

JESUS MOVED WITH COMPASSION

A. Let's talk about the "compassion" of Jesus this morning.

1. Compassion is a feeling of sympathy & sorrow for the misfortunes of others.
2. The Greek word in the NT indicates that it's a feeling that begins deep inside your body.

NT Greek word: Splanchnizomai (splanekh-nid'-zom-ahee); **to have the bowels yearn**, i.e. (fig.) **feel sympathy, to pity**:

Compassion is similar to "mercy": eleeo (el-eh-eh'-o): **to succor [give assistance] the afflicted, to bring help to the wretched** [poor quality or condition; characterized by physical misery]. (Thayer)

Matthew 9:36

36 Seeing the people, **He felt compassion for them**, because they were **distressed** and **dispirited** like sheep without a shepherd. (**weary & scattered** – nkjv)

3. You would have to get into the mind of a sheep to fully understand that simile.

4. So we'll have to take Jesus' word for it; lost sheep are **distressed & dispirited** [ESV: **harassed** (troubled persistently) and **helpless**].

5. Why is the subject of compassion so important to us?

Philippians 2:5

5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

1 John 2:6

6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to **walk in the same manner as He walked.**

- a. Jesus not only lived out God's purpose, and invited us to do the same; He not only refused to yield to temptation, He also demonstrated compassion.
- b. In fact, compassion was at the root of everything Jesus came here to do.
- c. If He hadn't been compassionate toward humanity (us), then He wouldn't have bothered leaving His home in glory to "empty Himself – taking the form of a bond-servant – to be made in the likeness of men" (Phil 4:7).

- B. But do WE really need a lesson on compassion?

1. Don't we try to be compassionate? Perhaps.
2. But we don't see an awful lot of compassion in culture.
 - a. Our society (and much of the world) is eaten up with hatred, violence, lust, and especially materialism.
 - b. And what are those things all about? They're about SELF-GRATIFICATION.
 - c. Any culture preoccupied with satisfying itself (on a personal level), is going to be less inclined to show compassion toward those who need it.
 - Oh, people might show compassion if it doesn't require too much of a sacrifice.
 - In news recently there's been reports about the mismanagement of funds donated to A charitable organization set up to help wounded veterans.
 - That kind of thing happens because people want to be seen as generous and compassionate, but they also want something out of it themselves.
3. And so yes, we can always use a lesson from the word of God on compassion, and how to be a compassionate people.

[**And** we have no better model than the Lord Jesus. **In fact**, we could sum up His life in one phrase: Jesus "moved with compassion" (Mark 1:41; Matt 20:34).

And so as we discuss what it means to have "Christ in us" this year, ...we can't go too far in that discussion before we mention how deeply compassionate Jesus was and even is today.]

I. JESUS, MODEL OF COMPASSION

- A. His Incarnation. ***Jesus' compassion is seen before the world ever began.*** Before creation, God agreed that when man sinned, as Satan had before him, and set himself on a course to Hell, that the Word of God would intervene and take human form, to teach, lead, sacrifice, suffer and die to redeem and restore humanity to His favor & glory (Matt 1:20-21; Eph 1:3-14).

Romans 6:23 (Eph 2:1-10)

23 For ***the wages of sin is death*** (Matt 10:28), ***but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

1. Now think about it. Jesus showed compassion --- for those who have not been born!
 - a. What does that say about a mother's right to choose? It kicks...legs out from under it.
 - b. **Jesus showed compassion toward the unborn! That would you and me!**

[Secondly, we see His compassion in His works.]

B. His Works. ***The compassion of Jesus is vividly seen, in Scripture, by the things He did*** while He was in the body.

1. **Blind Men.** Turn to Matthew 20. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to be arrested, to face a mock trial, to be accused of blasphemy and sentenced to die on the cross -- when he walks by two blind men.

Matthew 20:30-34

30 And two blind men sitting by the road, hearing that Jesus was passing by, cried out, "**Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!**" 31 The crowd sternly told them to be quiet, but **they cried out all the more, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!"** 32 And Jesus stopped and called them, and said, "**What do you want Me to do for you?**" 33 They said to Him, "**Lord, we want our eyes to be opened.**" 34 **Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.**

- a. Wouldn't you agree that Jesus had a lot "on His plate" here, and yet He took a moment to show compassion
- b. How often do we get in too much of a hurry to show compassion?

2. **A Leper.** Turn to Mark 1. On this occasion Jesus met a poor man suffering with that dreaded disease known as leprosy.

- a. Lepers were like sinners, totally cut off from the fellowship of God's people.

