



The Man of Compassion

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

Some people do the right thing in the wrong way ...or for the wrong reason. Motives are very important when a Christian wants to follow Jesus and be used of Lord. If you have the wrong motives – if you’re not motivated by God’s love – if you’re not in it for God’s glory – if you could give a flip about helping people, you are simply not going to accomplish anything of lasting value. Your life would be a waste.

When it comes to tactfully expressing our faith and reaching out to the irreligious with the gospel, we can always offer up a plethora of excuses as to why we just don’t do it. But to be honest about it, the real reason many Christians do not share their faith (by word and deed) with unbelievers is that they simply don’t care enough. We won’t be bothered with it when there are so many other important things to contend with. We don’t have a “burden” for the plight of sinners in their struggles. We lack that supernatural, heart-felt concern that is born in fervently praying for them.

Jesus Christ set the example for us in how he served the Father. It was about compassion! He took time for individuals. Jesus saw Zacchaeus as a bankrupt sinner with an empty hole inside his heart that only He could fill, and through Christ’s simple expression of kindness, Zacchaeus was transformed (Lk. 19). That’s what we all love about Christ. God is so ***“gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous”*** (Ps 112:4). Christ modeled ministry for all of us, because he saw people with eyes of love.

***We need to see through Jesus' eyes, our neighbors who are lost;
For then we will reach out to them, regardless of the cost. —Sper***

***“Compassion and love, when put into action, can transform the lives of
countless people.” –President George W. Bush***

***You tell me the depth of a Christian’s compassion, and I will tell you the
measure of his usefulness. –Alexander McClaren***

Checked it out for yourself! Look closely at what motivated Jesus Christ when He encountered the needs and suffering of people around Him?

“Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News about the kingdom, and healing all kinds of diseases and sicknesses. When he saw the crowds, *he felt sorry for them because they were hurting and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Jesus said to his followers, ‘There are many people to harvest but only a few workers to help harvest them. Pray to the Lord, who owns the harvest, that he will send more workers to gather his harvest’*” (Emphasis mine. Matt. 9:35-38 ncv).

Jesus “*felt great pity for the crowds that came, because their problems were so great and they didn’t know where to go for help*” (nlt)

“*He was moved with [splanchnizomai] on them*” (kjv).

No, He dumped spaghetti on them. That word is Greek for compassion. In the original language and in old English, it means His bowels deeply yearned to help them in any way He could. When He saw them, He was moved inside. “*Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, ‘I have compassion on the multitude’*” (Matt. 15:32).

We can observe this pattern of powerful compassion all the way through the earthly ministry of Christ. He looked inside a person, right through them to their deepest need. He saw where they were really hurting the most. Their facade was totally transparent – He saw behind it. He grasped the real cry of the heart. He felt it and wept because he realized they were as defenseless sheep without a protecting shepherd. He zealously experienced the Father’s compassion for each one of them.

Jesus still shows love to the sinner and saint, to the rich and poor, to leaders and followers alike! And if the Lord is going to use you in any capacity, you will have to obtain compassion for the hell-boundling and also for that one who is born again and yet bugs you to no end – yes, for the lost and “the found.” And that kind of thing doesn’t come to you by straining or striving in the flesh. God has it and He gives compassion free and easy. The Lord “*will have compassion on His servants*” (Ps. 135:14). But we must first choose to care. The Bible says of those in the body of Christ, “*If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it*” (1 Cor. 12:26).

One encyclopedia defines *compassion* as “*a sense of shared suffering. It is most often combined with a desire to alleviate or reduce such suffering and to show special kindness to those who suffer.*” But Jesus can alleviate a lot more than suffering.

In fact, it’s the Father’s goal to alleviate us from every evil and to conform us into the image of His own sympathetic Son. You might ask how? Think about Jesus a minute. He was a prayerful Man. He poured out his heart for others. His life was led from one solitary prayer meeting to another. And what happened in-between? Power encounters spawned by divine affection that delivered people from evil harassment! Who always

won the battle? Jesus the Victor! Mr. Lu-Cifer is the loser. Yes way, supernatural virtue literally flowed from Jesus' life into the lives of needy individuals to Satan's chagrin. Righteous vertical connectivity – that's where it started for Jesus and that's where it will start with you! It wasn't like dialup (having a little prayer once in a while), it was better than fiber optic broadband – constant communion! He was constantly led by the Spirit.

