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## **Being The Hands Of Jesus Through Our Compassion (Part II)**

### **COLOSSIANS 3:12-14**

#### **Introduction**

1. Perhaps in your lifetime you have heard the words, "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery . . ."
2. These words come from an Irish poet by the name of Oscar Wilde.
3. Did you know, however, that there is more to the quote?
4. It actually states "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery that mediocrity can pay to greatness."
5. As Christians, you and I are called upon to be imitators:
  - a. "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children" (Ephesians 5:1).
  - b. "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).
6. When we imitate our heavenly Father and His Son, we glorify their names.
7. Last week, we looked at the compassion of our God, as we find it portrayed in the Old Testament.
8. Today, I would like for us to look at the compassion which Jesus not only taught and exemplified in His own life, but which He also desires in ours.
9. As I said last week, my goal is that we each will seek to emulate Him in our own lives.
10. May we as the body of Christ be known for our compassion.

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### **I. Compassion: Our Lord's Desire For His People**

#### **A. JESUS' ENCOUNTER WITH THE PHARISEES IN MATTHEW'S HOME (MATTHEW 9:9-13)**

1. Following the call of Matthew to become a disciple, Jesus is invited to his home.

2. There He is eating with tax collectors and sinners.
3. The Pharisees saw this and questioned His disciples, “Why is your teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?” (v. 11).
4. In response, Jesus said, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire compassion (mercy) and not sacrifice,’ for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Matthew 9:12-13).

**Slide 3****B. THE DISCIPLES PERCEIVED VIOLATION OF THE SABBATH (MATTHEW 12:1-7)**

1. As Jesus and His disciples are going through the grainfields on the Sabbath, the disciples became hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat.
2. The Pharisees complained, “Look, Your disciples do what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath” (v. 2).
3. Jesus reminded them of what David did when fleeing from Saul, how he and his companions ate the consecrated bread.
4. He then said, “But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire compassion, and not a sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the innocent” (v. 7).
5. The Pharisees may have been meticulous when it came to their keeping of the law, but they left something to be desired when it came to compassion for their fellow man.
6. God’s desire for us is that we seek to become a compassionate people.

**Slide 4****II. An Important Element In Jesus’ Teaching****A. THE PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT (MATTHEW 18:23-35)**

1. Jesus told a parable of a king who “wished to settle accounts with his slaves” (Matthew 18:23).
2. One was brought before him who owed him 10,000 talents, an astronomical sum, which in reality he could never pay.

3. The king ordered him to be sold, “along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment be made” (v. 25).
4. He pleaded with the king to have patience, promising to repay everything.
5. Jesus said that “the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt” (v. 27).

**Slide 5****B. THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN (LUKE 10:33)**

1. Jesus told another parable of a man who was going from Jerusalem down to Jericho.
2. He was attacked by thieves who stripped him of his clothing, beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.
3. Though a priest and a Levite passed by, neither of them stopped to care for the injured man.
4. Jesus said it was a Samaritan, a man hated by the Jews, who saw him and felt compassion (cf. Luke 10:33).

“But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion,” (Luke 10:33, NASB95)

5. He ministered to the man’s wounds, then put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

**Slide 6****C. THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON (LUKE 15:20)**

1. In the parable of the prodigal son, we encounter a younger son who asked his father for his share of the inheritance.
2. When he had received it, he went away to “a distant country,” wasted it all and later found himself hired out to a farmer, feeding his pigs.
3. He finally came to his senses and realized his need to go home and seek his father’s forgiveness.
4. Jesus said that “while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him” (Luke 15:20).
5. What did the father’s compassion look like? (Cf. Luke 15:22-24)

“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.”  
(Luke 15:22–24, NASB95)

6. Jesus taught lessons which demonstrated compassion in action.
7. He wants us to learn what our compassion is to look like.

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## III. We See Compassion In Jesus’ Response To Human Need

### A. IN HIS TEACHING AND MINISTRY (MATTHEW 9:36)

1. Last week David Nowlin read to us from Matthew 9:35-38, where Matthew provided us an insight into Jesus’ ministry in Galilee and His response to the people He encountered.
2. In verse 35, Matthew tells us about Jesus’ itinerary. He was . . .
  - a. “going through all the cities and villages”
  - b. “teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom”
  - c. “healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness”
3. In verse 36, Matthew reveals to us Jesus response to the various crowds He encountered, and the reason for His response:
  - a. Response: “He felt compassion for them”
  - b. Reason: “They were “distressed and dispirited (“weary and worn out,” HCSB) like sheep without a shepherd”

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### B. IN HIS CLEANSING OF A LEPER (MARK 1:41)

1. In the beginning of his gospel, Mark informs us that Jesus was going into the “synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons” (Mark 1:39).

