

God is Compassionate

Sunday, May 05, 2019

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But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. (Psalms 86:15)

I. Compassion involves deep feeling and emotions because of the suffering of others.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines it this way:

A suffering with another; painful sympathy; a sensation of sorrow excited by the distress or misfortunes of another; pity; commiseration. Compassion is a mixed passion, compounded of love and sorrow; at least some portion of love generally attends the pain or regret, or is excited by it. Extreme distress of an enemy even changes enmity into at least temporary affection.

- A. Generally, people are moved with compassion upon seeing and learning of the suffering or misfortunes of others.
- B. It can be avoided by not looking upon that which causes it and avoiding its presence.
 - 1. "Out of sight - out of mind."
- C. The more selfish a person is, the less compassion he feels.
- D. The more unfairly that he feels life has treated him, the less compassion he will have for the bad things that happen to others.
 - 1. People who have no compassion are people who have brooded over their own troubles and blamed them on others rather than trusting God with them.

II. Compassion is one of the good traits of humanity.

- A. It is one of the attributes of God that is hardest to erase out of the heart.
- B. It takes much sin and selfishness to completely eradicate compassion from the human heart.
- C. In this dark and evil time in which we live it can be found everywhere, if you look for it.
- D. Compassion is such a strong thing in us that it will distort our good judgement.

III. God is compassionate.

- A. As with everything else, He is the King of compassion.
- B. Yet God is probably falsely accused more in this matter than in any other.
 - 1. It seems that the first thought that enters the mind when we find ourselves in trouble is that God does not care.

And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? (Mark 4:38)

- 2. How utterly wrong and unfair it is to accuse God of not caring!
- C. There is no other attribute of God that is stressed more strongly in the Word of God than his compassion.

But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. (Psalms 86:15)

Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. (Psalms 112:4)

The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. (Psalms 145:8)

D. His compassion does not even depend upon how we treat Him.

Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again. (Psalms 78:36-39)

E. Compassion differs from pity in that it involves action.

1. God always pities, but He has the knowledge and wisdom to NOT do something about it when it is the wisest and best thing to do
2. Many times we have compassion but have no power or means to do anything about it - God never has that problem.

F. One of the outstanding characteristics of Jesus and his life on earth was his compassion.

And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. (Mark 1:41)

And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things. (Mark 6:34)

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 will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. (Matthew 15:32)

So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. (Matthew 20:34)

1. Did you notice in the verses that Jesus was "moved" with compassion and did something to fix the problem and take away the suffering?

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (Luke 10:30-34)

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. (Luke 10:36-37)

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)