

## Series: Called to Follow

### “The Compassion of a Disciple”

#### Matthew 9:9-13

Today we continue in our series “Called to Follow” where we are learning what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Many in our culture identify themselves as “Christians” because they are familiar with Christian values and morals. Perhaps they grew up in a Christian family and remember their grandparents being strong people of faith, memorized a few verses as a child, and still hold to many of the values that were instilled in them. Some refer to themselves as Christians because we live in a nation founded upon Christian values and principles. Perhaps their political views are very close to Christian values so they assume that this means that they are Christian. Others refer to themselves as Christians because they do “Christiany” things like go to church on Christmas and Easter, say their prayers when someone’s in need, and genuinely try to be good people. We discover through the gospels that none of these things actually make someone a Christian. To be a Christian one must repent of their sin and trust in Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior. The Bible says plainly, “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved,” **Romans 10:9**. Once we have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, He begins to work in us and through us to transform us into the likeness of Jesus. If someone is truly a Christian there will be evidence in our lives because we will be following Jesus and not the world around us. Throughout this series, we are discovering the marks of a follower of Jesus, and with each one we are pausing to examine, “Is this true of me? Am I a follower of Jesus? Is this an area I need to grow in?”

Last week we looked at how the world will know that we are disciples of Jesus – by our love for one another. Scripture is very clear that in the Church, we must love each other as the Lord Jesus Christ has loved us, but today I want us to think beyond our attitude and actions towards one another in the Church. It is equally important that we examine our actions and attitudes towards those outside the Church. In this text, we see a clear picture of Jesus’ close relationship with His disciples, and we also see a powerful picture of His desire to have a relationship with those who are sinners. How we treat others and care for them matters greatly, and once again Jesus models for us what this should look like. As we read God’s Word I pray that He will capture, convict, and change our hearts as we study “The Compassion of a Disciple.”

Show Text

Have you ever wrestled with a situation that constantly captured your attention and grabbed hold of your mind? Have you ever heard a statement that you couldn’t let go of? You continually wondered, “What did this mean? Why did they say that? Where did this come from? Is there something more there?” Have you ever gone back and forth with something in your heart that you just couldn’t let go of? If so, then I believe you can relate to the Scripture that we are studying today. Almost three months ago I preached about the event that we read of in this text, but there is something specific here that I have been wrestling with ever since that sermon. I believe that God wants us all to listen closely to His statement about compassion and wrestle with what it means and how it should be applied in each of our lives today. As we study the text, I want us to see three truths about Jesus and I pray that we will consider how He wants to apply them to our lives today:

## I. Jesus Exemplified Compassion for Sinners (vs. 10-11)

We see repeatedly that Jesus is the perfect example of how we are to live our lives. He was 100% man just like you and I with the only exception that He never sinned. At the same time, He was 100% God, fully deity with all authority and power. If we want to know what is important to God, if we want to know what He is like and how He would have us to live, we simply need to study His Word and His life. **Colossians 2:9-10** says, “For in Him (Jesus) all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.” As followers of Christ we are not adhering to some outward form of religion, but we are submitted to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and living our life to please Him, not man. So, when it comes to living in a sinful world filled with sinful people, how are we to relate to others? What are we to do? How are we to act? What should our treatment look like? All of these questions are answered through the example of Jesus. As we study this Scripture, and many others in the New Testament, it is very clear that Jesus exemplified compassion in three primary ways:

### A. He Came for Sinners

As simple as this point may be, it is the foundational point of everything that follows. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus, the Son of God, was with the Father in heaven. He did not have to come to this fallen sinful world, but He willingly came to bring glory to the Father and salvation to sinners. When Jesus began His earthly ministry in **Luke 4**, He came to Nazareth and entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day. He was handed the scroll of the book of Isaiah and Jesus read aloud, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the **poor**. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the **captives**, and recovery of sight to the **blind**, to set free those who are **oppressed**, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord,” **verses 18-19**. As everyone was looking at Him, “He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,’ ” **verse 21**. From the very start of His ministry Jesus made it clear that He had come to preach the Gospel to those in need and to set people free. Later in Jesus’ ministry He would say it this way in **Luke 19:10**, “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Everywhere that Jesus went and everything He did had this purpose in mind. This was so clear that the apostle Paul would later write in **1 Timothy 1:15**, “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.”

