

COMPASSION

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“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
(Jeremiah 29:11)

COMPASSION The Art of Giving God’s Way

INTRODUCTION

We are living in a time of destiny before Jesus returns. Evil is increasing. Selfishness and rebellion are running rampant. The world’s moral and economic strongholds of stability are shaking. The love of many is growing cold because of the increase of wickedness. (Matthew 24:12-14)

These are signs of the last days. (2nd Timothy 3:1-5) The stage is set for the good news of Jesus as well as hope and salvation to be spread to the nations. Then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14) When people come to the end of their resources, God will be their only answer and their only hope.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will not be ashamed and will be saved!

Because lack has increased in the world, God’s people need to be equipped, prepared, and led by the Holy Spirit (in God’s love) to deal with these end-time situations. This booklet seeks to give guidelines and principles from God’s word as to when and how to give to people in their time of need.

It is also intended to encourage Christians not to lose their passion for the compassion and to gain wisdom and understanding about God’s compassion and how it operates.

- *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)*

- *“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 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.”* (2nd Corinthians 8:8-9)

The Lord told me, “Love My people. Help My people. Do it My way by My Spirit, for Jesus is coming soon.”

A man told me this story of how offended he was when I would not give him money for rent: Leaving our church, he went to another church and asked them for rent money. They wrote him out a check. He thought to himself, *Here is a true church of God.* Then he thought again, *I’m still continuing to drink, which is why I don’t have rent money.* Drinking and drugs leads to poverty and many other sorrows! (Proverbs 20:1, 23:19-35)

He later said to me, “You cared about me and loved me enough to tell me that my drinking was wrong and would destroy my life. You forced me to look at my life and walk with God. The other church didn’t help me even though they paid my rent. They didn’t help me deal with my sin. Now my life is changed. Thank God! I am forgiven, healed, and free, and my family is blessed.”

PART I

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S COMPASSION

Definitions:

- **Sympathy** (pity) - feelings for self or others who are in a problem. The focus is on self and the problem, not the solution. It is rooted in pride and self.
- **Empathy** - putting one's self in another's position. Can be positive for ministry purposes when coupled with compassion (God's love) or negative when motivated by sympathy (self-pity). Sympathy produces guilt or obligation-giving, which do not resolve or change the situation.
- **Compassion** - God's love in intervention in order to produce faith in God and provide a solution for a problem which includes a change of life. Then the problem does not have to exist. It focuses people on the solution (God), not the problem (self), which then produces cheerful giving toward God and His people. (John 3:16)

The Lord's nature is love and compassion. Jonah, who lacked in this area except towards himself (Jonah 4:1-11), declared about the Lord, *"I knew that you were a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."* (Jonah 4:2)

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son [Jesus] that whoever believes in [receives] Him will not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:16-21) People condemn themselves by not believing on Jesus and receiving God's compassionate love for them. (John 3:16-21)

God's compassion provides a solution for poverty, that people might not perish and be separated from God forever, or be in lack, sickness, disease, and bound by death. Jesus is God come as a man to save us and give us abundant life now and forever.

Jesus is our example of how to display the compassion of God towards people. He is able to sympathize with our weaknesses and problems because He was tempted, as we are tempted, not to believe God and to disobey His commandments. However, He did not give up His faith and love for God. He empathized with our needs and He put Himself in our place (became a man), taking our problems, pain, and suffering on Himself at the cross. Jesus approached the throne of God's grace

(ability) and received God's mercy for us, so we could have His life and be transformed into His children forever.

God's compassion flowed through Jesus as He was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power to go out and do good and heal those oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. (Acts 10:38)

God's compassion does not leave people in their weaknesses or problems. Sympathy leaves people in their problems. God's compassion moves people to believe Him, receive solutions, and change their lives by God's grace.

"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace [from God] to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

" 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and will bring you back from captivity'." (Jeremiah 29:11-14)

The Lord's compassion brings prosperity and blessing to His people by breaking the yoke of poverty through His anointing in Jesus' name. This is why we must preach the good news of God's prosperity. (Luke 4:18-19)

HOW GOD'S COMPASSION WORKS

Sympathy keeps people in their problems by rehearsing and focusing on the problem and self. Compassion causes people to be encouraged in God and rise out of the situation through faith in God and His Word.

God's compassion is always there for those who want to change. People who want sympathy do not want help.

