

WORD

"35 And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 9:35,36

Jesus' response to seeing the crowds was compassion. He saw them differently from the way we might see crowds—as an irritation or inconvenience. Jesus urges us to fish for folks like He did when we follow Him (Matthew 4:19). We are to approach the lost in the same way He does, to have the same perspective as He does, and to act in the same manner as He does. We will examine three approaches to helping the lost in this lesson.

1. BE COMPASSIONATE

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 9:36

Jesus saw that the crowds were harassed and helpless. He recognized them for what they truly were: lost sheep in need of a shepherd. He therefore purposefully went out to them out of sympathy for them. When you notice a crowd, what do you do? How have you grown in your ability to actively encourage others to follow Jesus?

2. BE CONNECTED

"The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'"

Luke 7:34

Because He enjoyed spending time with the lost, many religious people were upset with Jesus. But, Jesus did this on purpose so that they could know Him and repent of their sinful lifestyle. Similarly, if we solely associate with Christians, we cannot reach out to the lost. Jesus set the example for us, and we are to reach out to the lost in order to bring them back to God. How can you keep fostering bonds with folks who have wandered off? Why are they being engaged, exactly?

3. BE COURAGEOUS

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Romans 1:16

As we help others follow Jesus, we will need more than compassion and connection. The courage we shall need comes from God. Paul urged the Roman church to openly share the good news with everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike. We are able to communicate what God has accomplished for us. Why shouldn't we feel embarrassed about the gospel?

APPLICATION

- Do you recognize Jesus as your Savior and Lord? If not, would you like to give your life up to God right now?
- This week, how can you show compassion to the lost?
- This week, who can you connect with? What might be preventing you from telling your relatives and friends about the gospel? How can you be braver and speak about who God is in your life with more confidence?

PRAYER

- Give God praise for saving you and showing Himself to you. Ask God to help you inspire others to follow Him.
- Pray to God to enable you to view lost people as He does. Pray to Him for kindness and bravery.
- Ask God to help you to do everything it takes so that your loved ones will come to know Him. Trust in God to save them.



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