Jesus came for sinners, but we must not see this only in a general way. This has a personal implication for all of us. Just as Jesus came *for* us, He also came *to* us. We see that plainly in our text today. We are immediately introduced to Matthew who was a tax collector working for the Roman government. If you’d like to learn more about his background, please go back and listen to the sermon from Luke 5 earlier this year. In short summary, Matthew was a man who would have been greatly despised by his people. He had grown up in the home of a Levite, which means he was a Jew raised to support the work in the temple. He would have been greatly despised by the Jewish people because he was a traitor to his people, a sellout who left his family heritage to work for the Roman government. He would have also been greatly despised by the culture. As a tax collector, he had the right and the power to demand whatever taxes and wages he desired. Because of this, tax collectors were often viewed as thieves. They made a lot of money in unprincipled ways. This also impacted the people that they hung out

with. Religious people like the Pharisees and even decently moral people would want nothing to do with this group, so the tax collectors were left to hang out with all the other unprincipled people in society. For this reason, when we find tax collectors mentioned in Scripture it is commonly combined with the word “sinners.” It’s like saying these were the “scoundrels” of the day. But, who did Jesus come for? Jesus came for the sinners and the scoundrels. It was no accident that day as Jesus made His way around the Sea of Galilee and saw Matthew in the tax collector’s booth. Jesus knew the plans and purposes that the Father had for him. He knew what would unfold in the days ahead. He did not distance Himself from Matthew, run in disgust or disdain, or shake His head in shame and regret for who and what Matthew had become. Instead, with great compassion Jesus looked at Matthew and said, “Follow Me.” The same Jesus who came for sinners came personally to Matthew to call him to follow, and He still does the same in our lives when He calls our name and invites us to follow Him.

## **B. He Cared for Sinners**

Matthew knew the lostness and longing of his soul. He had tried everything the world had to offer, but it had never brought true fulfillment and peace to his heart and life. He had power, possessions, profit, pleasures, plenty of sinful friends, and a plethora of experiences, but he was still empty. He had been hearing of the miracles of Jesus and had heard some aspects of His teaching, but in this miraculous moment, as soon as Jesus called, Matthew turned from his sinful ways and trusted in Jesus. He left everything behind to follow the Lord. Having accepted Jesus, he also accepted His disciples and invited them all to his house for a meal. It is interesting that in Matthew’s account, he never tells us that the house even belonged to him, nor does he tell us how large of a meal it was. One of the other disciples, Luke, explains, “And he gave a big reception for Him in his house.” Matthew was so filled with humility and gratitude to Jesus that he simply states, “Jesus was reclining at the table.” I prefer the King James translation that says, “Jesus sat at meat.” ☺ The entire banquet was put on for Jesus. He was the guest of honor in Matthew’s house, and now as a follower of Jesus, Matthew was doing everything that he could to bring his friends to meet Jesus. So as Jesus and the disciples are now enjoying a meal, there were many tax collectors and sinners who came to dine with them. There were so many that came that Luke says, “And Levi gave a big reception for Him (Jesus) in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them,” **Luke 5:29**. The word “sinners” suggests that these are individuals who were publicly considered morally unclean. It appears that they did not argue with their condition. The culture called them sinners, they knew they were sinners, and Jesus called them the same.

Some might hear this and think, “I wonder if this was an accident. Did Jesus mean to be there?” What was He doing hanging out with all these sinners? Please understand that Jesus knew the type of man that Matthew had been, and He knew the type of crowd that Matthew ran with. He hung out with all the scoundrels and sinners in town. Jesus knew that these were the people invited to come, but He didn’t run for the door, seek an escape, or make up an excuse. He intentionally stayed and ate with them. It would have been very easy for Jesus to dismiss Himself from the dinner. He could’ve concluded, “I don’t have anything in common with these people. They don’t look like Me, and they don’t act like Me.” As God-in-the-flesh He could have easily said, “I know all the wicked things y’all have been doing, and I’ve got to get out of here,” but He continued to eat the meal, to fellowship with Matthew, and to talk with the guests, showing kindness and compassion. Simply put, He cared for them.