The Lord has compassion upon whoever He will. (Exodus 33:19) God's people should have compassion for the same ones God has compassion upon. (Luke 6:27-38)

God's compassion:

- is motivated by love and faith. It is not selfish or self-centered. Apart from God, man's giving is always to benefit self, rather than to give thanks and honor to God.
- shares in people's sorrows, and then turns them to joys (1st Corinthians 12:26) in the Lord.

(Suffering does not build character. Putting faith in God and applying God's Word in a time of suffering is what builds God's character.)

- causes change because it applies God's love, which produces His faith to change the situation. Faith works by love. Compassion gives the attention and glory to God!

(God never intended for people to fight the "good fight of faith" by themselves. Pride hinders people from receiving God's compassion and provision.)

- asks, "How would you like to be treated?" and then does something about it by God's ability. (Luke 15:11-31, 6:27-38)
- is available for whoever recognizes their need and wants a change in their lives. (Luke 15:11-31)
- is a gift that is only effective to those who receive Him. Without Jesus as Lord of your life, you will continue to have the same problems.
- does not overlook the problem. God is not interested in the problem, but rather in providing a solution, a change, and a result which removes the cause or root of the problem and allows continued blessing.

(You don't have to go through what others are going through to have compassion. You are not relating to the problem, but rather to God's solution.)

- causes a person to say "Bless God!" rather than "Poor me!" (sympathy).
- produces God's love and purpose through faith. (Speak God's word. Bring God's love with power and authority)
- brings positive change and results.
- only produces God's solutions which are not man's solutions. Man wants to be a beggar when God wants him to be a giver.
- points people to God to have faith in Him when problems come. Problems are a praise report in the happening. People look to people instead of looking to

God who made man. Don't go to the creation when you can go to the Creator!
(Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalms 121)

- works in the law of giving and receiving when someone is hurting or in a problem situation. Compassion is not moved by the need, but rather by love and faith in God.

On the other hand, **sympathy** is rooted in pride (self). It wants attention. The person wanting sympathy does not want to change or does not believe or look to God for change.

Sympathy cripples. Compassion heals.

- Sympathy is not God's love. It does not accomplish God's purpose. It points to people or problems, not God.
- Sympathy is rooted in unbelief.

Having a need is not selfishness. Selfishness is when you prefer your need before someone else's need and God's purpose.

Just because someone has a problem does not mean they want a solution.

There are times when everyone has needs. One cause may be an attack that is out of a person's control. However, needs are often present because of the consequences of a person's actions (you reap what you sow). Having needs allows God's compassion to flow through others, giving opportunity for the giver and the receiver to be blessed and to glorify God. (2nd Corinthians 9; John 9:1-7)

Pride must be removed from your giving – the kind of giving where you enable or control, and your receiving – being a beggar.

There will be a time when God wants us to give and times when He wants us to receive. If you cannot receive, you have pride, and you are rejecting God's provision. "*Give and you shall receive.*" (Luke 6:37-38)

Compassion is God's intervention into a situation. His compassion shows mercy and honor to those who cannot benefit or repay the giver. (Luke 14:12-14)

Jesus' compassion led him to weep, not because Lazarus was dead, but because of the unbelief that was present concerning Lazarus being raised from the dead. (John 11)

You need not have problems to receive blessings. God's compassion gives blessings every day to those who love Him and keep His commandments. (Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Psalm 23)

The devil hates people to have God's prosperity because it destroys poverty. The devil tries to prevent people from preaching the good news of God's prosperity to the poor: the poor don't have to be poor anymore. (John 10:10) The preaching of God's prosperity produces faith and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which destroys poverty in the five areas: spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, or in relationships. (Luke 4:18-19)

PART II

WHY DO PEOPLE LACK?

The question is often asked, “If God is all loving, then why do bad things happen to people?”

The Lord says,

“My people perish for lack of knowledge.” (Hosea 4:6)

“The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have come that you might have life more abundantly.” (John 10:10)

The Lord makes it clear that ignorance about the His love (and ways) and a thief (demonic forces) are present to cause evil to happen to people. The knowledge of God’s Word and faith in Him would defeat these foes. Compassion is God’s intervention in our behalf. His love casts out fear and unbelief (which cause poverty) (1st John 4:16-18)

The Lord’s loving compassion has done everything to save, heal, and deliver everyone in Jesus. However, people will still have problems and ultimately go to the lake of fire if they do not believe and receive God’s loving gift. Poverty is the direct result of the absence of God’s presence in a person’s life, either through lack of knowledge, unbelief, or disobedience to God’s principles.

