

Gathering Question: Think of a situation when you needed compassion. What would have been a good way for someone to be compassionate to you? Why do you think that some people equate compassion with weakness?

Compassion

We are extremely busy people and it takes time to really see people. Sometimes in our mad rush we fail to realize that people around us who we spend time with every day might be going through some horrible times. Compassion begins with seeing other people. When we are compassionate we act differently towards those who are hurting. We immediately feel the need to do something to help them. We cannot just pass by. We are compelled by our hearts to act.

And that is where real compassion lies, in the heart. When a person encounters another person who is hurting and needs help; his heart gets all torn up inside. You know the feeling don't you? Your insides churn. You feel a little sick inside. You want to cry. These are the same exact emotions that Jesus often felt. When he encountered a leper who begged for help or a mother who had lost her only son; when he looked out over the clamoring crowds or heard the cry of a blind beggar; he was all torn up inside. He couldn't help it—he was a lover! He felt the pain of those around him and was compelled to act.

Being like Jesus means that our hearts become like his. It means that our eyes begin to see the pain around us. It means that our feet stop and we help. It is not always easy or even comfortable. To take on the grief of others will cost us time, energy, and maybe even money, but just imagine the results. Hearts are warmed, wounds are healed, lives are saved, and the life of Jesus is carried on. Our Christianity becomes more than just spoken words; it becomes real love in action.

Compassion should not be saved for the big moments in life. In those little moments each day with a spouses, children and friend we can be like Jesus by allowing our hearts to be affected by those around us.

Read: Luke 10:25-37; Mark 1:40-45

Reflect:

1. When the expert in the law challenged Jesus, do you think he was disagreeing with compassion for was he fishing for something (29)
2. What limits did the lawyer hope to put on compassion?
3. What would be some good reasons for not being compassionate?
4. Who today could be compared to a Samaritan?
5. What is the most significant part of the Mark 1 passage to you?