Mark 1:40-41

40 And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "**If You are willing, You can make me clean.**" 41 **Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."**

- b. Here was a man that wasn't sure if Jesus was "willing" to show compassion.
- c. Do you ever wonder if Jesus is "willing" to show you compassion?
- d. He certainly left no question about that here.

3. **A Demonic.** Turn to Mark 5. Here, Jesus encountered a man controlled by demons. He lived wild and naked among the tombs, covered in self-inflicted cuts and bruises. When Jesus saw this horrible situation, He commanded the demons to leave. And in an instant the man was in his right mind, clothed and ready for life.

Mark 5:19

19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, "Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, **and how He had mercy [compassion] on you.**"

a. And so we've seen thus far that Jesus showed compassion **toward** those who cried out for it, and **toward** those who doubted His willingness to give it, and **toward** those who didn't even ask for it. He showed compassion to the **faithful, unbelieving** and the **ignorant**.

4. **A Widow.** Turn to Luke 7. Here, Jesus was walking into the small village (Nain) when He encountered a funeral march. The Lord spotted a woman walking beside the casket and weeping. She was a widow so she had no husband to comfort her. The deceased was her only son. The situation moved Jesus to do more than just bow his head in respect as they passed.

Luke 7:13-15

13 **When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep."** 14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

a. Do you ever wonder if Jesus can feel your pain? Do you feel like you weep alone, or all in vain, for those you love who have passed or are lost in the world?

[That's when you need to consider Jesus' works of compassion.]

C. His Words. **We can also see the compassion of Jesus in what He said.**

1. **His Instruction.** Turn to Mark 6. Jesus taught the word of God to people when they were very confused and uncertain.

Mark 6:34

34 When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and **He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to TEACH them many things.**

a. When people are confused, they need to hear the word of God for clarification and comfort.

Luke 9:10-12

10 When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida. 11 But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; **and welcoming them, He began SPEAKING to them about the kingdom of God** and curing those who had need of healing.

- b. For a fuller context: Jesus' first cousin John had just been killed by Herod. But rather than drive the people away, the Lord set aside his own grief to provide spiritual instruction for these people; it was an act of compassion.
2. **His Parables.** Jesus also spoke about compassion in the parables He taught.
- a. **Good Samaritan.** Shows us that a heart of compassion will overcome superficial racial barriers (Luke 10:33).
 - b. **Unforgiving Servant.** Teaches us that we need to remember how many sins God have forgiven us, as we deal with those who may be in our debt (Mt 18:26-27).
 - c. **Father of the Prodigal.** Depicts a com-passionate Heavenly Father standing by ready and willing to forgive a wayward child that repents (Luke 15:20).
 - This parable teaches us that even though we have disgraced ourselves, He still feels for us, and wants us back.
 - Compassion bridges the gap between God's holiness and our sinfulness — when there is humble confession of sin and true repentance.

- D. His Continuing Compassion. ***The wonderful truth is that His compassion did not end at the cross.*** He has gone into his glory; He is living at the right hand of the Father, and even there "He is moved with compassion."

Hebrews 2:17-18

17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become ***a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people***. 18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15-16

15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us ***draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need***.

[So Jesus is compassionate even today; and in a special way towards His people.

He suffered through every temptation, and He has compassion for us when we are going through that.

He sympathizes with our weaknesses, and calls us to draw near to His throne for grace and mercy when God's forgiveness is necessary.]

CLOSING: HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO HIS COMPASSION?

[How about now? Is Jesus compassionate today?]

A. Come to Him (Matt 11:28-30). ***His compassion should drive us to Him.***

1. Adam was driven away from the presence of God, because of his sin.
2. But the compassion of Jesus Christ drives us back to God, even though we have sinned.

Psalms 145:8 (David)

8 The ***Lord is gracious and merciful*** [***compassionate***]; slow to anger and great in lovingkindness [mercy].

Psalms 90:13-14 (Moses)

13 Do return, O Lord; how long will it be? ***And be sorry for*** [***have compassion on***] ***Your servants.*** 14 O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness [mercy], that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

3. Jesus came to represent a compassionate Father waiting for us to realize it.

B. Emulate Him (Phil 2:1-5). ***But it is the goal of this lesson is that we become like Him.***

1. We must view others in the same way He views us.

2. So we need to be alert for opportunities to show His compassion.

Philippians 2:1-4

2 Therefore if there is any ***encouragement in Christ***, if there is any ***consolation of love***, if there is any ***fellowship of the Spirit***, if any ***affection and compassion***, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 ***do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.***

Philippians 2:5-10

5 ***Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus***, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but ***emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.*** 8 Being found in appearance as a man, ***He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death***, even death on a cross.