
The Compassionate Christ

Matthew 9:35-38

And after seeing the miracles of Jesus in Matt. 9:32ff., the Pharisees accused Jesus of “*casting demons by the ruler of the demons*”(v. 34). Jesus later responded verbally to His critics in Matt. 12:25-32. But His immediate response was to simply continue doing good. Matthew tells us that the motive behind Jesus’ helping and healing ministries was His great sympathy and compassion. The gospel is based on the reality that sinners need the grace, mercy and compassion of Christ (Matt. 9:13; 1 Tim.1:15).

As followers of Christ, we ought to have the same compassion for the lost. That could only happen when these three things become true.

1. _____ ***what Jesus*** _____

Jesus and the disciples saw the crowd of people who were following them and coming to them. But Jesus saw them with different eyes than the disciples did. Jesus saw the great need of lost people (Eph. 2:12). These Jewish crowd were religious but even their religion was a source of burden (Matt. 11:28; 15:14; 23:4), suffering under the hands of their self-righteous self-seeking religious leaders (John 9:24-34; cf. Ezekiel 34; Matt. 23:4). Jesus also saw the great opportunity of harvest of lost people (cf. John 4:35, Luke 10:2).

2. _____ ***what Jesus*** _____

The verb “felt compassion,” means to feel something deep down inside. The care and love of God is shown in that He sent His beloved Son to become like one of us (Heb. 4:15) that we might experience His love and compassion (Matt. 14:14; cf. Matt. 8:17; 14:14;15:32; 18:27; Mark 5:19; 6:34; 8:2). He was filled with compassion for the leper in Mark 1:41, the widow of Nain in Luke 7:13; He was moved with compassion as He touched the blind men in Matt. 20:34. And now in 1 Peter 3:8, he calls us to show that same compassion to others.

3. _____ ***what Jesus*** _____

Jesus ministered to people’s needs. We too, are called to minister (serve). Every Christian is called to serve Christ and minister to others. God has given every believer unique gifts and opportunities to be used in serving others (Rom. 12:6ff; 1 Cor. 12:4-6). We may have differing gifts, but God expects us to use them in serving others (1 Pet.4:10).

May the love of Jesus our Savior motivate us to go out of our comfort zones and proclaim to good news of salvation to this sinful world. If you have experienced that salvation, then you’re one of His workers in His harvest. Jesus is calling you to pray for laborers. And as you do, may you also be ready and willing to respond like Isaiah who said, “Here am I Lord, send me.”