

Why Compassion & Generosity Matter

THE PASSAGE

Exodus 22:21-23:9

THE PRINCIPLES

Why Compassion & Generosity Matter

- (1) It's what we've **ALREADY RECEIVED**.
Exodus 22:21 & 23:9 Titus 3:5 & James 1:17 Deuteronomy 7:7 & 9:4 & 8:11-17
- (2) It's our **ASSIGNMENT**.
Colossians 3:17 Micah 6:8 Matthew 22:36-40 Luke 10:29-37

FOUR DANGERS TO AVOID

How Compassion & Generosity Go Bad

- (1) A **POVERTY** gospel.
Mark 14:3-11 Romans 14:4 1 Timothy 6:17-19
- (2) **COMPASSION** overload.
1 John 3:17-18 Proverbs 29:7 Proverbs 31:8-9 Proverbs 21:13 Mark 1:33-39
- (3) Enabling **SIN** and **IRRESPONSIBILITY**.
Exodus 23:1 Proverbs 16:26 2 Thessalonians 3:10 Leviticus 23:22 & Ephesians 4:28
- (4) Self-**DECEPTION**.
Luke 17:7-10 1 Timothy 5:8 Micah 6:8

Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 8, 2016

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend Larry gave us four dangers to avoid regarding compassion and generosity. Each one of us is different as to how susceptible we are to each danger. As you read through each danger, rank them from most to least susceptible for you.

2. Larry mentioned compassion is important because it's something we've already received. Despite this fact, many of us still struggle with extending compassion to other people. Think through what it means for you to be compassionate and make lists of things that encourage your compassion and things that discourage it.

Encouraging Things:

Discouraging Things:

Which people or causes do you tend to have the most compassion for and why?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. One of the responses to the generosity and compassion we've received is gratitude. Gratitude is more of a daily practice of being thankful rather than a one-time decision or feeling. Any day we don't practice gratitude, we naturally fall back into complacency, entitlement or privilege, which takes us further away from being thankful. What do you see in the following verses that remind us of what God has done for us and can help us practice the daily habit of gratitude?

1 Corinthians 1:4-9 *New International Version (NIV)*

Thanksgiving

⁴I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. ⁵For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge—

⁶God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. ⁷Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Corinthians 4:15-16 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁵All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 9:11-12 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

What habits have you or someone you know used in order to be thankful on a daily basis?

2. Larry mentioned that "yesterday's grace quickly becomes today's privilege." It can be easy to take for granted God's grace and everything that's been given to us. How do you see this principle worked out in Luke 17:11-19?

Luke 17:11-19 *New International Version (NIV)*

Jesus Heals Ten Men With Leprosy

¹¹ Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹² As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance ¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

¹⁵ One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. ¹⁶ He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷ Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine?" ¹⁸ Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" ¹⁹ Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

Why do you think taking things for granted so easily creeps into our lives?

Can you think of anything you could use to help you avoid taking things for granted?

3. This weekend we heard we're all supposed to represent Jesus by being his hands and feet. In 2 Corinthians 5:20 the Bible calls this being God's ambassador. An ambassador is someone who represents and carries out the will of his country or the person who sent them. One of the greatest ambassadors for Jesus was the apostle Paul. What can we learn from Paul in the following passages about how to be better ambassadors?

2 Corinthians 5:16-20 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against

them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Ephesians 6:18-20 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Galatians 2:20 *New International Version (NIV)*

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

How well do you think you're doing at being a compassionate and generous ambassador?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back at this week's teaching and homework, is there anything you want to remember to be grateful for in the next week?

2. Is there anything hindering your compassion for others that you need to pray about?

Prayer Requests:

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