

# SOLVING STRUGGLES

## In Interpersonal Relationships

### **“Learning to Live, Love and Listen to Each Other”**

#### **Ingredient #3: COMPASSION - Luke 10:25-37**

Our heavenly Father, we thank You for the wonderful privilege that is ours to share in the thing that means the most to us and that's Your Word. Thank You for the power of the scriptures. Thank You when we allow them to speak, they show us issues where we live. We pray that we would have Your mind and Your wisdom, Your ability to unlock the truths of this passage that comes under consideration. Pray that You would help each one to be able to comprehend the truth and go away with a deeper desire to be more personable, more intimate in relationships and more committed to others in interpersonal relationships. We realize that this is our biggest problem. Father, we pray that You would help us to learn how to be the kind of people that really stimulate others, challenge them, and meet their needs. Thank You now for this opportunity to study with one another. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

We are pursuing the ingredients of interpersonal relationships.

1. Our first ingredient was a Relationship with God.
2. Our second ingredient was Unconditional Love.

We looked together in the first study at a judge who didn't fear God, didn't fear man. He had no respect for man. We saw that a good vertical relationship provides a good horizontal relationship.

We looked at the parable of the prodigal son. We could call it the parable of the prodigal father because so often we try to put the focus in the wrong place.

The focus of those parables is on the father and not on the sons. We talked about the fact that God never needs to be reconciled to us, so He is always free in interpersonal relationships to act.

He doesn't have anything against us. He hasn't turned His back on us. We are the ones who turn our back on Him and we must be converted. We must be turned back into a face-to-face relationship with Him to know Him.

We come to one of the most familiar parables of all. We have the scriptural responsibilities for relationships. There are 37 of those listed.

As a believer, this is what you are supposed to be doing. The picture we are using has Correct Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting in the top left-hand corner. Correct Negative Thinking/Feeling/Acting are in the top right-hand corner. Down at the bottom you have Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting and Incorrect Negative Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

While we are working through our study put the characters where they belong in the study. When you find them, locate it.

The passage we are looking at is the parable of the Good Samaritan—Luke 10: 25-37.

What is the ingredient we're talking about in this study?

The first ingredient—Relationship with God.

The second one—Unconditional love.

Then thirdly—Compassion.

What's the difference between compassion and unconditional love?

If you have unconditional love for somebody haven't you always thought that compassion meant the same thing?

No, it doesn't.

Ask the Lord to teach us the difference between the two. This verse really epitomizes it:

1 John 3: 18

My little children, let us love in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth.

See the difference?

The easiest thing in the world for us to do for each other is to tell each other “I love you.”

To use the words and just say “I love you” or to use our tongues to express how much we appreciate each other.

He says, “let us not love in word or in tongue, but,” forms the contrast, “in deed and in truth.”

Love is demonstrated when the rubber meets the road and it moves from the heart to the hand. It’s easy to get stars in your eyes and say “I love you.” It’s another thing to demonstrate that love by actions.

That’s the difference between unconditional love and compassion. Unconditional love is a matter of the heart. Compassion is a matter of the hand and doing something. We are motivated by our heart but we are doing something about it.

Unconditional love motivates us. Compassion moves us.

Unconditional love motivates us and compassion moves us into action.

As we get ready to look at this ingredient, let’s take a minute to define the word compassion and show you the word that is in the Greek text and the Hebrew text so that you understand what we are talking about.

This is what your dictionary says:

Compassion: Sympathetic consciousness of another person's distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

You hurt for somebody but that is not enough. You have to desire to alleviate the pain that you are seeing this person is suffering. That's in the English text.

In the Hebrew, *racham* is the Hebrew root. It is a very interesting word. It means "to be soft." We say somebody is a "big softy". You know they are "a piece of cake". They are a "pushover".

Whenever there is some story on TV and a person wants to cry. You know they hurt when they see needs. That's a good word—soft.

It is not that easy in the Greek text. When you get to the Greek text, the Greek word for compassion is *splagchna*. Do you know what that is? That's your guts. That's just the way it sounds, too isn't it?

That's your intestines. That's your liver and all that stuff down there. The Greeks believed honestly that your emotions were down there. They would have a hard time giving a valentine because their love was not in the heart. You felt it down there.

With all the ulcers and everything else we are probably not too far from the truth. Certainly there are parts of our bodies that express our emotions and the stress of the emotions by what goes wrong below the heart. The word for heart love, lungs and

liver and kidneys and intestines, are how the Greeks described compassion.

