

## Compassion and Responsibility

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- Compassion – sympathetic consciousness of others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it
- Responsibility – the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something or someone
- Matthew 9:36 – *“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”*
  - Jesus noticed this of a large crowd that was following Him at this point in His ministry
  - They were harassed, they were helpless and He displayed compassion
  - Romans 5:6 – *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.”*
  - Christ had compassion on us as well
  - Though we were powerless, He died for us
- He also showed great responsibility
  - He knew that He was the only one that could do this
- And in this sermon, I’d like to look at 3 examples of people showing great compassion and responsibility
- Example 1: Joshua
- In Deuteronomy 34, we read the account of the death of Moses
  - In vs 1-4, we read that Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah
  - Perhaps the exact same location that Balak tried getting Balaam to curse the Israelites (Numbers 23)
  - And it was here that the Lord showed Moses the whole land from Gilead in the East to Dan in the West, from Ephraim in the South to Manasseh in the North, and the land of Judah all the way to the western sea
  - The land that Moses physically led the Israelites out of Egypt to obtain at the ultimate leadership of God, of course
  - The land that he no doubt wanted to enter
  - But the land that he could not inherit due to his disobedience of God (Numbers 20)
    - Just as Moses struck the rock and water came out of it, sustaining the Israelites in the wilderness, so Christ was struck by His enemies and so we are sustained spiritually (1 Corinthians 10)
  - He was only allowed to see the land (vs 4)
  - And then Moses died in Moab, was buried in Moab (vs 5-6)
  - So Israel is without a physical leader – God is still their ultimate leader, but they have no physical leader
  - And then the Lord speaks with Joshua
    - Vs 1-9
      - Joshua – get ready to cross the Jordan and possess the land that I have given the Israelites

- Every place where you set your foot will be Israel's
- No one will be able to stand against you
- Because just like I was with Moses – so I will be with you
  - God is with us too, you know – the faithful Christian
  - Romans 8:1 – *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”*
  - Romans 8:31 – *“What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?”*
  - Rejoice brethren – if you are a faithful Christian, God is with you
  - Even if man tried to stop that – what can man do to us? (Hebrews 13:6)
- But there are conditions – Joshua I will be with you, but you need to something for me
  - Obey all the law my servant Moses gave you
  - Do not deviate from it to the right or the left
  - Meditate on the law day and night – give it the respect it deserves
  - Because you are responsible to do everything written in it
  - Then I will make you prosperous and successful – but only then
  - Do not be afraid because I am with you
- So Joshua listens
- He makes preparations to cross the Jordan and begin taking control of the promised land
- CH 2 – he sends spies to scope out Jericho
- CH's 3 & 4 – Joshua leads the Israelites over the Jordan on dry ground
- CH 6 – the Israelites take Jericho
- But in CH 7, we read that some of the Israelites were unfaithful in the taking of Jericho
- Achan is specifically mentioned and he took some things out of the city that they were ordered to not take
- And the Israelites attempted to take the much smaller city of Ai, but failed as a result
- And the Lord spoke to Joshua as if speaking man to man in today's terms
- And He said the following vs 10-15
  - Israel has sinned
  - They violated my covenant which I told them not to do
  - Joshua – this is your responsibility, I will not be with you anymore until you make this right
  - Consecrate these people, make them present themselves tribe by tribe, clan by clan, family by family, and man by man – find the perpetrator
    - Part of being a leader is realizing that when those beneath you fail, you fail
    - There were conditions when God told Joshua that He would be with him

- And those conditions were not met – God was not with Israel, the people who had just taken Jericho (well fortified, many fighting men), but they couldn't take Ai
- “Joshua, we don't need many men to take this city” (7:3)
- But they failed – because they didn't listen to God
- When we truly realize that heaven is real and that hell is real, we all want to go to heaven
- And if you can honestly sit in your seat this morning and say “I want to go to heaven, but I don't think it's worth giving up what I want to do on this earth”, then you and I need to have a talk after service because your soul is in danger
- And I would argue that you truly don't understand that heaven is real and that hell is real – or if you do, you've just forgotten
- Or worst case, you've grown to just not care – that's dangerous
- And if you are in this situation, I highly recommend you come talk to me after services, come talk to one of the elders, or one of the faithful brethren in this congregation so we can do whatever we need to do to get you back on the right path
- We spoke a minute ago about how God will be with the faithful Christian – but that's the condition, we must be faithful
- If you aren't a Christian, or if you are not faithful, do not expect God to save you (Matthew 10:32)

