

Slide 1

Moved By Compassion

MATTHEW 9:35-38

Introduction

1. The majority of you who are gathered here today are Christians.
2. What motivates you to . . .
 - a. be patient, kind and good toward others?
 - b. do good to everyone, especially your brothers and sisters in Christ?
 - c. share the good news of Jesus Christ with those who are lost?
3. You might say, that is just who I am. I want to help others. I want to do good.
4. You might say, that's what I do as a Christian? Why?
5. What motivated Jesus to save the lost?
 - a. We often sing a hymn with these questions:
 - 1) "Why did the Savior heaven leave and come to earth below, where men His grace would not receive?"
 - 2) "Why did the Savior mark the way, and why temptation know? Why teach and toil and plead and pray?"
 - 3) "Why feel the garden's dreadful dross? Why thru His trials go? Why suffer death upon the cross?"
 - ❑ The answer: He loves me.
6. The apostle Paul understood this, because, in Ephesians 5:2, He used it as an example of the love in which you and I are to walk.

"And walk in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma" (Ephesians 5:2).
7. That love resulted in something else — compassion.

8. In our text today, Matthew tells us that Jesus went through “all the cities and villages” teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.
9. As He healed those with various diseases and sicknesses “He felt compassion for them” (v. 36).
10. What is compassion?
 - a. The word literally means “to suffer together.”
 - b. It is the feeling that arises when you are confronted with another person’s suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering.
11. Scientists have discovered that there is a biological basis for compassion.
12. “When we feel compassion, our heart rate slows down, we secrete the “bonding hormone oxytocin, and regions of the brain linked to empathy, caregiving and feelings of pleasure light up.”
13. This results in our “wanting to approach and care for other people.”
14. It was compassion which moved Jesus to respond to the needs of those he encountered and it is that same compassion which should move us as His disciples.
15. If we are going to be the hands of Jesus, we need to develop His compassion.
16. Today, let’s look more in depth at compassion:
 - a. Its connection to God and His Son.
 - b. How we can develop it in our lives.

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I. The Compassion of God

A. YOU AND I SERVE A GOD OF COMPASSION

1. It is the capstone of His eternal goodness.
2. In Psalm 103:8, David wrote, “The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.”

3. God's compassion is like that of a father for his children (Psalm 103:23-14).

“Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust” (Psalm 103:13-14).

4. On Mount Sinai, when the Lord revealed Himself to Moses, He reassured him that He is “a compassionate and gracious God” (Exodus 34:6b).

“The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth” (Exodus 34:6b).

5. This truth is repeated seven more times in the Old Testament (Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 4:31; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13).
6. You and I are privileged to have a God who suffers with us, but it doesn't stop with the Father.

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B. WE ARE DISCIPLES OF ONE WHO WAS OFTEN MOVED BY COMPASSION

1. Jesus had compassion for those who were lost:

- a. The 5,000 at Bethsaida (Matthew 14:14)

“When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick” (Matthew 14:14).

- b. The 4,000 by the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 15:32)

“And Jesus called His disciples to Him, and said, “I feel compassion for the people, because they have remained with Me now three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way.”” (Matthew 15:32)

- c. A leper in Galilee (Mark 1:40-42).

“Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched Him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately the leprosy

left him and he was cleansed” (Mark 1:40-42).

- d. The Gerasene man who was tormented night and day by a host of demons (Mark 5:1-20).

“Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you” (Mark 5:19, NKJV).

- e. The widow of Nain who had lost her only son (Luke 7:11-15).

“When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, “Do not weep” (Luke 7:13).

- f. The two blind men, on the road outside Jericho, who begged Jesus to have mercy on them (Matthew 20:30-34).

“Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him” (Matthew 20:34).

- 2. What did Jesus see when He looked at each of these people?

- a. People who “were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36).
- b. Individuals who were suffering from different diseases and sicknesses, demon possession.
- c. People who were physically hungry.

- 3. His compassion for them moved Him to meet not only their physical needs, but their spiritual needs as well.

- a. He taught them about the Good Shepherd and the kingdom of God.
- b. He called upon His disciples to pray for God “to send out workers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:28).
- c. He personally sent out His disciples as laborers (Matthew 10:1-7).

As you can see, not only is our God One of great compassion, but His Son came to this earth to demonstrate that compassion. The question we must now ask ourselves is this, “How are we at

demonstrating that same compassion?”

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II. Our Compassion

A. HOW CAN WE DEVELOP COMPASSION

1. Let God teach us how to love.
 - a. We see God’s love for us demonstrated in the gift of His Son to save us (John 3:16-17).

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.” (John 3:16–17)

- b. The more we study the life of Jesus, the more the Holy Spirit teaches us how to love others (1 Thessalonians 4:9).

“Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another;” (1 Thessalonians 4:9).

4a

2. Spend time around people.
 - a. If we are going to love others and have compassion for them, we must get to know them.
 - b. The more we get to know them, the more we will become concerned about their well being.

4b

3. We must be careful that we do not become isolated from people.
 - a. That is all too easy to do when we limit ourselves to virtual worship, Facebook interactions, instant messages and tweets.
 - b. Getting to know about how others are doing involves looking them in

the eye, hearing them talk and sensing their emotions and their situation first hand.

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B. OUR COMPASSION SHOULD MOVE US TO . . .

1. Respond to the physical and spiritual needs of around us.
2. From a physical and financial standpoint, many in this congregation, because you are retired and have saved for your retirement, did not suffer a great deal because of Covid-19 this past year.
 - a. However, there were others whose places of employment closed their doors for a period of time, leaving them without a paycheck.
 - b. They struggled to survive and perhaps even now, though they are back at work, are trying to catch up.
 - c. They need our compassion, our willingness to reach out and help.
3. From a spiritual standpoint there are those who are lost and are doomed to an eternity of separation from God unless you and I do something.
 - a. Let's show compassion by teaching them about Jesus, what He came to do, and what He means to us.
 - b. If you do not know how to teach, ask one of the elders, Kyle, myself, or a fellow member to teach you.
 - c. You may remember that it was Peter who wrote that each of us should always be ready to "give a defense to anyone who asks [us] for a reason for the hope that is in [us]".
 - d. If it is simply beyond your ability to teach then bring the person needing to be taught to someone here who can teach them:
 - 1) Philip brought Nathanel to Jesus (John 1:45-46).
 - 2) He also brought the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus to Andrew (John 12:20-22).
 - 3) Cornelius invited his family and friends to come hear Peter (Acts 10:24,33).

5a

4. Keep praying that God will send laborers into the harvest (*Matthew 9:38*).
5. Actively work to keep sending others out to teach as did the church at Antioch when they sent out Paul and Barnabas (*Acts 13:2-3*).

Conclusion

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1. Many years ago, a young man named Thomas Chisholm who had been born in Franklin, Kentucky and who spent his boyhood on a farm wrote a hymn with these words:

**O to be like Thee, full of compassion,
Loving, forgiving, tender and kind,
Helping the helpless, cheering the fainting,
Seeking the wand'ring sinner to find.**

**O To be like Thee! oh! To be like Thee,
Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art;
Come in Thy sweetness, come in Thy fulness;
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart.**

2. Is Christ's image stamped deep on your heart?
3. Do others see His compassion in you?
4. If not, is it because you haven't yet submitted your will to Him and allowed His heart to be developed within you?
5. Today, if you need to turn from the sin that is in your life and turn to Christ for the cleansing which can come only from His blood, do so today.