

A Heart Of Compassion

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Haters:

There are too many in the world that hate truth. They hate good deeds. They have hatred toward others. It is true that there are things to be hated (Prov. 6:16-19), but these are things that work against good and righteousness; they are hated for their destructive influence. Christianity seeks a radical re-conception of self and others, asking us to look for the best, hope for the best, and work for the best. An emotion at the other end of the spectrum from hatred is compassion.

Compassion is the ability to have a tender response to the suffering or situation of another, including those whose personal actions have been the cause of their own trouble. Compassion allows one to share the suffering or feelings of another because of our common humanity and because of our possibility of suffering the same. And compassion has the ability to moderate our own emotions, especially of anger or grief, in the face of errors, faults, and sins of others, and to bear with them gently, even while hating the sin. I believe this is kind of a heart that our beloved Ellis has; I came to know him in 2012 when he was in Africa teaching and preaching the gospel according to the standard of the Holy scriptures. By him showing us the right teachings I came to realize that we were driven and taken astray with false teachings of those that calls themselves modern days Christians because they put Law where there is no Law. Especially in the communion. May our good God keep him and strengthen him in this life because the church needs such people.

Jesus Himself showed this type of compassionate response to people who were suffering under various difficulties. Matt. 9:36-38 shows Him being concerned over those who needed spiritual and moral direction in their lives – *“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.”* To be confused spiritually is to be confused about the meaning of life and how it is to be lived. The Lord worried over such people.

He also gave attention to those who suffered under physical difficulties and disabilities. Repeatedly Jesus took time to address illness and diseases that afflicted His countrymen, *“And Jesus went*

forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." (Matt. 14:14). No doubt these miracles became opportunities to preach the Gospel, but He could have simply done tricks and wonders to show His power; He chose to show His power not with tricks, but with miraculous, compassionate acts. He also addressed physical needs, as in the feeding of the thousands in, "*Then Jesus called his disciples unto him and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days and have nothing to eat: and I not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.*" Matthew 15:32 . He did not, however, let such occasions pass without acknowledging the deeper significance of what He had done and would do (John 6). Through the parable of the good Samaritan He taught His audience on that occasion to be full of care for others. "*But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.*" (Luke 10:33). He provided comfort and relief for those who had lost loved ones, as the family of Jairus. "*And behold there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly, saying my little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, if I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed by that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.*" (Mark 5:22-33) and the widow at Nain. "*And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother and she was a widow and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.*" (Luke 7:11-13). Such remind us of the words of Paul "*Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.*" (Rom. 12:15).

And, although He was not obligated to do so, He was compassionate and caring toward those who suffered from their own sinful decisions. Whereas some could say our popular aphorisms, “You’ve made your bed. Now lie in it!” or “You got what you deserve,” Jesus told the parable of the forgiving master (Matt. 18:27- 33). He did not excuse wrongdoing, certainly, but He wanted people to look for a way out of sin and into righteous living. The parable of the prodigal son was told specifically for the purpose of showing God’s willingness to forgive the penitent.

It takes no special skill to be a hater. It takes no maturity to deal with others insensitively and carelessly. But much is required to interact with others in a compassionate way. We must be willing to take time to care, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan. We must be willing to admit our own humanity. People weep, and they need a shoulder to cry on. They need someone to help them cope with those things are common but devastating. We must be willing to help those who have erred from the right path, neither yielding our respect for what is right, nor failing to aid the lost. In these ways we become imitators of the big-spirited nature of Jesus as we look for the best, hope for the best, and work for the best. Fulfilling our calling as preachers and teachers of God’s word.

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