Reasons Why People Lack:

1. The Lord Jesus is not their shepherd. (Psalm 23) People trust in and look to man (the arm of the flesh) and are cursed when problems come. (Jeremiah 17:5-8) They don’t look to or rely on God to help them. King Asa was blessed when he relied on the Lord, but he later hardened his heart against God and His people. Refusing to seek the Lord, he sought the physicians only and died of a foot ailment. (2nd Chronicles 16:1-13)

In one situation a man came to a brother in the Lord who had previously helped him and asked for financial aid. The brother questioned him, “Have you asked God for help?” He replied, “No. It’s easier to go to you.” The brother said, “Then I can’t help you!”

If you are not relying on God, He may harden the heart of someone who used to help you. God’s compassion is realized by those who seek Him and receive Him and His provision. It is provided for all, but only those who receive it will experience its blessing.

Others seek after and rely upon false gods who cannot help them. They are cursed. Famines and pestilence are the direct result of worshipping false gods. (Deuteronomy 28) People are starving in countries where there are plenty of animals walking around, but they cannot eat the meat because of their beliefs. (1st Timothy 4:1-5)

2. People lack because they have willful, knowing disobedience towards God's commandments. (Deuteronomy 28:15-68) They have separated themselves from God's compassion; therefore, God will not help them until they humble themselves and ask for His forgiveness and help. (2nd Chronicles 7:13-14) God is not mocked. You reap what you sow. (Galatians 6:7, Proverbs 28:13-14)
3. People lack because they are not honoring God with their tithes and offerings. (Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:8-12) They are robbing God and are cursed. People, not God, curse themselves. God's compassion promises to bless, not curse. Giving and receiving is God's way of blessing. (Luke 6:38) If you are not honoring God through your giving, do not expect to receive from Him.

A man once complained to me, "I can't tithe. You don't expect me to take food out of my children's mouths!" I asked, "How much do you spend on your beer and cigarettes a month?" It ended up to be more than enough to tithe to God and to feed the children. Others say, "I can't tithe. I must pay my bills." Understand this: It is an honor and a privilege to thank and love God by giving Him the tithe first (10% of the gross earnings). The reality is that the tithe belongs to and is owed to God before we pay our bills and taxes. The tithe releases the miracle of God's provision to us to pay our bills as we honor the Lord first in our lives. (Read Haggai and 1st Kings 17; 2nd Kings 4-5)

4. Pride causes people to lack. "*God resists the proud and gives grace [ability] to the humble* [those who seek and rely upon Him]." (James 4:6-7) Others have not because they do not ask God, or when they do ask, it is for selfish purposes (meaning they would not be willing to give it away if God should ask for it). (James 4:3)
5. People lack because they are helping and giving to people who are under God's judgment for their wickedness and for hating God. (see 1st Chronicles 19:1-3, 2nd Chronicles 20:35-37) If you help people who have cursed themselves, you will receive the same curse. You are enabling their wickedness and

getting in the way of God's wrath and discipline, hindering them from repenting and changing.

6. People lack because they do not work. God's Word is clear: "*If a man will not work, he shall not eat.*" (2nd Thessalonians 3:10)

Welfare was never intended to become a lifestyle of laziness. It was created to help people temporarily by giving them a "jump start." Abuse of God's provision will cause it to cease. Man's system is not accomplishing God's purpose, but rather keeping people from being blessed.

7. People lack because they are relying on man's provision (insurance, welfare, lawsuits, etc.), looking for a free ride. When the beggar was healed, he then had to go work, and the free ride ended. However, the blessing began when the kingdom of God entered his life. (Acts 3) We have seen people healed by the compassion of the Lord only to deny their healing because they would lose their insurance benefits and have to go back to work.
8. People lack because they don't want to change, or they accept their situation rather than believing God. They like sympathy. They grumble and complain but do not allow God to change things. Some have chosen to live in a certain way, and others want to change their choices. Not everyone who is sick wants to be well, and some people have chosen to live in poverty.
9. People lack because they have taken advantage of others. Greedy for gain, they have made dishonest gain. (James 5:1-5; Proverbs 28:16, Proverbs 13:11)
10. People are double-minded. They are not in faith. God's Word says they should not expect to receive anything from God. (James 1:5-11) God blessed Isaac when he got rid of the fear for his life. Isaac planted a crop in the time of famine and received a hundred-fold return. (Genesis 26)
11. People lack because they mismanage what God has provided. Beware of credit spending and spending beyond your means.

