

Compassion Again

Matthew 15:32-39

Introduction

Compassion

Verse 32 spells it out for us again.

- See 14:14 and 9:36

Feeding this time of Gentiles

It is possible that the disciples were very unsure that Jesus would feed a big group of Gentiles.

I. The Call to Compassion

Three Days in the Desert – Whatever food they brought on their own is long gone.

Once again Jesus involves the disciples in the need of the people. He disciplines them; all of us are called to share the mercy of God with others.

Ephesians 2:10 ESV

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Titus 2:14 ESV

14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Matthew 5:16 ESV

16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

II. The Clarity for Compassion

The circumstances that change from day to day and situation to situation often confuse us. We need clear thinking.

How Many Fish, Loaves? God Reveals Himself in the Real Life Circumstances that Surround Us.

When one of my children heard I was preaching on the feeding of the 4k this child, remaining nameless to protect this child, well *she* said that feeding 5k with 5 loaves and 2 fish must mean that Jesus fed 4k with 3 loaves and 1 fish.

The work of God in our midst is not formulaic. We must never reduce following God to a method. How foolish. We will certainly never figure God out! And yet, He is faithful! This miracle teaches us he is faithful.

III. The Commitment to Compassion

Again, Jesus not only involves the disciples, but he also involves what they have. He asks them what they possess and what can be used.

[Stinginess] to-day, out of thoughtfulness for to-morrow, is a complication of corrupt affection that ought to be mortified. If we be prudently kind and charitable with what we have, we may piously hope that God will send more. *Jehovah-jireh, The Lord will provide.* The disciples asked, *Whence should we have bread?* Christ asked, *How many loaves have ye?* Note, When we cannot have what we would, we must make the best of what we have, and do good with it as far as it will go; we must not think so much of our wants as of our havings. Christ herein went according to the rule he gave to Martha, not to be *troubled about many things, nor cumbered about much serving.* **Nature is content with little, grace with less, but lust with nothing.**¹

Ephesians 4:28 ESV

28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

Nothing Wasted!

Again, Jesus ordered the fragments to be collected so that nothing be wasted. The ability to perform miracles does not grant the authority to waste God's gifts.²

¹Henry, M. (1996, c1991). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible : Complete and unabridged in one volume* (Mt 15:29). Peabody: Hendrickson.

²Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary.* "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Mt 15:21). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

IV. The Confidence for Compassion

Again, a great miracle takes place as Jesus multiplies the food.

V. The Contentment in Compassion

Everyone left satisfied. All our needs are met in Christ.

Isaiah 58:5-12 ESV

John Piper:

The point of Isaiah 58 is this: Piety that does not produce a passion for God-exalting social justice and practical mercy is worthless. Or to put it positively: God promises that we will break forth like the dawn if our piety produces a passion for social justice and practical mercy.

Five Kinds of Human Need for Passionate Concern

In addition to the all-important need for faith and forgiveness and personal holiness, there are five kinds of human need that Isaiah – and Jesus – are passionately concerned about.

1) The need for freedom from bondage and oppression. Four times in verse 6 and once in verse 9 he hits on this. Verse 6: "Loose the bonds of wickedness, undo the straps of the yoke, let the oppressed go free, break every yoke." Verse 9b: "Take away the yoke from your midst."

2) The need for food. Verse 7a: "Is it not to share your bread with the hungry?"

3) The need for housing. Verse 7b: "[Is it not] to bring the homeless poor into your house?"

4) The need for clothing. Verse 7c: "[Is not this the fast I choose:] When you see the naked, to cover him?"

5) The need for respect. Verse 9b: "Take away . . . the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness." In other words, stop accusing unjustly and belittling and exploiting.