

101. The Compassion of God

By Arland Steen

Insight Into The Compassion Of God

Psalm 145:8-9 reads, *"8The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy. 9The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."*

Insight into God's compassion gives us clear insight into God's willingness to heal human beings of every sickness.

Compassion and *mercy* have the same meaning in scripture but *compassion* is the inward feeling while *mercy* is the visible manifestation of that feeling. *Compassion* is a sympathetic consciousness of another's distress together with a desire to alleviate it; *mercy* is love that shows itself in tender actions to alleviate suffering.

Yearning is another word used to describe compassion. *Yearning* is a tender, urgent longing. Faith will be inspired as we realize that he yearns to do for us.

The Lord is FULL of compassion.

Sentiments about God's graciousness and compassion are expressed over and over again throughout scripture. These are the most conspicuous statements about our Father.

The first statement -- *the Lord is gracious* -- means that 'He is disposed to show favors.'

Jesus unveiled the compassionate heart of God to people by everywhere healing the sick and it is this one glorious fact that Satan has worked overtime to hide. By broadcasting the two unscriptural and illogical traditions that:

- a) the age of healing has past and
- b) God uses sickness and trials to teach us,

he almost succeeded in eclipsing the compassion of God from the eyes of people.

Psalm 5:12 reads, *"For You, O Lord will bless the righteous; with favor You will surround him as with a shield."* Even the devil knows God is able and willing but has kept people from knowing that they have His favor. He does not so much mind us talking about God's ability as long as we do not talk about His willingness. Even talking about His willingness doesn't go far enough, for God DELIGHTS IN MERCY!

Micah 7:18 reads, *"Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity, and passing over the transgressions of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy [lovingkindness]."* It seems God would rather have us doubt His ability than His willingness.

Some magnify God's power more than His love. But the Word says, "God IS love."
It is not faith in God's power only that secures His blessings, but faith in His love.

Verse 9 shows that He is so full of compassion that He cannot be a respecter of persons. He is unable to fully gratify His benevolent heart by blessing holy beings, so He extends His mercies to the wicked of the earth. How much more does He love His own!

Psalm 103:11 reads, *"For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him."*

Most people associate God's mercy with forgiveness of sin but we must develop an awareness of His mercy toward the sick. This is the main focus of God's mercy in the NT.

A Bible Example of God's Compassion

Two Blind Men

Matthew 20:29-34 (NKJ): *"29Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. 30And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O*

Lord, Son of David!" ³¹*Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"* ³²*So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"* ³³*They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."* ³⁴*So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.*

A Personal Example of God's Compassion

A Week in April

I was in my church office on Tuesday afternoon, April 3, 2001 about 80% finished eating take-out from Baja Fresh. The telephone rang and it was a lady from Orange County. She said in a voice that got my attention, "I need to talk to you." She related that a 13-year old girl who I knew living near Tulsa, Oklahoma had spent the previous Friday night at a friend's house and wasn't feeling well and took some over-the-counter medicine. All she told me was, "Her kidneys are shot (a muddy substance was coming out of them) and they are going to do a liver transplant if they can find a donor." That is all I knew.

When I heard those words it was as if I could see a large sign that said, 'LIES! LIES! LIES!'

The girl had trouble sleeping and took too many tablets of an over-the-counter medicine that contained two ingredients - acetaminophen and an antihistamine - to help with the insomnia. Acetaminophen is toxic to the liver if too much is ingested and is the #1 cause of liver failure in the U.S. It's very easy to take too much because it's found in many popular cold and flu over-the-counter drugs.

We had many close friends in those days that were seasoned in prayer and contacted them to join us in interceding on this girl's behalf. The doctors were saying she might not make it through the night, so we bound the spirit of death. Did we have negative thoughts? Yes. Some involved in this saw her dying and her family at the funeral. But every thought that rose up against the knowledge of God was cast down!

The doctors began tests and said if liver failure had not already taken place, it was coming. Within thirty minutes they airlifted the patient by helicopter to Baptist Hospital in Oklahoma City.

When she arrived at the hospital, they took the mother into a conference room and told her that her daughter had been given priority one for a liver transplant. She was on the donor list. It was highly likely this would be necessary. But before they would even know if this would be a possibility there was a great chance that she would suffer brain death, a 70% chance and 7 out of 10. This is what a case like hers faced. The doctors talked about brain swelling and damage and brain bleeding and internal bleeding, kidney failure and terribly high risks of infection, that because the liver has so many functions all vital organs can be adversely affected.

Wednesday morning the initial reports came. There was no swelling of her brain and no bleeding and her liver numbers were down. We were far from where we needed to be, medically speaking, but this was the beginning of a positive trend and a series of reports that got in line with God's. The doctor said it was good news and although we were probably only seeing artificial recovery, his gut feeling was that Elizabeth would not need a transplant. We would know more as the day went on. She did well through Wednesday night.

Thursday morning started with the report that there was nothing negative to report. The doctor said she was doing as good if not better than expected. Her liver was regenerating. They would start to feed her intravenously. Platelet numbers were still quite low, the chance of bleeding and infection was still very high, so we began to confess Ezekiel 16:6 over her. The numbers began to change.

Friday they took her off the liver donor list. She would not need a transplant! And they took her off all sedatives and life support. The transplant doctor came in and said, "Congratulations, you got your miracle from Heaven." He even said it was as if she had a brand new liver.

Saturday they removed her oxygen and all tubes. She sat in a chair, brushed her own teeth, did some physical therapy and ate. When she was finished she said, "Do you know what I was just thinking of? I was thinking of that song 'Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory.' On Sunday she was moved out of ICU into a regular room. The doctors were elated and told the mother that there were so many things that were averted that could have happened. She was discharged from the hospital on Tuesday and went to school on Wednesday!

Every healing is a touch of the resurrection of Jesus and His compassion for people!

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