God's unconditional love has become conditional by our response! The Lord wants everyone to be saved and not to be impoverished or to perish, but people choose whether or not to receive God's provision.

PART III

WHY DO PEOPLE RECEIVE?

Those who receive are those who respond to God's unconditional love by loving, believing, and relying upon God with all their hearts and souls, and they love people as they love themselves. They do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith, realizing God's loving kindness leads people to repent and change. (Romans 2:4) They do just the opposite of those who don't receive. They know that those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. (Isaiah 58) The righteous never beg but believe God and seek first His kingdom, to His glory. (Psalms 37, Matthew 6)

Here are some qualities of those who have received God's compassion:

1. Humility – They are God-reliant in heart and attitude
2. Thankfulness and appreciation towards God and His provision
3. Obedience to God's commands (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)
4. Unselfishness - Preferring others more important than themselves (Philippians 2)
5. No greed or covetousness because God is with them (Hebrews 13:5-6)
6. Have knowledge that the Lord never causes them to lack except to show them that He is their source and supplier. (Deuteronomy 8) God is the source of their prosperity
7. Have God's peace and joy no matter what the circumstance (Philippians 4)
8. Godliness, and contentment with God's provision (1st Timothy 6)
9. Have praise and worship in their hearts and on their lips
10. Have generous caring hearts – are givers and receivers
11. *“In all things at all times, having all that they need, they will abound in every good work”* (2nd Corinthians 9)
12. Righteousness (that endures forever)

One day I was walking through my house praising and thanking God for His loving compassion and provision towards me in all areas of life – spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, in finances, and in relationships. A thought came to me, *how can you be so happy, content, and blessed when there are so many suffering people in this world?*

I began to consider that thought, and depression and sorrow came over me. Then I heard another voice, “Son, you are blessed because I have blessed you. You have

received and shared My love with My people. You have believed and obeyed My word, and as a result I have blessed you! Others have not received My love and believed My word. That is why they lack and are suffering.”

I had the impression to read Matthew 5:2-15. *“The poor will always be with you, but blessed are the poor in spirit [the ones who recognize their need for God], for theirs is the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived. I have blessed you and that is why you are blessed.”* (Matthew 5:2-15)

The Lord showed me that the thief was trying to steal my joy in God’s blessing. God’s loving, unconditional compassion is for all, but only those who receive, believe, and obey Him will experience the blessing.

Giving to God and to others under the Holy Spirit’s direction destroys the bondage of poverty in a person’s life. Poverty says, “You don’t have enough.” Giving says, *“My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”* (see Philippians 4:4-19)

PART IV

TIPS FOR GIVING GOD'S WAY

- Let love and thanks for what God has done for you motivate and direct all of your giving. Have a desire to bless. (2nd Corinthians 8:7-15)
- Give everything you have to the Lord in attitude, and you will be free to do it in deed. (Luke 21:1-3; Matthew 19:16-30)
- Honor the Lord first with the tithe (10% of gross earnings). (Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:8-12) This belongs to the ministry where you are being fed the Word of God and cared for.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to direct your giving in all circumstances. He will show you what to do or not do, how to give, what to give, and how much to give. The Lord knows the hearts and lives of those approaching you with need. He knows where He wants you to give. Give generously and cheerfully (hilariously) where the Lord directs you. If you give to whom God directs, you loan to the Lord and He will repay you. (Proverbs 19:17)
- The Lord gives not just for needs, but often to bless the faithful or for His purposes to be done (Mark 14:1-9; Luke 7:36-50) Do not give to people who are robbing God (because they are not giving their tithes and offerings).
- Do not give based on sympathy (pictures of starving children, family obligations, “the ministry can’t continue,” etc.), emotional appeals, or out of obligation. Seek the Lord’s direction where He wants you to give and what He wants you to do, if anything. (2nd Corinthians 9)
- What the Lord wants He will supply through His people or however He desires.
- The Lord, Jehovah Jireh, will supply an offering for those who desire to give an offering. Expect increase. Expect that God will supply you seed to sow. (2nd Corinthians 9)
- *“Give and it will be given to you - pressed down, shaken together, running over shall men give unto your bosom.”* (Luke 6:38)
- Give where it is appreciated. Then thanks goes to God for His provision through you.
- Remember - you are a caretaker of what belongs to God. Use it as God directs, and He will bless you with increase. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- You are not God (the source). Don’t give to those whom God is not giving to (see “Why People Lack” in this book). If you do give to them, don’t expect God to bless you. They will pressure you because they are not believing God, and they are looking to you and others. Giving to such people is like throwing money and time down the hole. There is no blessing,

and you are getting in the way of God dealing with their hearts to change them so they can be blessed. The Lord will deal with you if you are in the way. (2nd Chronicles 19:1-3, 20:35-37) If God resists the proud, who am I to help them? (James 4:6-7) You can always tell who is proud because after you help them, they are ungrateful. If you don't help them, they get angry, "hate you," and curse you.