You might have heard the story about the little kid that was supposed to write a paper for his health class and his paper read something like this. He says, “The body is made up of three parts: the brainium, the borax, and the abominable cavity. The brainium contains the brain with which we think and the borax contains the heart and the liver and the lungs with which we live with. And, the abominable cavity contains the bowels of which there are five, A, E, I, O and U.” (source unknown)

So there is Compassion. This is one word that was specifically used by Christ to describe how He felt about the conditions of the world.

Matthew 20:34—“Jesus had compassion on them.”

Mark 1:41—“He was filled with compassion.”

Luke 7:13—“His heart went out to her.”

Matthew 9:36—“When He saw the crowds, He had compassion.”

Mark 8:2—“Jesus says of Himself, ‘I have compassion.’”

That word is used in a lot of other places in the New Testament. Paul, when he is telling the Corinthians that they are not right in their attitudes toward him.

2 Corinthians 6:12—“We are not withholding our affection from

you, but you are withholding yours from us.”

We are not withholding our compassion toward you but you are certainly withholding yours toward us.

Philippians 1:8— “God can testify how I longed for all of you with the affection (or the compassion) of Christ Jesus.”

We are told in Colossians 3:12 that we are to “clothe ourselves with compassion.”

Now it is interesting that this word occurs in three of these first four parables. Do you remember where the word occurred? Do you remember when the prodigal son came to his senses and he started to come home? What did it say? The father “was moved with compassion” and he ran and got his arms around him.

That is God. God is an old man running to get His arms around us and come into reconciliation because He has compassion.

In our next study we are going to hit a critical ingredient in interpersonal relationships. Forgiveness is probably the biggest ingredient of all and we are going to see the very same word occur in Matthew 18. The secret to this study is in the little phrase “He had compassion.” It is not in the story of the Good Samaritan but right in the heart of the story in the little phrase “He had compassion.”

With these thoughts in mind, let’s get ourselves ready and realize that we as believers can manifest spontaneous compassion. It’s a manifestation of the Spirit of God among us.

This individual, “He had compassion.” He moved beyond his selfish desires and his own selfish needs to make a contribution in the life of somebody else.

What you are going to do with your little picture is you’re going to take it and you are going to place it on each of these characters.

**v. 25 And behold, a certain legal expert stood up, putting Him to the test saying, “Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit eternal life?”**

“And behold, a certain legal expert stood up, putting Him to the test saying, ‘Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit eternal life?’”

Now here is a young man, he’s got his head together, but his heart is missing. This young man is like some young men who go to a Bible class, carry a big Bible and sit in the back wanting to see if the theology is straight and whether they can afford to continue to come back and listen another time. They are strictly there with selfish motivation to check out to see if the teacher has done the homework and whether they can afford to come back and learn anything.

It’s an arrogant spirit. It’s a self-centered spirit. This young man is standing up and what is he doing? He is putting Jesus to the test. He is checking Jesus on His theology. He is so caught up in his own importance that he misses who the teacher is.

This teacher knows it all. He created it. He inspired the writing

of it and He is getting ready to die for the guy that is asking the questions.

Sometimes we are so blind in our pride.

Putting him to the test, he says, “What must I do to gain eternal life?”

Now where do you put him on the picture just by the fact that you know he is putting the teacher to the test? What are some of the words that can come off of the page there that you think might describe this individual? Do you come up with any? Self-righteous, a know-it-all, perfection.

We have this fellow down in the lower left-hand corner where a lot of people are that have bad interpersonal relationships because the focus is totally on them. The people who have the focus entirely on themselves can't have good interpersonal relationships because they are not people-oriented.

When you have the focus inward on yourself, in order to have a conversation, you have to talk about yourself. Until we learn to live in the life of somebody else, we don't have the ingredients for good interpersonal relationships.

This fellow is putting Jesus to the test. Don't you love Jesus? Look what He does. He is so great.

**v. 26 And He said to him: “What is written in the law?  
How are you reading?”**

“And He said to him: ‘What is written in the law? How are you reading?’”

Talk about Correct Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting. There it is. Here is the One who wrote the Law. Here is the One who knows every jot and every tittle. He has it all together. He is the Son of the living God.

In compassion to this young upstart, He says to him, “What is written in the law? How are you reading?”

Get a load of the answer. This is incredible.

