

TITLE: A COVENANT OF COMPASSION

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:8, 9

TEXT: 2 SAM. 8-10 [2SAM.9:1; 10:9-12]

CATEGORY: SUFFERING, SUPPORT, SOLIDARITY, HEALING,

SOLIDARITY: MEANS, UNION OR FELLOWSHIP ARISING FROM COMMON RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTERESTS.

COMPASSION: MEANS, SHARING IN GOD'S HEART FOR AN ACHING AND WOUNDED WORLD.

DESIRE: TO BECOME THE HEALING PRESENCE OF CHRIST TO OTHERS

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO PRACTICE COMPASSION?

- FIND THE OPPORTUNITY AND MEANS TO COMFORT, ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THOSE WHO STRUGGLE, SUFFER AND ARE OPPRESSED.
- SEEK TO HEAL WOUNDS - RATHER THAN REACT TO THE WOUNDED.
- SHOW MERCY RATHER THAN PASS JUDGMENT.
- SHARE YOUR RESOURCES AND TIME WITH OTHERS WHO ARE IN NEED.
- VOLUNTEER FOR SOME FORM OF COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE OF COMPASSION.
- VISIT THOSE WHO ARE SICK, HOSPITALIZED, UNABLE TO DRIVE AND ATTEND TO THEIR NEEDS AND DESIRES WITH PATIENT LOVE.

JESUS SHOWED COMPASSION TO OUTCASTS, PROSTITUTES, BEGGARS, WOMEN, FOREIGNERS, AS WELL AS TO THOSE WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASES. HE SAW THE PEOPLE THAT OTHERS OVERLOOKED. AND HE WAS QUICK TO FEEL FOR THEM RATHER THAN LABEL THEM AS LAZY OR PROMISCUOUS FOR EXAMPLE.

READ LUKE 7: 36-50

VS. 44, 'SIMON, DO YOU SEE THIS WOMAN?'

SIMON SAW ONLY APPEARANCES. HE DIDN'T FEEL FOR THE WOMAN BECAUSE HE DID NOT SEE HER.

JESUS REALLY SEES THE HUNGRY, THE POOR, THE GRIEVING, THE PHYSICALLY IMPAIRED, THE MENTALLY DERANGED, THE DEMONICALLY OPPRESSED AND THE CULTURALLY MARGINALIZED. AND WHAT HE SEES MOVES HIM TO COMPASSION.

FOR JESUS,

COMPASSION WAS A CALL TO ACTION, TO HEALING & TO RESTORATION.

CHRIST IS STILL LONGING TO TOUCH THIS SUFFERING WORLD THROUGH THE COMPASSION OF HIS CHURCH, AND HIS APPRENTICES ARE PEOPLE OF COMPASSION. THEY KNOW HOW TO LOOK FOR PAIN IN THE EYES OF OTHERS. THEY KNOW THAT LABELS DON'T HELP PEOPLE CHANGE. THEY BELIEVE THAT LOVE ALWAYS HAS HANDS AND FEET.

- IT IS OUR CHOICES THAT WILL REVEAL WHETHER THE CHURCH TODAY BECOMES KNOWN AS A WELLSPRING OF COMPASSION OR A PLACE WHERE NO ONE PARTICULARLY CARES.

EXERCISE:

- CHOOSE ONE WAY YOU CAN SHOW COMPASSION TO SOMEONE THIS WEEK.
- CONSIDER WHO THE OUTSIDERS AND DISENFRANCHISED ARE IN YOUR COMMUNITY. CHOOSE ONE OF THESE GROUPS AND FIND OUT SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. WHAT DO THEY NEED? WHAT DO THEY HAVE TO GIVE?

Q: WHERE IS GOD CALLING YOU TO WALK IN HIS COMPASSION?

PROV.18:1, UNFRIENDLY PEOPLE CARE ONLY ABOUT THEMSELVES;

PROV.18:10, THE NAME OF THE LORD IS A STRONG TOWER, THE GODLY RUN TO HIM AND ARE SAFE.

PROV.18:22, THE MAN WHO FINDS A WIFE FINDS A TREASURE, AND HE RECEIVES FAVOR FROM THE LORD.

PROV.18:24, THERE ARE 'FRIENDS' WHO DESTROY EACH OTHER, BUT A REAL FRIEND STICKS CLOSER THAN A BROTHER.

REFLECTION & PRAYER