- Compassion moves through God's Word which produces faith in the hearer. "*Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God.*" (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8) Faith in God changes a person's life and style of living.
- It is pleasing to God for people to take care of their families (see guidelines for church giving in 1st Timothy 5), but do it God's way. Bread given continuously without God's Word is not compassion.
- Giving should always change a person's life and bring glory to God. Soup lines don't always help people find God's purpose, but they help the people doing it "feel good." Love makes people responsible, accountable, and committed to the consequences of their actions so they will change their situation by God's grace.
- The giving of God's Word and giving to further God's Word is good soil for God's blessing to the giver and the receiver. We must get God's Word of prosperity to the nations to destroy poverty. (Luke 4:18-19)
- If people do not work, they do not eat. Don't continue to help people who are not contributing because you are not really helping them. This is sympathy, not God's compassion. Pray, and the Lord will show you how to help them to contribute. Make them responsible. God's Word says to separate from them until they come to their senses, but don't treat them as enemies. This is compassion. (2nd Thessalonians 3) Remember, compassion helps people to give so they can receive. (Luke 6:38)

There are times in people's lives when problems occur. Christians will help them (1st John 3:16-24); however, this is not to become a lifestyle. The government welfare system is finding out that "free money" produces "free-loaders." This is not God's way and has contributed to the breakdown of the family, as well as child abuse. It pays people for having children and provides encouragement for divorce.

Proud "free-loaders" will seek to intimidate you about not helping them by saying, "What kind of Christian are you?" If God is not helping them, He will not use you to help them either. Don't feel guilty or condemned by them. God's Word says that your heart will know what the Lord says is right or wrong. (1st John 3:16-24) Ask God. Give out of faith and love for God and people, not out of compulsion, guilt, or sympathy.

- Give to meet the real needs of the people. The Holy Spirit, when asked, will show you what the person really needs. Perceiving faith in the beggar, Peter said, *“Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus, arise and walk.”* (Acts 3:1-10)

He could have given him money out of sympathy (By the way, don't ever give cash to people. Get them what they need like groceries, gas bill, etc.) (Luke 10:25-37) However, God's compassion for this man in healing him changed his life, so that he could get a job and be productive in his life to the glory of God. He probably became a generous giver as well as a blessed receiver. A bag of groceries feeds for a day. A job could help them feed the neighborhood.

- *“Do not grow weary in well doing for in due season you shall reap a harvest if you don't give up. As we have opportunity, do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith.”* (See also Galatians 6:1-10.) God's loving compassion is not mocked. Whatever people sow is what they will reap. You cannot be responsible for what other people are doing or not doing with their lives. You can only be responsible for yourself. People make their own choices. We have no control over that and neither does God. However, the Lord Jesus wants us to be responsible to love and care for people under the Holy Spirit's direction, for what we do to the least of these we do to (and for) Him. (Matthew 25)
- The Lord taught me about “spiritual leeches” and how they draw on our faith, but they never develop their own. You pour God's Word into them, and it runs right out. They will drain you spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and in your relationships. Remember the ten virgins? When the time came, the five virgins could not give their oil to the ones who had run out. (Matthew 25)
- You cannot help someone by covering and carrying them all the time. It is God's heart and our hearts to help them, but we must help them to learn to go to God (Psalm 121) and believe and obey His Word. This is tough because they are relying on you to do it for them. It is not God's way. You will get tired, weary, discouraged, and have bad feelings toward people and then feel guilty about not loving them as God wants. Compassion helps people find the kingdom of God, and then God will meet all their needs through faith in Him. (Matthew 6:19-34)
- Release your love and faith in God and don't give up, but do it God's way. Rely on God, not yourself. Be encouraged by the words of promise, *“Do not grow weary in well doing. For in due season you will reap a harvest if you do not give up.”* (Galatians 6:9)

In one such experience, I was tired and weary of doing good towards a certain woman. She called night and day, every day. She never received any help, nor did she do the counsel I gave her. I didn't want to pick up the phone, and my love and patience were growing thin. In addition, I was feeling guilty because I loved God and I wanted to love His people. My life is the Lord's to care for His people, but this was ridiculous. Frustrated, not knowing what to do anymore, I quit leaning to my own understanding and asked God's forgiveness. I asked for His help to love and care for this lady the way the Lord would want it to be done. (Sometimes you can unknowingly love and care for people by being a "nice, kind, loving person" instead of using the compassionate love of God which is everlasting, never changes, and never fails because it has God's power.)