**v. 27 And answering he said: “You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and your neighbor as yourself.”**

“And answering he said: ‘You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and your neighbor as yourself.’”

We are dealing with a pro. “Brother, I know it all. I am so glad you asked me.”

It’s like he has his big time to shine and the teacher falls right into his trap by giving him a chance to tell everybody in the audience, “Here’s somebody that really needs to be doing the teaching instead of doing the listening.”

You can just feel it. Do you think there are any other words down in lower left that characterizes him?

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We have arrogance. We have conceit, bragging, looking down on others and feeling superior to others.

We have him located now. So, here is a man who's right on theology but he is wrong on attitude. He does not have compassion. He is all skill and no score simply because he is depending on himself rather than the Spirit.

He is the kind of guy that's cold, creedal, and concise when it comes to matters of the sacred. There is no compassion in his heart. There is no concern for the people that he is ministering unto. He doesn't hurt with them and feel with them and reach out to them because he is living in Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

If you don't know how to love, you don't know how to live. If you don't know how to love, you don't get to first base in good interpersonal relationships.

One of the first things you have to pray for as a believer is that the Spirit of God would produce that self-sacrificing quality of love in your life as a person. I'm not talking about these warm fuzzies that makes you feel good and causes you to snuggle up to a member of the opposite sex and be all lovey dovey. That stuff blows hot and cold. You know that as well as I do.

I'm talking about the stuff that the Lord produces in a heart that's always there. It never changes. You can always count on it because there is a sense of acceptance and stability. You can see it in the face because there is compassion.

This young man doesn't have that.

Look at verse 28. Here is Jesus' response to the student.

**v. 28 And He said to him: “You answered correctly. Be doing this and you shall live.”**

“And He said to him: ‘You answered correctly. Be doing this and you shall live.’”

He commends him which is a good thing to do for a student who gives you the right answer. He turns right around and commands him. He says, “You answered correctly.” That's the commendation.

Then He commands him, “Be doing this and you shall live.”

In other words, you fulfill all of the things you just got through talking about and you put it into shoe leather, then everything is going to be wonderful.

Does our young upstart stop at that point? Look at the next phrase in verse 29.

**v. 29 But he, desiring to show himself righteous, said to Jesus: “And who is my neighbor?”**

“But he, desiring to show himself righteous, said to Jesus: ‘And who is my neighbor?’”

What two sentences jump out at you to show you that he belongs down in the lower left?

The first one was, he was putting Jesus to the test. The second one was, “he’s desiring to show himself righteous.”

Do you remember that first study when we talked about the ingredient of a relationship with God? The Pharisee said, “I thank God I’m not like this weird tax collector over here next to me. I mean, I fast and I do all of these things and I thank God I’m not like him.”

Here is a man who wants to speak of his righteousness, wants to speak of his character, and so he says, “Who is my neighbor?”

That question leads to another supposition that we cannot escape. He is so arrogant that he believes that he loves the Lord his God with all his whole heart, with his whole soul, and with his whole mind. If you define the neighbor bit, man he has it on a downhill roll.

That is exactly what this tells us. He is living in such an unrealistic world that he actually believes in his heart that he does love the Lord his God with his whole heart, his whole soul and his whole mind. “If you take the horizontal and define the neighbor bit, I have it and I’m going.”

The question he asks here is really going to put the bite on him. We are going to see it later here in the passage.

A tremendous thing is going to happen here as Jesus now shows

him the neighbor.

That causes us to move from the student who has a right relationship with God but a wrong relationship with men. We are now going to look at a Samaritan. This Samaritan is wrong on truth but he is right on relationship. He is one who really is doing it right. There is a key phrase in it.

**v. 30 Jesus replied and said: “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell into the hands of robbers who stripped him and beat him, departed, leaving him half dead.**

“Jesus replied and said: ‘A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell into the hands of robbers who stripped him and beat him, departed, leaving him half dead.’”

What is the story here? What is the beginning story?

We have a guy splattered all over the sidewalk. He has been the victim of a crime. He is on a trip from Jerusalem down to Jericho and these robbers get him and they leave him a bloody mess on the road.

We have a man in desperate need. He has been robbed, beaten and left half dead. That’s the beginning. Now watch what Jesus does.

**v. 31 Now by coincidence, a certain priest was going down the road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.**

“Now by coincidence, a certain priest was going down the road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.”

Where are we going to put the priest on your chart? Here is a religious individual. Where is he going to fit? Don't be afraid to do it just because he's a man of the cloth now.

