

# JESUS MOVED WITH COMPASSION

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## Introduction: (Scripture Reading: Matthew 9:35-38)

- A. Show pictures that cause us to be compassionate then ask, “How do you feel after looking at these pictures?” - Blessed? Sad? Compassionate? All of these are probably good responses to have
- B. Sometimes it seems that our world is cold, heartless, and apathetic! This was certainly not the case with Jesus & must not be the case with us either! God’s people are to be a compassionate people!

## I. Jesus – Moved By Compassion:

### **A. The ministry of Jesus was often characterized by His compassionate treatment of others:**

1. Both the civil and religious environment during Jesus’ ministry on earth was marked by a lack of true compassion and mercy! (Zech 7:8-14; Micah 6:8; Amos 8:4-6)
  - a. Sometimes the problem wasn’t so much they treated wrongly and abused others... some just chose not to treat others at all! Choosing the road of callousness and neglect!
  - b. God had led the Jews into captivity for their sinfulness. They got the message about the idolatry part & when they returned they refused to repeat this... But they missed the part about mercy & compassion, which was also a reason God had punished them!
  - c. Unless you were of a certain religious or social group, were free of certain diseases, had wealth, or related to the right people, you were either just ignored or mistreated!
2. Due to its nature, Jesus’ ministry really stood out during that time! The purpose and focus of His mission would be one of compassion and mercy! (Luke 4:16-21; 7:19-23)
  - a. Isaiah, who prophesied a lot about the coming Messiah, spoke about the nature of His mission... The Messiah would go to the poor, captives, blind, and the oppressed
  - b. While the focus of Jesus’ mission was certainly spiritual, he brought that spiritual message into the lives of people through very real acts of physical compassion!
  - c. When John wanted to make sure that Jesus was the Messiah the proof Jesus sent back to Him was the miracles Jesus performed but which ones... The miracles of compassion!
3. Jesus’ ministry was not just a ministry of compassion in regard to physical struggles, but he also reached out with compassion to those with spiritual struggles! (Matthew 12:20-22)
4. While it’s not clearly stated, this compassion of Jesus was probably one of the major sticking points with the Jewish leaders that caused them to hate Jesus! (Luke 10:31-32)

### **B. There are where we find Jesus showing compassion... consider only a few and what they teach us:**

1. Jesus showed compassion when He healed a leper of his horrendous disease (Mark 1:40-45)
  - a. Leprosy was a very deadly disease! It would start out a little place on your skin and would slowly eat away your body leaving you resembling a mangled mess... hardly human!
  - b. A highly contagious disease which just added pain to pain! Weren’t allowed to interact normally in society. Most were exiled to leper colonies. Clothing, possessions, and houses could be burned. If around others one must cover mouth & say “unclean”
  - c. Notice that Jesus touched him! I doubt it was His touch that healed him but the words He spoke! So why touch him? This was a touch of compassion! Due to his disease, this may have been the first time in years this leper had felt the touch of another person!
  - d. We usually think of Jesus’ miracles as being for the purpose of confirming the word or

- proving His identity... was that what this was about? Jesus said not to tell anyone about this! Why heal him? He was moved with compassion & wanted to help him!
2. Jesus showed compassion for a mother whose son had recently died (**Luke 7:11-13**)
    - a. This account is a real tear jerker! Here's a woman who's husband recently died (the closest relationship on earth) and now her ONLY son has died! Now that's sorrow!
    - b. Jesus simply sees this woman and has compassion – It doesn't appear He had been told anything, He doesn't check her background first, and He isn't considering her spiritual state... He sees a woman who is mourning and His heart goes out to her!
  3. Jesus showed compassion on a group of followers who were hungry (**Matthew 15:32**)
  4. On another occasion, we find Jesus expressing compassion over people's spiritual state (**Mat 9:26**)
  5. Jesus showed compassion on people the world seemed to have no time for! (**Matt 20:29-34**)
    - a. This is during the peak of Jesus' popularity. There's a great crowd following Him watching Him and listening to His every words... This is just prior to His triumphal entry as well
    - b. Picture this large group traveling down the road when two blind men cry out to Jesus... Their response? "KEEP QUIET!" They didn't have time for interruptions like this!
    - c. Jesus, in great contrast, stops and basically asks, "How can I help you?" – He then shows pity (same word for compassion), touches them, and cures them of their blindness!
    - d. To the crowd of people Jesus had better things to be doing, He needed to be teaching, & these two men were distracting him! Jesus had compassion and so He had time!
  6. When you study the gospels what are the vast majority of miracles? Healing or restoring life!
    - a. Jesus could have performed any kind of great miracle – He could have walked on water more, moved mountains, parted seas... He could have leaped buildings or flown!
    - b. Choosing to heal shows compassion, care, & desire to meet the physical needs of others!

