



Sermon Text: Acts 9:32-43

Sermon Date: January 28, 2018

There is something magnetic and beautiful about compassion. People notice compassion. In our text, we see Peter and the church engaged in ministries of compassion. On Sunday we examined why Christians should be defined by compassion and how we can cultivate a compassionate lifestyle.

ACTS 9:32-43

- **A Picture of Compassion.** In this brief transitional passage, we see multiple pictures of compassion. Peter shows compassion on a paralyzed man named Aeneas, by healing him. Tabitha showed compassion by regularly providing for the widows in Joppa. And Peter showed compassion by traveling to Joppa and raising Tabitha from the dead.
- **The Action of Compassion.** We also saw that compassion isn't simply a feeling, but an action. Compassion often requires us to inconvenience ourselves in service for the good of another person. In all three pictures, we see compassion in action.
- **The Appeal of Compassion.** Each story ends with these miracles of compassion having an evangelistic consequence. Works of compassion are powerful vehicles for evangelism because they gain us an audience for sharing the gospel.

WHY BE COMPASSIONATE?

- **The Image of God.** The Bible teaches that all people are created in God's image to both reflect and represent Him in the world. While the image of God has been distorted by sin, humanity still bears God's image. Wayne Grudem says, "Every single human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness, or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God's image and therefore must be treated with the dignity and respect that is due to God's image-bearer."
- **The Example of Christ.** Out of all humanity, Christ alone was the perfect image of God. What we see in Christ is what God intended for man, and what we see is a man of perfect compassion. Christians should be marked by compassion because we follow the example of Jesus.
- **The Kindness of the Gospel.** The gospel is the good news of God's compassion on sinners. Having received God's infinite compassion in Christ, how can we not be people who show compassion?

HOW DO WE GROW IN COMPASSION?

The way we answer that question will reveal how well we understand ourselves and the gospel. Many people will resort to willpower and self-help, but that approach shows an ignorance of God's Word. The way we grow in compassion is by fixing our eyes on Jesus and enjoying his compassion for us. True compassion that endures will only flow from the fountain of the gospel. By beholding Christ, the image of God is renewed within us and the Spirit changes us to live more like Jesus. *"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit"* (2 Corinthians 3:18).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?
2. How do works of compassion help the church do evangelism?
3. What are some specific ways you can show compassion in your life this week?