Why do you think he didn't stop in the first place? What about being over-committed and over-involved? “I'm late and I need to get home to dinner. I can't stop and mess with you, guy.”

We look at this and we think we're over-committed and over-involved and we just can't stand to get involved in the nitty gritty. We don't wash dirty feet and we don't deal with people splattered all over the road because that is not us.

They are missing an ingredient. It wouldn't be quite so bad if we just had one of them.

**v. 32 So, likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.**

“So, likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.”

We have the priest who learned to make a sacrifice of everything but himself. We have a Levite who thinks that passing out hymnals and taking up the offering constitutes service. His services for the sanctuary and his theology is for the temple.

When it comes to being a servant, he is a selective snob. He decides who he is going to spend his compassion on.

Both of them pass by and leave this fellow there. They preferred the comfortable cloister to the cry of the crowd.

Theology is for the sanctuary not for the street. The sacred is for sanctuary, theology is for the temple. What do we have? So far you hear a guy saying, “Help” and there isn’t anybody. They are all making excuses.

You might try to write out as many excuses as you can to try to defend the priest and the Levite. Here are a few to give you an idea.

Here he is coming, bopping along the road, both of them pass by on the opposite side. “Well, you know this could be dangerous. After all maybe the robbers are still lurking around somewhere close and I sure don’t want to become like him.” Or “What if he dies while I am trying to help him. I could get sued.” How about that one? Or “I’m tired. It has been a tough day, Lord. You know I did my deal at the temple today.” “Lord, I really don’t know the first thing about first-aid. What if he has cardiac arrest while I’m working on him? I don’t know mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.” Or “I don’t have time. Supper’s waiting and you know my wife. If I’m five minutes late, I’m really in trouble. I can’t stop.”

Ask yourself the question, what is your excuse? Why is it that we are so busy that we can’t bring help and healing to people around us? Why is it that we assume then that if compassion is

a characteristic of Correct Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting that maybe we are not in the upper left-hand corner?

**v. 33 But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he had compassion.**

“But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him;”—capital letters, key phrase to the whole study—“HE HAD COMPASSION.”

That’s what the Lord is trying to teach in the parable. The difference between intimate, deep interpersonal relationships is our ability to move beyond the shield that we have up and get in behind others and minister to them. Demonstrate that we really care about each other and want to help.

This is really fantastic that Jesus would choose a Samaritan. You talk about people having tough interpersonal relationships.

The Jews hated the Samaritans. Jews hated Samaritans so much that if they left Jerusalem at point A to go north to Galilee, point B, to see their family, do you know what they did? Samaria lays in-between and they would cross over the Jordan River, go up neutral territory, cross back over, see their families cross over, then come down because they weren’t going to be defiled by Samaritans.

Remember in John 4 where it says, “Jesus must needs go through Samaria.” (ref. John 4:4)

That was a need because there was an outcast Samaritan woman there who needed to know the Lord Jesus.

Remember there in John 4 when Jesus confronted her with the fact that she has had five husbands and the guy she was living with now was not her husband? It was very embarrassing for her, and naturally, her answer was fantastic. She said, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain and you say that Jerusalem was the place where we ought to worship.” (ref. John 4:19-20)

Isn't that the way that we do it? When the skeletons start coming out of the closet and the Lord puts His finger on the sin in our lives, we immediately turn religious on Him.

“We worship here on the mountain—up here on Mount Garrison. You'll stay down in Jerusalem so I don't have to listen to what you have to say because you are not my denomination.”

She pulled the curtain on him, right there real quick. Then that glorious, glorious manifestation of the fact that He was the Messiah and how drastically her life changed as a result of the Living Water.

There is another interesting thing. In Luke chapter 9, just before this happens—to show you how God or the Lord Jesus uses characters in stories to really stretch the point on interpersonal relationships—let me tell you a little story.

In chapter 9, the verses just before this in chapter 10, the disciples and Jesus are all up in the north. They are in Galilee

and the Passover is going to be down here in Jerusalem pretty quick and Jesus says, “I need to finish my speaking up here and I want you all to go down to the next town and I want you to make reservations for us to spend the night because we have to go to the Passover.”

So here they come down from the north. James and John, the sons of thunder, are in this group. They go into town and they check in at the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce says the best place to stay in town is the Samaritan Sheraton.