○ Vs 16-26

- Joshua heeded God's advice
- He took responsibility for the actions of the people and he fixed the situation
- He identified Achan as the perpetrator and they got rid of the sin
- And God gave them Ai in CH 8
- God rewarded Joshua and the Israelites
- But only after Joshua took responsibility and corrected the situation
  - We have a situation on our hands – sin
  - Romans 3:23 – “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*”
  - We're all guilty – everyone that has reached the age of consent
  - And our guilt is worth of death
  - Romans 6:23 – “*For the wages of sin is death.*”
  - We need to take responsibility for our actions and give our lives to God as He is the only one who can save us for the sure doom that we deserve
  - Luke 13:3 – “*I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.*”
  - If we don't take responsibility, then your own blood is on your own hands
  - You have sealed your fate – not God, He does not want to punish (2 Peter 3:9), but you have done that
  - Take responsibility – fess up to your mistakes, come to Christ

- Be obedient to the plan of salvation and stay faithful
  - If you've been obedient to the plan of salvation and you're no longer faithful, what good is that? You've neglected your first love – come back
- Example 2: Paul
- Acts 13 & 14 describes Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey throughout Asia Minor
- 13:14-15
  - Paul goes on to teach them the true gospel in Antioch, in a Jewish synagogue
  - The Jews who had Jesus crucified or at least supported those who had Him crucified – these are the people Paul is preaching the gospel to
  - Do you think there's folks in the denominational world who need the gospel? The true gospel, not once saved always saved, or belief only salvation – but the 1 true gospel
  - They need to hear the gospel – Paul was not afraid to preach the truth to those of a different belief – you and I must not be either
  - Vs 50 – they were persecuted in Antioch and went to Iconium
- 14:1
  - Paul and Barnabas converted numerous Jews and Gentiles in Iconium
  - And then they were ran out again (vs 6)
- 14:8-19
  - They were teaching and healing in Lystra
  - Until some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium to stone him
  - They did and they thought they had killed him
  - But he and Barnabas left for Derbe the next day (vs 20)
- 14:21-22
  - Not only did they preach and make disciples in Derbe, but on their way home – they stopped back and checked on the brethren in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch
  - The same locations in which there existed Jews who attempted to stone him
- Acts 9:15 – *“But the Lord said to Ananias, ‘Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.’”*
  - Do you think Paul took this responsibility lightly?
  - What about in Acts 21 when Paul was warned by Agabus via a message from the Holy Spirit that he would be bound in Jerusalem
  - Paul still went – he took this responsibility very seriously
  - That's why he could say the following in 2 Timothy 4:7-8
    - *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day...”*
    - He couldn't have said that if he hadn't have put in the work
    - And neither can we
- Do you think Paul demonstrated compassion on these people by preaching them the gospel?
  - I would argue that had he not preached them the gospel – he would have demonstrated that he didn't care 1 bit about these people

- But that's not what he did
- He went against the standard and preached the exact opposite message than the Jews were preaching
- When we don't preach the gospel today, we are demonstrating that we don't care about the lost amongst our fellow man
  - It's not popular and I want to be popular
- Are you trying to please man or God? (Galatians 1:10)
  - Because if that's your attitude – you are trying to please men and you are not a servant of Christ (Galatians 1:10)
- Preach the gospel to your friends, to your coworkers
- If you don't, their blood is going to be on your head and it's not going to matter how popular you were in this life (Mark 8:36)
- Example 3: Jesus
- Romans 5:6-8 – *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*
- Do you think that displayed compassion?
- If you don't think so, just consider all the other times that Scripture specifically states that Jesus had compassion
- What about responsibility?
- He knew that He was the only being who could accomplish this – and He did
- Thanks be to God for this indescribably gift
- **Matthew 26:36-39**
  - Though I don't fully understand it, but Jesus was just as much man as He was God the Son
  - And here His fleshly emotions kick in
  - *“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yes not as I will, but as you will.”*
  - In a sense, it was possible
  - He could have called 12 legions of angels (Matthew 26:53)
  - Matthew 26:54 – *“But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?”*
  - But to Jesus, He knew it wasn't possible
  - He wasn't worried about Himself – He was worried about us
  - And in that sense it was not possible
  - Because He knew that it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats take away sin (Hebrews 10:4)
  - And He knew that only through the gospel of Christ could man be justified, not through the old law (Romans)

- And He not only knew God's plan of salvation for lost man, but He knew that He was the plan
- And by executing this plan despite His earthly desires not to be treated this way, He showed the greatest compassion and responsibility that one could ever show
- Christ died for the sins of the world and that includes yours
- If you have not been obedient to His gospel, you need to take responsibility and do so
- He gave His life for you, you owe it to Him to be obedient – take responsibility for your sins and come to Christ who is the only one who can forgive
- You can do so by following God's perfect plan of salvation
  - **Step 1: Hearing the gospel** – *Romans 10:13-17*
    - Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many – *1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16*
  - **Step 2: Believing the gospel** – *Mark 16:16, John 3:16*
  - **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord** – *Romans 10:8-10, 1 John 1:9*
  - **Step 4: Repentance of sins** – *Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38*
    - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
  - **Step 5: Baptism into Christ** – *Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Peter 3:21-22*
    - Baptism: immerse or submerge
  - **Step 6: Live faithfully** – *Revelation 2:10*