

# COMPASSION

## JESUS' COMPASSION

Sunday was Mother's Day. It is a day to honor the person who gave us birth. Talking about mothers can be tricky. Some people have loving, generous, protective mothers, while some endure a childhood with selfish, non-supportive mothers. Some parents may even be non-existent.

**What do you think are some good characteristics of a mother?**

**What is meant when someone is called "a mother hen?"**

**Is this considered a positive or negative description?**

There is a story that has circled the internet of a clean-up crew of firefighters after a large forest fire. As they searched the scorched area one team member spotted the charred remains of a bird. Since a bird can easily take flight from the impending fire, the firefighter was wondering why the bird was caught in the fire. Being curious he moved the carcass. When he did there was a flurry of movement as four chicks ran out from under the bird.

**What kept the mother bird on the ground in the face of a painful death?**

**What word best describes the bird's death?**

**SUICIDE    ACCIDENT    SACRIFICE    IGNORANCE**

**Psalm 57:1**— Be gracious to me, God, be gracious to me, for I take refuge in you. I will seek refuge in the shadow of your wings until danger passes.

**Psalm 91:4**— He will cover you with his feathers; you will take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield.

**Who is the Psalmist referring to as the "hen" in these verses? [God]**

Being in frustration one day Jesus said...

**Luke 13:34**— Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her. How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

**What did Jesus compare Himself to?**

**Jesus said He was willing to protect His children but were His children willing to be protected?**

**Why do you think that is the case?**

**How did Jesus demonstrate His compassion to His children?**

**What are some of the things that the “mother heart” of God desires for His children?**

## **OUR BROKENNESS**

In this world, broken things are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Anything we no longer need, we throw away. Damaged goods are rejected, and that includes people. In marriage, when relationships break down, the tendency is to walk away and find someone new rather than work at reconciliation. The world is full of people with broken hearts, broken spirits, and broken relationships.

**Psalm 34:18**—The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

**In what ways can people be “broken?”**

**Examine yourself. In what ways do you feel that you are broken?**

**How do you feel when you see someone else dealing with similar issues?**

**Acts 3**— Now Peter and John were going up to the temple for the time of prayer at three in the afternoon. 2 A man who was lame from birth was being carried there. He was placed each day at the temple gate called Beautiful, so that he could beg from those entering the temple. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked for money.

**How many broken people are named in this passage?**

**What was the name of the gate where the lame man lay?**

Jewish historian Josephus describes the gate as made of fine Corinthian brass at the temple, seventy-five feet high with huge double doors, and so beautiful that it “greatly excelled those gates that were only covered over with silver and gold.”

Actually, there were 10 gates to the Temple. All were fabulous. Nine were covered with gold and silver, but they were not the BEAUTIFUL gate. This one was covered in Corinthian bronze. Over time, the bronze will change color. The natural “turning” makes the covering completely unique.

**How is our brokenness like the brass gates? [Over time, we can grow into something beautiful and individually despite our past. Over time, God can make something beautiful of our lives.]**

## **OUR COMPASSION**

**Acts 3:4-10**—Peter, along with John, looked straight at him (the lame man) and said, “Look at us.” 5 So he turned to them, expecting to get something from them. 6 But Peter said, “I don’t have silver or gold, but what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!” 7 Then, taking him by the right hand he raised him up, and at once his feet and ankles became strong. 8 So he jumped up and started to walk, and he entered the temple with them — walking, leaping, and praising God. 9 All the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 and they recognized that he was the one who used to sit and beg at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. So they were filled with awe and astonishment at what had happened to him.

**What thoughts must have been going through Peter and John’s minds as they saw the lame man that day?**

**What would have happened to the man if they had passed by him that day?**

The man was looking for a “band-aid” to his problems—\_\_\_\_\_. What he needed was the cure for all his problems—\_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes when we pray, we ask God for band-aids, when God wants to give us \_\_\_\_\_ that changes everything!

**Acts 2:1-4**— When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. 3 They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated and rested on each one of them. 4 Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.

**How were they able to perform such a miracle?**

**V. 7**— Then, taking him by the right hand he raised him up, and at once his feet and ankles became strong.

It was one thing to \_\_\_\_\_, “get up and walk.” It is another when someone makes the gesture to \_\_\_\_\_ you. Peter—in faith that what he said would happen—reached out and grabbed the man to help him up. In doing so, he was also raising the man’s faith in what would happen.

**Imagine if you were the lame man. What would most cause you to try to stand? Someone saying to you to “get up and walk” or someone actually taking you by the hand and helping to lift you?**

**When you have compassion for others does your gesture consist of words or does your action reach out to them to grow their faith?**

This wasn’t something Peter did on a whim or as a promotional event; he did it under the specific prompting of the Holy Spirit. God gave Peter the supernatural ability to trust Him for something completely out of the ordinary. Peter had probably passed that same man many times, giving no response to his cries, but this time he was moved to take action by the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

**When the Spirit comes to live in our lives, what happens when we pass others with a need?**

**2 Corinthians 8:9**— But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.”

**Paul wrote this in a passage. Who is the “He” he is referring to?**

**How is God’s power perfected when we are weak?**

Compassion \_\_\_\_\_ is simply an emotion of \_\_\_\_\_.

To the Christian, COMPASSION should be defined as a \_\_\_\_\_,  
not a \_\_\_\_\_.

## PRAYER TIME

- Thank God for His transforming compassion toward you. Think of where you would be had God not shown you great sacrifice and protection.
- Ask God to open your eyes to the plight of others who need help. Ask Him to show you the difference between a “band-aid” and a real transformation.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to work through you to make a difference in people’s lives.
- Ask God to show your group how they can be the element of change to someone in need.