So these fellows go over there and they are filling out a card for the thirteen of them that are going to be spending the night. The guy looks at their names on the card and realizes that they are Jewish and he says, “Are you going to Jerusalem for the Passover?” And they said, “Yeah, how do you know?” He says, “I tell you one thing, you ain’t staying at the Samaritan Sheraton.”

James and John, bless their hearts. If you think that John was always an apostle of love, you need to see him in this picture. He doesn’t even go to the Holiday Inn. He is just so angry that he goes and sits on the curb.

Jesus comes down and He’s got an Old Testament illustration for this. He says, “Where are we staying?” They said, “We aren’t staying here and in fact, I’ve got a suggestion. Like Elijah, in the Old Testament, called fire out of heaven, I want you to call fire out of heaven and wipe out this place.”

Do you know what the Lord Jesus said? “I came not to call the

righteous but sinners to repentance. I came not to destroy men's lives but to save them."

Here's this arrogant student who wants to have definition of a neighbor. Jesus has twelve ears listening. He says, "Oh, by the way, I want to tell you the story about a certain Samaritan."

Talking about interpersonal relationships, You are going to tell us what compassion is all about and You use a Samaritan. I love the Lord. He is so fantastic in the way that He does that. He just handles it beautifully.

The conflict here is that they don't have it. The Jews said that God hates three things. He hates sin, He hates Samaritans and He hates women. Those are the three things that God hates in their theology.

Anybody that is listening to this parable has to recognize that the Lord is crossing over every boundary in telling this particular story.

What is your attitude when you come across somebody who has a real need? Detour. "Bloody man ahead!"

There are a lot of Christians who are taking the tollway. They don't want to stop. They don't want to be involved. They want to get to heaven, but they sure don't want to mess around with anybody else while they are getting there. It's I, me and my. This is poor interpersonal relationships.

The hymn writer had it right:

Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease,  
While others fought to win the prize,  
and sailed through bloody seas.

“he had compassion.”

Because he had compassion, he did something. This is compassion with hands now. Look what he does. His compassion causes him to do five things.

**v. 34 And having come to him, he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then having set him upon his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.**

“And having come to him, he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then having set him upon his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.”

**v. 35 And on the next day, having taken out two denarii (about 35-40 cents) he gave them to the innkeeper and said, “Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition, when I return, I will repay you.”**

“And on the next day, having taken out two denarii”—that’s about two days salary—“(about 35-40 cents)” —that’s before inflation hit—“he gave them to the innkeeper and said: ‘Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition, when I return, I will repay you.’”

If we are trying to get a handle on what real compassion is, then let's watch it in the Samaritan. What did he do? First, he bandaged the fellow's wounds. He took care of the immediate need.

Have you been around people like that? When an emergency takes place, they are the first ones to jump up and do something. If it is going to involve an act of service they don't wait for somebody to tell them to do something, they get up and do it. It is an incredible thing but when you are around people like that, they are such a blessing.

Here's this man. He immediately meets needs. He jumps in and he bandages him and pours on oil and wine. Then, what does he do? He uses his own beast of burden to carry the fellow while he walked. It's like I don't mind walking because I know you can't and I will let you use my beast.

Then, after he got him to the inn, what did he do? He altered his schedule. He stayed there. He really took care of him. He was willing to go to the inconvenience of changing some business deal or something else because this need was more important than what he was going to.

Have you ever noticed that about Jesus? You never see Jesus under stress to get to the next place. That is the most convicting part of His life and relationship.

This fellow alters his schedule and he stays there and takes care of him. Then, that's not enough. The next morning when he gets up (after probably staying up most of the night taking care of

him) he provides the funds for the overnight stay and he gives the innkeeper extra money. He says, “By the way, if he doesn’t make the progress that we think he is going to make, when I stop by here on my next business trip, I’ll pick up the tab for whatever else he spends. I am good for the rest of the expenses for this man to get well.”

Wow, what a fellow! You don’t always have to have right theology to demonstrate real compassion. In fact, the more conservative that we are, the less effective we are in interpersonal relationships.

Somebody said that fundamentalism is an excuse for being uninvolved and sometimes I believe that is the truth. We are so concerned about what a chapter and verse says, we don’t have time to spill ourselves out in the lives of others.

### James 2:17

Even so faith, if it has not works is dead.

Let’s talk about cost. It cost him time, it cost him oil and wine, it cost him the use of his beast, it cost him for lodging, it probably cost him some sleep too while he took care of the individual. It probably cost him some money out of his checkbook.