The Lord told me (like a thought), "Go buy her some groceries." Leaning to my own understanding I considered this: *I've done everything; what good is that going to do?* But in obedience to God, I went and did it anyway, realizing He knows better than I do, and I was going to learn to do things His way. My way did not work.

I asked the Lord to show me what groceries He wanted in the bag. (Proverbs 3:5-6) I purchased them and drove over to the woman's house, parked a half a block away, and snuck up to the door. I put the groceries on the porch and left quickly. (I was always taught not to do your deeds to be seen of men or make a show before men, but let the glory and thanks go to God. (Matthew 6:1-4) In this case, I think I just didn't want to be seen.)

As I arrived home, the phone rang. Guess who? She proceeded to thank me for the groceries and said, "The Lord spoke to me! He told me not to call you anymore unless He directed it. I am to call on God and He will take care of everything I need!" (Jeremiah 31:3)

I rejoiced with her and thanked God. This is what I had been trying to get through to her for months. It was not the bag of groceries, but God's compassion, directed by the Holy Spirit, that allowed her to receive this revelation of the Kingdom of God. She saw God's power and desire for her to understand His presence and glory for her life.

- God's compassion precedes His power. (Matthew 9:36, 11:14, 15:32, 20:34) On more than one occasion the Lord Jesus fed the people who had come to hear His teaching and to be healed. (Mark 6:30-44; John 5) They had been in one place all day. Jesus had compassion on them and taught them the ways of the Kingdom. Note: the compassion was not to feed them, but to teach them about the Kingdom of God. The miraculous feeding was an extra blessing confirming His work and authority. It was released through the unselfish act of a young boy who gave his lunch to Jesus. Jesus thanked God for this provision, blessed it, passed it out, and God multiplied it to fill everyone, even with extra provision. God is more than enough!

Jesus' response to the people who wanted to make Him king because He fed them was *"I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed His seal of approval."* They asked him, *"What must we do to do the works God requires?"* Jesus answered, *"The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."* (See also John 6:26-70.)

Jesus' compassion pointed the people to the Kingdom of God through faith in Him, not to the food they ate. As people seek first the Kingdom of God, He will meet all their needs. (Matthew 6:19-34)

- Plan your giving. (1st Corinthians 16:1-2; 2nd Corinthians 9:1-5)
- Giving and receiving are both blessed by God, but giving is more blessed. (Acts 20:35) The measure you give determines the measure you receive. (2nd Corinthians 9:6)

The Lord is constantly thinking about good things He wants to do for us. We would do well to ask the Holy Spirit what He would have us to do for people, not just when there is a need, but also to simply bless someone as God's compassion does. The Lord is searching for someone to bless. (2nd Chronicles 16:9)

- The Lord's compassion will not quench the "bruised reed." (Isaiah 42:3; Matthew 12:20) He wants us to help people who are hurting yet seeking Him and His Kingdom. (Isaiah 58) The Lord will get them help. In Acts 4-5 God's people worked together about His Kingdom purpose and contributed to each other. No one lacked, and everyone was blessed.
- Don't lie or take advantage of a brother or sister for personal gain. (Acts 5:1-10; Exodus 18:20-21; and Luke 16:10-13) Don't permit a brother or sister to do something for you which causes them hardship. (2nd Corinthians 8:13-15) You cannot demand love from someone without showing the same love in return. God's compassion benefits and blesses everyone concerned - the giver and receiver, the buyer and seller. Prefer the other more important than yourself. When someone is blessed, we are all blessed equally.

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

"Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."

"The service you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by

which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ and for your generosity in sharing with them and others. In their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!” (2nd Corinthians 9:8-15)

“LOVE MY PEOPLE. HELP MY PEOPLE. DO IT MY WAY, BY MY SPIRIT, FOR JESUS IS COMING SOON!”

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