

# — Love Declared • Love Demonstrated —

## Part 3 - Compassion

As God calls us to declare and demonstrate His love to the world around us we believe that will result in unprecedented levels of compassion being released into the city of Brisbane.

### **The Significance of Compassion**

Compassion is not a superficial emotion or sentimental attachment. It is love at the gut level. It means to have sympathy or pity in action to anyone in need – grace and mercy flow from compassion.

Compassion is always accompanied by action.

As a people who have received mercy and have been shown compassion by God, we then are compelled to have compassion on others (1 John 4:7-11).

Compassion is not just a nice concept in the mind of Jesus. He approached the unapproachable. He touched the untouchable.

### **In Need of Compassion**

When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before Him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Matthew 8:1-2 (NIV)

Anyone who came in contact with a leper was also considered unclean. Lepers were therefore isolated from the rest of the community.

When the man knelt before Jesus this was an act of worship. This man, who was not allowed to go to the temple or synagogue like everyone else to worship, he recognises something in Jesus and rightly calls Him Lord.

### **An Act of Compassion**

*Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.*

Matthew 8:3 (NIV)

The touch didn't heal him – it was the act of touching that displayed compassion. This man received more than a physical healing.

Jesus gave compassion, He risked and He reached out – love was demonstrated, love was experienced.

No one is outside the compassion of God.

Compassion always means you are going to take a risk – love can be rejected. Compassion also will always require you to reach out. Reach out beyond where you are comfortable but it's in this moment that the healing takes place, that love is demonstrated.

## **Sent to Heal**

We need to view this world through grace filled eyes just as Jesus did.

- + When we come to faith, Holy Spirit enters our spirit permanently as the seal or guarantee of both our position in Christ, and the certainty of the ongoing work of God in our lives (Philippians 1:6).
- + The love of God begins to be spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5).
- + To be a child of the king, a subject of the kingdom, is first to possess a certain kind of character, a character of brokenness, mourning over sin, meekness, a hunger and thirst for righteousness, mercifulness, compassion, purity of heart, a peacemaking quality (Matthew 5:3-12).

We are not meant to control our Christianity. Our Christianity is meant to control us!

## **Love Demonstrated - Compassion**

The only hope for reconciliation and justice in this hate filled world is when each one of us enters into a vibrant daily love relationship with Jesus. We can only change when God changes us on the inside. It's the living and active word of God that transforms us from the inside out (Romans 12:1-2).

Here are three simple things you can do in any situation where a compassionate heart manifests itself in loving action.

- + *Don't just pray, act!* (Micah 6:8; Galatians 5:6)
- + *Don't just talk about how bad off a person is, help them.*
- + *Accept people as they are and show them Jesus, the One who can change them.*

Just imagine thousands of us going out into the communities we are a part of clothed in the compassion of Jesus. Imagine when that compassion finds action that actually allows people to experience God at work in their life through your love demonstrated!

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Read Matthew 8:1-3. What stands out to you about the man coming to Jesus? How do the actions of Jesus display more than a physical healing?
2. If the meaning of compassion gives reference to a gut felt reaction that we get when we see something and think, "This isn't right I have got to do something about this situation", what stops us from doing something about the need we see? How could you overcome this barrier?
3. Read 1 John 4:7-11. Discuss how this relates to compassion – love demonstrated.
4. Ask Holy Spirit who it is in your sphere of influence that needs to experience His grace and mercy through your acts of compassion. What will you do?
5. Pray that you would be sent this week into the world demonstrating the love of God through acts of compassion.