God help us not to be cold, compassionless cowards when it comes to the matter of being involved in the lives of others.

We need men and women who are motivated by the Master to move into a mess and make a miracle happen.

It was Francis Schaeffer who said:

(The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century by Francis Schaeffer)

All men are our neighbors, and we are to love them as ourselves. We are able to do this on the basis of creation, even if they are not redeemed, for all men have value because they are made in the image of God. Therefore they are to be loved, even at great cost. This is, of course, the whole point of Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan. Because a man is a man, he is to be loved at all costs.

That's easy isn't it to become fighting fundamentalists? Striving for the purity of doctrine of detail.

Orthodoxy without opportunity is obnoxious.

Theology without theater is terrible.

Doctrine without a demonstration is dead.

Instruction must issue in involvement or it will become invalid.

It stops right here.

Now watch what the Lord does. The story is over. Now let's see Him talk back to the student.

**v. 36 Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"**

“Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?”

He is so kind to them. At the beginning of the study He says, “What does the law say?”

“Well, you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and your whole soul and your neighbor as yourself.”

The guy says take your pick. One of the three of these was fulfilling the requirements of a neighbor. Which one of these three was a neighbor? Watch the answer because it is critical.

**v. 37 And he said: “The one who showed mercy upon him.” Then Jesus said to him: “Go and do likewise.”**

“And he said: “The one who showed mercy upon him.” Then Jesus said to him: ‘Go and do likewise.’”

He can't even use the word Samaritan? That's a dirty word and you can sense his flesh creeping inside with hatred and animosity. That he'd be put in this kind of position, if he's going to keep the law and go to glory, he's got to love a Samaritan!

Samaritans were Jews that married foreigners and they're a mixed breed. The Jews were repulsed by them. They hated them.

“And he said: “The one who showed mercy on him.””

That's all he could say.

Look at Jesus' command. "Go and do likewise."

He doesn't have any more questions to show himself righteous. He's going away under deep conviction because of the absence of compassion in his life.

Do you think he went and did likewise?

Any more than the Pharisee went down from the temple like the tax collector who was justified, or like the oldest son in Luke 15 in our last study. It's a miracle when a self-righteous, arrogant individual discovers that he doesn't have compassion and he does something to change all that. It's a miracle when we see that happen.

Philippians chapter 2 is wonderful passage of scripture. Pick out the four illustrations of compassion. There are four people in Philippians 2 who show compassion.

The first one is Jesus Christ:

### Philippians 2:7

He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, He was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

That's the first manifestation of compassion.

The second one is the apostle Paul:

### Philippians 2:17

If I be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

What's he saying? He says, "If my life is spent physically for yours, it's no big deal. I delight to be spent for you." Compassion.

Thirdly, Timothy.

### Philippians 2:20, 21

I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state, for all seek their own, not the things which are of Jesus Christ. But you know the proof of him, like a son with a father, he served with me in the gospel.

The fourth one is Epaphroditus.

### Philippians 2:30

Because of the work of Christ, he was near unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

Because of the work of Christ, Epaphroditus shows to take the offering and go 600 miles over to the city of Rome and deliver that offering to Paul. He stays there and gets involved in the ministry in Rome to the point that he risked his physical life and he had to be sent back to Philippi because he was about to die.

That's the kind of man that you've got here in the final part of the study.

What's that tell us? Instruction must issue in involvement. Study and service go hand in hand. We reveal the fact that we love, the fact that we're constructively involved in doing something about it.

### 1 John 4:7-13

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we love God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

That Spirit produces love and compassion.

Remember what the Lord Jesus said in His letter to the church at Ephesus back in Revelation 2? He said:

“I have one thing against you. You have left your first love.” (ref. Revelation 2:4)

If you've become cold, critical and concise and you've lost your

compassion, could you come back and take a fresh look at the Cross?

Bow your knee and tell the Lord He is worthy. He is worthy of your love and of your praise. Ask Him again to produce in you that love.

### John 13:34, 35

A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another. By this shall all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.

Maybe you feel like Peter. Peter really blew it when he denied the Lord three times. Again when he sees the resurrected Christ in John 21, there on the shore after they had fished all night and they hadn't caught anything,

Jesus is standing on the shore early in the morning and He says, "Have you caught anything?" They say, "No." "Throw the net on the other side, boys." They caught a hundred and fifty-three fish.

