

Compassion for People

- **Lesson set up:** Share an illustration that highlights personal encounters you have had with people who were not very compassionate towards you or your situation, and then share the inverse of that, where encountering a compassionate person highly impacted you personally.

Use your own encounter story/illustration; below is an example:

Trip to ER at midnight!

- *Check in guy: Zero compassion*
- *IV guy: Clearly, it was just his job*
- *CAT Scan guy: Impersonal*
- *Doc Martin: Hallelujah! Such a passion to help people*
 - *His compassion was moving*
 - *Nearly upset that I hadn't called him at 4:00am!*

- **Compassion requires leaders to get involved in messy situations.**

Most meaningful ministry isn't:

- Convenient
- Sterile
- Problem free

Not only can it mess with our schedules but sometimes our attitudes.

I'm grateful that you all care about people.

My passionate prayer is that we remain that way.

The pressures of large and "getting larger" churches often turn caring and compassionate staff members into professionals who craft:

- Manicured programs
- Meticulous performances
- Machine like processes

It's good that our:

- Programs are fluid *Students / Camp*
- Performances are fresh *Night of Worship*
- Processes are friendly to the people. *Membership, Small Groups*

Compassion for people keeps things fluid, fresh and friendly

We (staff) own the principle that says ***if*** we must choose, we make it easy for the people and more difficult for the staff, never the reverse.

It's easy to test your compassion, your passion to help people.

Insert sample compassion tests from your church. Mine are below:

- *Pastor-on-call (POC) days*
How do you respond to those in crisis or those with benevolence needs who walk in the church? Or to those who have emergencies 'after hours'?
- *Phone calls/voice mails in the office*
How quickly do you respond?
- *Sunday morning situations:*
The 'Difficult person' (Do you ask Who's on call? or How can I help?)

Give an example of staff, board member or key leader who you have seen serve in this arena well. Mine is below:

ND . . .

- *Young woman having a very difficult morning . . .*
- *Saturday night – guy just released from prison . . .*

• **Investing yourself in messy situations requires margin to stay in the game.**

Ministry *from* the soul *to* a soul is draining.

Insert your own illustration. Mine is below:

Recently:

- *Sat for hours with a frustrated leader*
- *Saturday morning w/ guy captured by pornography*
- *A couple who lost their son to drugs*
- *A pastor who has been beat up by his congregation*

When you are really in the game, your heart, mind and soul it takes a toll.
When you genuinely care about people, your tank WILL run dry. That's normal.

Jesus is the best leader to learn from.

- He was constantly pouring himself into messy situations, and yet he consistently withdrew for time alone with the Father.
- He knew the need to create margin in order for His Spirit and flesh to be renewed.

- Following his friend John the Baptist's beheading (Matt 14:1-12), and the miracle of feeding 5,000 (Matt 14:13-21). . . Jesus was exhausted as he began this ministry. **Let's look at his response.**

Matt 14: 22-23

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside **by himself** to pray. When evening came, he was there **alone**,

Mark 3: 7-12

⁷ Jesus **withdrew** with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. ⁸ When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. ⁹ Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. ¹⁰ For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. ¹¹ Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." ¹² But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

How do you pull this together?

How do you keep from being sucked into messes all day every day?

Knowing you can never create enough margin . . .

When you are off mission, you never have enough time.

- **Weaving margin into the messes allowed Jesus to stay on mission.**

Some of you would have called Jesus a workaholic.

He was on mission all the time.

When He wasn't, He was with the Father.

- He was never in a frenzy.
- He never had too much to do.
- He never let His in-box freak Him out.
- If my laptop goes down for a day, I'm inches from an aneurism.

Jesus knew what He was doing.

Not because He was in charge – opposite, the Father directed his ministry.

Matthew Chapter 9 is one of many amazing examples of how Jesus ministered to messy interruptions but stayed on mission.

(Read Matthew- Chapter 9)

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

⁹ Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. ² Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

³ At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

⁴ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ⁶ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home." ⁷ Then the man got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

The Calling of Matthew

⁹ As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

¹⁰ While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

¹² On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ¹³ But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'^[a] For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus Questioned About Fasting

¹⁴ Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?"

¹⁵ Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

¹⁶ "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. ¹⁷ Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman

¹⁸ While he was saying this, a synagogue leader came and knelt before him and said, “My daughter has just died. But come and put your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹ Jesus got up and went with him, and so did his disciples.

²⁰ Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. ²¹ She said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed.”

²² Jesus turned and saw her. “Take heart, daughter,” he said, “your faith has healed you.” And the woman was healed at that moment.

²³ When Jesus entered the synagogue leader’s house and saw the noisy crowd and people playing pipes, ²⁴ he said, “Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.” But they laughed at him. ²⁵ After the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. ²⁶ News of this spread through all that region.

Jesus Heals the Blind and the Mute

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

²⁸ When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?”

“Yes, Lord,” they replied.

²⁹ Then he touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith let it be done to you”; ³⁰ and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, “See that no one knows about this.” ³¹ But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.

³² While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. ³³ And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, “Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel.”

³⁴ But the Pharisees said, “It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons.”

The Workers Are Few

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said

to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Wow, check it out. Jesus:

- Healed a paralytic
- Recruited a leader
- Was questioned
- Taught two lessons
- Raised what people thought was a dead girl
- Healed a woman's 12 year problem w/ bleeding
- Was laughed at
- Healed two blind guys
- Cast out a demon from a mute, and gave him the ability to speak
- Cast vision for the mission, recruiting more workers for the harvest.

Think about all that from the reality of your world.

How can you do all the stuff that is clamoring for your time, and do all that you believe you are called and required to do, and not go postal?

**Go back and look at Jesus' life.
(Read Mark 1:35-39)**

Mark 1: 35-39

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

³⁸ Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else--to the nearby villages--so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." ³⁹ So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

1. Jesus created margin to be with the Father.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

2. Jesus kept His head and heart focused on the mission.

(What he was supposed to do)

“That is why I have come”.

3. Jesus allows the father to determine the next move.

“Let us go somewhere else.”

The Father told Him that while He was alone in prayer!!

Time with the Father will help you determine what you are to do and what you must leave undone.

Remember, Jesus was:

- Laughed at
- Misunderstood
- Ridiculed
- Criticized
- Questioned
- But his compassion and mission focus spoke all that needed to be spoken.

All He did was at the direction of the Father.