**C. Just like Jesus, His disciples today will be a people who are moved by compassion:**

1. It's obvious to us that we are to be compassion, but what really is compassion? (**Colossians 3:12**)
  - a. A couple Greek words are translated compassion, but the main one is "splanchnon" – It means, "To be moved as to one's inwards (bowels)... to be moved with compassion"
  - b. It is from a word referring to your innards, or intestines (like saying guts) – You know the feeling you get on a roller coaster or after receiving really bad news. It feels like you just got kicked in the guts! It sounds crude, but that's the idea this word carries
  - c. That's how Jesus felt for those in need! But it wasn't just a feeling for Him, it meant action
  - d. Jesus did many compassionate & merciful things with His body while on earth! Jesus is still moving with compassion by His body! His hands, His ears, His eyes, His touch, His words... They're still providing compassion as we, His body, reach out to others!
2. How we respond to those in physical need does have an impact on our salvation! (**Mat 25:35-36**)
  - a. These weren't lost based on their wrong doctrine or some major sin – It was simply their failure to help those who were in physical need! That makes it a core gospel issue!
  - b. These are simple things – The giving of some food, a drink of water, a visit in prison, giving some clothes, & welcoming a stranger... These don't require a lot of time or money!
  - c. But what if it is a bigger thing... What if it demands our getting deeply involved and spending time and money on someone → Isn't that exactly what Jesus would do?
3. We've got to develop this compassion for those in spiritual need! (**Galatians 6:1-2**)
  - a. When we see people lost in sin what is our response? Do we think, "I can't believe they believe that!" or "Look at them, that's horrible! I'd never do something like that!"

- b. If you don't care about people who are lost, it won't matter how "moral" of a life you live, how many services you attend, and whether you were baptized how can we expect Jesus to say, "Well done good & faithful servant" when His mission was about the lost
- c. What if they have made some pretty bad mistakes in life? How many of us want all of our mistakes shown on a movie screen for all to see? God's been compassionate to us!
- 4. We need to be compassionate toward others during difficult times emotionally! **(Romans 12:15)**
  - a. People just need someone to weep with them, to say an encouraging word, to share a comforting scripture, to give a hug, or to do something to take their mind off things!
  - b. But if we try to be there for them then that is going to mean getting involved, spending extra time together, & checking on each other... OH NO! That's what a family does!
  - c. But we just don't have time! We don't have time to KNOW others are hurting, much less time to be there for them! We need to cut some things out of our schedules!
- 5. Instead letting the compassion of Christ be carried through us, we make excuses! **(Galatians 6:10)**
  - a. We may think, "Before I help out that person, I need to get a background check done on them by the FBI!" – Yes we need to be smart, but are we really looking for a way out?
  - b. We make assumptions saying, "They'll likely go spend it on beer and drugs!" or "I bet they deserve to be in this position" – That's not our fault and we at least let Christ shine!
  - c. We think, "I can't really afford to help this person... there's all these other things I need to buy for my family" – Yet we drive fancy cars, live in fancy homes, & eat huge meals!
  - d. Sometimes we say, "I could stop and help but they may be waiting to rob me!" – Again, we should be smart, but aren't there tons of chances to help that aren't risky?
  - e. We think, "I don't know anyone who needs help" → Opportunities are everywhere! Even in this church some could use financial help, physical assistance, or spiritual support!
  - f. If we're going to err on one side or the other let's err on the side of mercy & compassion!

**CONCLUSION:** When we are not compassionate to others we stand in the way of the gospel of Christ, the kingdom of God, and keep lost souls from knowing Him! **(John 13:35)**