John says, "Hey, it's the Lord." Peter's so excited he jumps in the water and swims to shore.

We already know that his interpersonal relationships were right with the Lord because he and the Lord had a private meeting after the resurrection that we don't know anything about other than what scripture says. "He appeared unto Cephas."

There on the shore they ate breakfast together. There were eight

of them—seven ex-fishermen and Jesus. They were reminiscing and talking about everything and they can't believe that the Lord is still alive.

In your wildest imagination could you believe if someone called your name out and said, "Do you love me?" That's the way He did with Peter. He said, "Peter, do you *agape* me, love me?"

Do you have the fruit of God's Spirit in your life for Me that you'd sacrifice anything for Me?

Peter's arrogance and self-sufficiency changed immediately. This is the first time in his life he admitted he wasn't adequate. Do you know what he said? "Lord, you know all things. I *phileo* You." What? "I'm your friend. I don't have it. I really don't have what you're talking about."

Why? Because he had the chance just a few days ago to do it and a little maid scared him off. He couldn't even sacrifice his life and his interests at a time when Jesus really needed him. He blew it. He realized it.

The Lord says a second time, "Peter, I'm asking you. Do you *agape* me?" Peter says, "Lord, I *phileo* you. Is that enough?"

I think there was some hesitancy. Then the Lord said, "Peter, do you even *phileo* me?" Then Peter said, "You know all things. I do *phileo* you. You are my friend."

The Lord is reaching out to you and he is saying, "I love you and I long for a personal relationship with you. I've provided

everything necessary for that in the gift of My Son, the Lord Jesus.”

If you don't know Him our hope is you'll reach out and take Him by inviting Christ into your life.

The first thing that will begin to manifest itself is you'll begin to love everybody. You'll have a deep compassion and concern.

Father, we thank You for Your word. Thank you for the pleasure that is ours to share it and the privilege of studying it. Thank You for making it so special to sit at the feet of Jesus as He tells this very powerful parable to demonstrate to us what the critical ingredient of good interpersonal relationships is, and that's compassion. We must be constructively involved in the lives of the people with whom we're trying to relate. Teach us how to do that. Teach us how to be the good, self-sacrificial servants. Teach us how to be more and more those who are living with Correct Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting, knowing that right there at the top of the page, we see compassion. We pray that would be a part of our lives and that we'd rejoice in the privilege of being spent in the interest of others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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# SOLVING STRUGGLES

## In Interpersonal Relationships

### “Learning to Live, Love and Listen to Each Other”

#### **Ingredient #3: COMPASSION - Luke 10:25-37**

#### NOTES

##### **I. The Student: Right on truth and wrong on relationship – Luke 10:25-29**

v. 25 And behold, a certain legal expert stood up, putting Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit eternal life?”

v. 26 And He said to him: “What is written in the Law? How are you reading?”

v. 27 And answering he said: “You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

v. 28 And He said to him: “You answered correctly. Be doing this and you shall live.”

v. 29 But he, desiring to show himself righteous, said to Jesus: “And who is my neighbor?”

##### **II. The Samaritan: Wrong on truth and right on relationship – Luke 10:30-35**

v. 30 Jesus replied and said: “A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell into the hands of robbers who stripped him and beat him, departed, leaving him half dead.

v. 31 Now, by coincidence, a certain priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

v. 32 So, likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.

v. 33 But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he had compassion.

v. 34 And having come to him, he bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then having set him upon his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.

v. 35 And on the next day, having taken out two denarii (about 35-40 cents) he gave them to the innkeeper and said: 'Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition, when I return, I will repay you.'

### **III. The Savior: Asks the right question and issues the right command – Luke 10:36-37**

v. 36 Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"

v. 37 And he said: "The one who showed mercy upon him." Then Jesus said to him: "Go and do likewise."

## LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: Instruction must issue in involvement.

Lesson #2: Study and service go hand in hand.

Lesson #3: A normal outgrowth of Healthy Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting is going to be: "He had compassion."

Lesson #4: Perhaps the words of the Lord to the church at Ephesus are words spoken clearly today: "I have this against you, in that you have left your first love."

Lesson #5: In the face of betrayal and denial, Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34, 35)

Lesson #6: It is compassion that communicates. It is compassion that gets involved in the lives of others and brings them to Jesus Christ.

Lesson #7: Do you hear the risen Lord speaking to your conscience, even as He spoke to Peter in John 21: “...‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.’”