But notice from my context of compassion (Matt. 9) what Jesus tells us to do. ***“Pray to the Lord, who owns the harvest”*** (vs. 38). They are His and prayer is inseparably linked to real compassion -- to souls being reaped into God's Kingdom!

I don't believe we will find any human who makes it to heaven who was not first prayed for by someone. Who do you pray for? With so many splitting Hades wide open these days do you merely, “say your [form] prayers,” or do you come to God through Christ and pray like you mean it—in faith? Listen, God loves to be with you and hear you get real with Him! **HE L-O-V-E-S YOU AND THOSE AROUND YOU!** Who can understand such a loving God?—the God who wrote the 3-billion-letter software code in the DNA molecule of every human cell? Who can fully comprehend His agape?—and who knows everything there is to know, even our inner thoughts? ***“The Lord is gracious and full of compassion”*** (Ps 111:4).

You and I are called to consistently represent Him before the people out in the world ...and become a part of their solution as the Lord leads, but not by our own power.

And it should start at home. A recent 26 year study revealed that fathers who spend more time with their young children have an important influence on how compassionate they will be when they grow up. Parental involvement was the single strongest parent-related factor in adult empathy the study revealed. The father's influence is quite astonishing said, Psychologist Richard Koffner. Dads who spend the most time with their kids, at least twice a week giving them baths, meals and basic care reared the most compassionate adults” (McGill University / Montreal).

When Jesus was on earth He had the right priorities. ***“He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray”*** (Matt. 14:23). Jesus prayed for people with a real sense of concern and urgency. He personally, experienced the warmth of His Father's compassion for people and he knew His time on this planet was limited. Your time here is also very limited. Do love to spend time alone with the Father. Do you feel sympathy for people?

***Love is giving for the world's needs, Love is sharing as the Spirit leads,
Love is caring when the world cries, Love is compassion
with Christlike eyes. —Brandt***

In the book of Acts, the needy populace realized that Christ's disciples, ***“had been with Jesus”*** (Acts 4:13). It was the power in their message, their pro-activity of passionate involvement, their non-narcissistic-deportment and their J-O-Y-O-U-S upbeat attitude that marked them as His true followers.

They were prayed-up, are you? Have you spent time alone with Jesus? Are you completely sold-out? Is the compassion of Christ so obvious in your life that those who know you realize that you are a follower of the living God? If so, the world will readily see that you are on God's side. Your influence cannot be hidden.

***When we've been alone with Jesus, learning from Him day by day,
Others soon will sense the difference as we walk along life's way. —Hess***

I love what the Weust's translation says about the Father after the prodigal son repented in Luke 15:18. ***"His father saw him and was moved with compassion, and having run, he fell on his neck and tenderly kissed him again and again."*** That's the only picture of God running in the whole Bible—it's towards a sinner.

Let's seek to imitate the Lord with His great compassion. The Bible says, ***"You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious"*** (Ps 86:15). God says, ***"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"*** (Phil. 2:5). It says, ***"He [God], being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity"*** (Ps. 78:38). For love's sake, let's also forgive the foolish.

Remember the good Samaritan? You recall how he went to that beat up guy who had fallen among thieves when others kept walking past. ***"When he saw him, he had compassion. So 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. On 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.'"*** It was in reference to his neighborly compassion that Christ told us all, ***"Go and do likewise"*** (Lk. 10:33-37).

In the last days many people ***"will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold"*** (Matt. 24:12). Let it not be so for you! Even though a plethora of cold-hearted false prophets and teachers keep asking for your money in the name of Jesus don't give up on the real Cause. Be a real Christian – a compassionate one.

Have Kurt's fishing devos blessed you? Click on the "Contact" button and let him know!

© Copyright 2007 by Fish4Souls. All rights reserved.