

Theme: We are called to mission by compassion for the ones who are suffering in this life and perishing without the Gospel.

I. Intro - Distinguished But Not Divided

- A. Early Christological controversies
- B. Importance of full Deity and full humanity
- C. Importance of distinguishing but not dividing the Deity & humanity of Christ
- D. Same is true in motivation for mission: distinguish but don't divide passion for God & compassion for people
- E. Last week - primacy of God; this week - compassion for humanity

II. Compassion For the Lost and Suffering

- A. Paul's solemn oath of truthfulness (v 1)
 - I speak the truth in Christ—
 - I am not lying,
 - my conscience confirms it
 - in the Holy Spirit— Romans 9:1
 1. A fourfold oath - he wants this to be clear
 2. Paul wants everyone to take careful note and believe what he is about to say
- B. Paul's great, unceasing sorrow (v2)
 - I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.
 - Romans 9:2
 1. Paul has great sorrow & unceasing anguish
 2. This is no shallow or passing thing for Paul
 3. He again adds emphasis so we will not miss his

point

- C. The focus of sorrow: the lost & suffering
 - For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ⁴ the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Romans 9:3–4
 1. Paul has great sorrow for his own people Israel
 2. Not racism or ethnocentrism - apostle to Gentiles
 3. His sorrow for Jews is because they rejected Christ
 4. Despite all of the glorious things they have - they are bound for hell - If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 1 John 3:17
 1. John is talking about the materially poor
 2. He links love for God with compassion for suffering
 3. Our love for God prompts us to love those made in His image, and to relieve their physical or spiritual suffering and poverty
- D. The depth of compassion - wishing to be cursed!
 - For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, Romans 9:3
 1. Paul willing to be cursed & cut off from Christ
 2. Can't happen, but wish shows seriousness
 3. This is true compassion for the lost!

III. The Call To Compassion

A. The biblical call to compassion for our fellow humans

1. All humans are the image of God

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. James 3:9–10

- a. All humans are the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27)
- b. This includes our words and our actions!
- c. This is why the 2nd commandment can not be divided from the 1st, why the 2nd half of the Decalogue flows from the first, and why the Lord's prayer teaches us that we begin with prayer with God's honor, and then flow to human need.
- d. Remember Jesus' words in Matthew 25:31-46 - 'if you did or did not do it to others, you did or did not do it to me!'
- e. How we view, speak about, and treat any other human is how we view, speak about, and treat God
- f. Passion for God always lead to compassion for those made in His image. If we lack compassion for people, it is a sign we lack passion for God.

2. True faith compels us to show compassion to the weak and suffering

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: **to look after orphans and widows in their distress** and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1:27

- a. True, living faith looks after orphans and widows
- b. True faith and worship fuels compassion for the weak and suffering in our world. Our love for God compels us to love them as well.

3. The Gospel compels us to compassion

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?
1 John 3:16–17

- a. The root is in v16 - the Gospel seen in the sacrificial love of Jesus
- b. The fruit in in v16b-17 - we love others and sacrifice to help them
- c. The Scripture is replete with the call to remember how God has delivered and forgiven us - and to extend that to others.

B. Examples of compassion for the lost & suffering

1. Moses

So Moses went back to the Lord and said, "Oh, what a great sin these people have committed! They have made themselves gods of gold. ³² But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." Exodus 32:31–32

- a. The people had sinned against Moses and God
- b. Moses had deep compassion - just like Paul!

2. Jesus

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9

- a. Paul is talking about a collection for the poor
- b. His ultimate example - Jesus!

3. Examples from the history of the church

- a. The countless unnamed who spread the Gospel in the early centuries of the faith - sometimes at the cost of their lives
- b. Monks and missionaries who took the Gospel to barbarians, Vikings, and distant lands
- c. Believers and missionaries in the Reformation - many of whom died for the faith
- d. John Knox - Give me Scotland or I die!
- e. The modern missionary movement where people devoted their lives to relieving suffering and proclaiming the Gospel in far flung lands
- f. CT Studd poem - the spirit of mission!
"Some wish to live within the sound
Of church or chapel bell
I want to build a rescue shop
Within a yard of hell." - CT Studd

IV. The Need for Compassionate Mission Today

A. The huge number of poor and suffering in our world

1. 80% of world's population lives on less than \$10 a day
2. 50% of the children in the world today live in poverty
3. UNICEF - 22,000 children die each day due to poverty
4. 1.8 billion people do not have a water source within 1 kilometer, and thus have to use only 20 liters per day. In the UK the average person uses 50 liters a day to flush toilets, while in the US the average person uses 600 liters a day. Poorest 40% of population is 5% of the income in the world.

5. Over 1 million die from malaria each year

6. Less than 1% of what is spent on weapons each year would put every child in school
7. The top 20% wealthiest account for 76.6% of private consumption of resources; the bottom 20% account for 1.5%.
8. This does not even account for the immense number suffering through the sex slave trade, drug addiction, depression, alcoholism, broken marriages, etc - there is great spiritual poverty and suffering as well

B. The huge number of lost in our world

1. Only 28% of world's population identify as 'Christian'
2. Evangelical's less than 10% of the world population
3. 7.4 billion people in 16,500 people groups (9,800 unique)
4. Almost 6,700 people groups are unreached (4,000 unique)
5. 40.5% of the world's people groups are unreached
6. Over 2 billion people are in people groups with few or no known believers
7. 65-70% of the world's population live in religiously restrictive countries
8. Many of the unreached are also among the poorest and most suffering - the task of reaching the lost and the poor are most often the task of reaching the same people!

C. The resources of Christians - the good, bad & ugly!

1. Christians make \$42 trillion annually
2. Christians give \$700 billion annually (the same as American's spend on Christmas each year)
3. Total missions giving \$45 billion (about 6% of total)
4. Almost 97% of Christian giving (\$677 billion) stays within the local church it was given to
5. Home missions accounts for 2.9%
6. Giving to the unevangelized world - .3% (\$2.1 billion)
7. Unreached people groups - \$450 million .001% of Christian income - \$1 out of every \$100,000 made.
8. If Christians would devote themselves to prayer, giving, and going the mission could be finished in the lifetime of many who are alive today.

V. Applying the Word

A. Am I moved by the need in our world?

1. The scope of need in our world is staggering!
2. Not just statistics; they are real people who suffer
3. Does this move me to compassion and action?
4. Each of these people are the image of God!!
5. A lack of compassion for the lost and suffering belies a lack of passion for the name and glory of Jesus Christ as well!
6. Do I have passion for Jesus and compassion for the lost and suffering?

7. If not - reflect on Gospel & then the need

B. Praying for the lost and suffering

1. In future weeks look at ways to engage in mission
2. Today I want to focus on heart issue of prayer
3. Look at links in Mission B'Ridge - be moved to pray
4. Pray for the lost and suffering this week!
5. Pray in meeting each week for our mission work

C. Closing prayer for lost and suffering

The Call of Mission: Compassion for the Lost & Suffering

Romans 9:1-3

September 11, 2016

Prayer

Genesis 12:2-3

Teaching keywords: Evangelism & missions; great commission; heaven, hell, and eternity; mercy ministry

"I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Gen. 12:2-3

I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit—² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race Romans 9:1-3

If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 1 John 3:17