2. One man, who Mark simply calls “a leper” came to Jesus, fell on his knees before Him and pleaded, “If You are willing, You can make me clean” (Mark 1:40).
3. Mark recorded what happened next with these words, “Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His Hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed” (Mark 1:41).

**Slide 9****C. IN HIS FEEDING OF THE MULTITUDES**

1. The 5,000 (Matthew 14:14; Mark 6:34)
  - a. Jesus’ intention was to withdraw with His disciples by boat across the Sea of Galilee to a secluded place where they could be alone.
  - b. However, when He arrived at Bethsaida, He found the crowd had followed Him on foot.
  - c. Both Matthew and Mark tell us that when Jesus went ashore and saw the large crowd, He did not become exasperated or express a sense of frustration.
  - d. Both men tell us that Jesus “felt compassion” (Matthew 14:14; Mark 6:34) for the people.
2. The 4,000 (Matthew 15:32; Mark 8:2)
  - a. In Matthew 15 & Mark 8, we find Jesus in the region of Decapolis (Ten Cities) to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee.
  - b. Matthew, in chapter 15 and verse 30 of his gospel, tells us that “Large crowds came to [Jesus], bring with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others . . .”
  - c. These, “they laid . . . down at [Jesus] feet; and He healed them” (v. 30b).
  - d. Mark (8:1) indicates the crowd was “large” and “had nothing to eat.”
  - e. 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; cf. Mark 8:2-3).

- f. Jesus took the seven loaves of bread and a few small fish which His disciples brought Him and fed a crowd of over 4,000.

**Slide 10****D. IN HIS HEALING OF TWO BLIND MEN (MATTHEW 20:34)**

1. On another occasion, as Jesus is leaving Jericho on His way to Jerusalem, “two blind men sitting by the road” heard that Jesus was passing by, and cried out, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David (Matthew 20:30).
2. Though the crowd sternly told them to be quiet, they cried out all the more.
3. Jesus stopped, called them to Himself, and asked them “What do you want Me to do for you?” (v. 32).
4. They said, “Lord, we want our eyes to be opened” (v. 33).
5. Matthew writes, “Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him” (Matthew 20:34).

**Slide 11****E. IN HIS RAISING OF THE WIDOW’S SON (LUKE 7:13)**

1. In Luke 7, we read of a trip which Jesus and His disciples made to the city of Nain — they were accompanied by a large crowd.
2. As they approached the city gate, they were met by a funeral procession.
3. A man who had recently died was being carried out for burial — he was the only son of his mother.
4. Not only had this mother just lost her only son — she was also a widow.
  - a. Here was a woman with no husband and no other sons to care for her.
  - b. She was alone in the world.
5. In Luke 7:13, we find these words, “When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, “Do not weep.””
6. Jesus’ compassion for this woman resulted in what happened next:
  - a. “He came up and touched the coffin”
  - b. “The bearers came to a halt”

- c. Jesus said, “Young man, I say to you, arise!”
  - d. “The dead man sat up and began to speak.”
7. In each situation, Jesus’ compassion for those He encountered caused Him to respond to their need.
  8. He healed the lepers and the lame, the crippled and the blind, the mute and the deaf. He fed the hungry and raised the dead.
  9. You and I too are to live out a life of compassion.

## Conclusion

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1. Our Scripture reading this morning was from Colossians 3:12-14.
2. There, we find these words from the apostle Paul:

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.” (Colossians 3:12–14, NASB95)
3. Do you have a heart of compassion? Ask yourself,
  - a. Am I a person who is kind and gentle?
  - b. Am I patient with my brothers and sisters in Christ?
  - c. Do I truly love them?
4. As we saw in our reading last week from Matthew 9:37-38, Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”
5. Let us pray that God will do two things:
  - a. That He will work in each of our lives to make us fit laborers in His harvest.
  - b. That He will provide more laborers to accomplish His work here in our community.