassion stirs the heart and motivates us to do good
 - Compassion for another's spiritual wellbeing is why we invite others to church, to study the bible, to confess Jesus, to be baptized, to follow Jesus
 - We are here today because of God's great compassion towards us
- Compassion Defined: Concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.
 - Concern – Caring for those we cannot reach
 - Sympathy – A feeling of pity or compassion for another's suffering
 - Empathy – Understanding another's suffering because we've experienced it ourselves
 - Mercy – Forgiveness motivated by compassion
- In our children's story we've seen the compassion of Jesus on the sick
 - Let's continue looking into the bible and learn about compassion...

I. Compassion for the Individual

- a. Compassion can be shown for the individual or family, a small group of people
 - i. Not only did Jesus reach out to the multitudes, but to individual people as well
- b. Compassion on a leper (Mark 1:40-45)

Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." (Mark 1:41)

- i. Jesus was moved when seeing this man suffering from this terrible disease
 - ii. Not only suffering physically, but being separated from family and friends
 - iii. Suffering with the pain, loneliness, isolation
 - iv. Jesus did the unthinkable, touched the untouchable, healing him
 - v. Jesus said, "Don't tell anyone." But the man couldn't keep from telling about the compassion he'd received.
- c. Compassion on a grieving widow (Luke 7:11-16)

When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." (Luke 7:13)

- i. Jesus witnessed a funeral procession, a woman's only son, a widow, suffered much loss
- ii. I've witnessed it first hand, my first funeral, the agony of loss, how can we not be moved
- iii. Jesus raised the woman's son, moved by compassion

- d. Compassion for a lost friend
 - i. Jesus receives word that his friend, one He loved was sick (John 11:1-44)
 - ii. Four days after Lazarus dies, Jesus goes to Bethany

(33) Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. (34) And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." (35) Jesus wept. (John 11:33–35)

- iii. Even though Jesus knew He would raise His friend, His compassion moved Him to tears
- e. Jesus taught us to have compassion on our neighbor when the opportunity arises
(The Good Samaritan; Lk 10:29-37)

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. (Luke 10:33)

- f. As our spirit grows and matures, we should desire to be compassionate towards others

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous... (1 Peter 3:8)

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II. Compassion for a People (Nation)

- a. Not only did Jesus show compassion on the individual, but on a nation as well
 - i. Jesus had been doing much healing...

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. (Matthew 9:36)

(At His triumphant entry into Jerusalem) Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, (Luke 19:41)

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37) The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few

- ii. His own nation had rejected Him, and would crucify Him like a common criminal
- b. Paul had the same compassion for his country compassion for Israel

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. (Romans 10:1)

- i. If Christ and Paul felt compassion for their own people, shouldn't we do the same?
 - ii. I hear our men praying, "Lord, bring our country back to being a God-fearing nation."
 - iii. We need to have compassion on our country and keep her in our prayers.

III. Compassion for Lost Souls

- a. If we can be compassionate towards others concerning their physical suffering, then surely we can be compassionate about their spiritual wellbeing.
 - i. We have a sympathetic Savior, can we not be sympathetic as well instead of being self-righteous and holier-than-thou?
 - ii. Are we too quick to give them to Satan or to shake the dust off our feet?

For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)

- b. Compassion moves us to be evangelistic
 - i. We know the warnings of God toward the disobedient

In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:8) Sent into everlasting destruction (v.9)

- ii. We know the story of the rich man and Lazarus
- iii. In the same way one would pull a person out of a burning building...

And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. (Jude 22–23)

(19) Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, (20) let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:19–20)

- c. We've known those (like missionaries) who have (had) a real compassion for the lost souls of the world.
We should make our personal goal to be more compassionate as well, why? Because of...

IV. The Great Compassion of God

- a. In the 86th Psalm, David prays for God's mercy and compassion

But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth. (Psalm 86:15)

- b. God's compassion on His people is everlasting (as seen in the words of the prophet for Israel)

For the mountains shall depart And the hills be removed, But My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," Says the LORD, who has mercy on you. (Isaiah 54:10)

- c. The complete biblical story is one of God's love and compassion on the people He created. It was God's compassion that sent Christ to die for our sins...

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (appeasement, atonement, satisfaction) for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:10–11)