### C. He Called Sinners to Repent

It is important to note that Jesus cared for these sinners, but it is also very important that we do not confuse what this caring for them looked like. Caring for sinners did not mean that Jesus **condoned** their sin. Jesus was not saying to them, “It’s okay. It’s no big deal. We all make mistakes. Just try your best next time.” That is not caring for sinners because that is not true. Jesus also did not **contribute** to their sin. He did not say, “Well, technically other people see you as sinners, but I know you tax collectors are just doing a good, honest job and doing what your superiors are telling you to do. After all, if you didn’t make the money you’ve made, you couldn’t host these big dinners like you’re doing right now. You’ve gotta do what you’ve gotta do. So just keep on living how you’re living and try to do some good along the way, too.” Again, that would not be caring because that is not true. It is also important to note that Jesus did not **compromise** His convictions by sinning with them. This is simply a meal in someone’s house. Jesus was not partaking in the actions that had earned these individuals the public title of “sinners.” He is not robbing anyone, getting drunk, and not lusting after the female “sinners” in the room. He is caring, yes, but He is not condoning, contributing, or compromising. He welcomed them into fellowship with Him so that He might care for them and share with them the Truth that would set them free.

The entirety of Jesus’ ministry was characterized by a focus on calling sinners to repent. The very first message Jesus preached in **Matthew 4:17b** was simply this, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” The word “repent” means “a change of mind” and it refers to a change in direction. Jesus was saying to them, “You’ve been living your life going this sinful way, but I’m calling you to trust in Me and turn from your sins.” We see this all throughout Scripture. For example, in John 4 Jesus begins to speak to the woman at the well. He begins to talk to her about the Living Water that leads to eternal life. Longing to no longer have to go to the well she said, “Then sir, please give me this water so that I will not be thirsty again.” For her to have this gift of eternal life, though, Jesus knew that there was sin that had to be addressed. He asked for her to bring her husband to Him, and she openly stated that she didn’t have one. Jesus then called out the sin, “For you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.” In other words, Jesus was kindly but truthfully confronting her adulterous, sinful ways, calling her to repent. He was offering her salvation and forgiveness if only she would trust in Him and turn from her sin. Thankfully she accepted His invitation and was changed by the power of God. Similarly, in John 8, the Pharisees were trying to trick Jesus, so they brought a woman to Him who had been caught in adultery. They knew that the Law required that she be stoned to death, but they asked Jesus, “What do You say we should do?” Jesus then stooped down and began writing on the ground. He then said, “Let him without sin, cast the first stone.” Then, one by one, the self-righteous crowd dropped their stones and began to walk away. **John 8:10-11** says, “Straightening up, Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?’ She said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said, ‘I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more.’ ” Jesus calls her and all sinners still today to trust in Him and turn away from their sins.

Perhaps you may think I am taking this statement too far. Matthew 9 does not tell us exactly what Jesus said to the people at the dinner table, but I would argue that repentance is implied. It is interesting to note Luke’s emphasis on repentance in a Scripture that sounds very similar

to the environment of Matthew 9. **Luke 15:1-7**, “Now all the tax collectors and the sinners were coming near Him to listen to Him. But the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, ‘This man receives sinners and eats with them.’ So He told them this parable, saying, ‘What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, “Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!” I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who **repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.’ ” This may not be the same encounter as Matthew 9, but it was certainly the same audience, the same adversaries, and the same call to action – in order for sinners to be saved from their sins, they must repent. It was clear enough to Matthew himself that he penned the words of Jesus in **verse 13** where Jesus says, “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” What is he calling them to? He is calling them to trust in Jesus and to repent of their sins.

## II. Jesus Explained Why Compassion Is Needed for Sinners (vs. 12)

Needless to say, Jesus’ actions were shocking and offensive to the religious establishment of the day. The Pharisees were so caught up in religious traditions and rules that they could not see or understand what God was doing right in front of them. They had long neglected a relationship with God to devote themselves instead to a dead religious system. The Pharisees were a very proud group of people who thought they were right about everything and criticized and condemned everyone else. They were the “holier-than-thous” of the day who did everything they could to not only avoid sin but to avoid sinners. They would, at all costs, keep the traditions of the elders no matter how it impacted others. They were appalled at Jesus’ actions, so they began to murmur and complain to the disciples, “Why is your Teacher eating with tax collectors and sinners?” Remember, they were jealous of Jesus so by bringing this to the disciples, they are likely trying to tempt them to also turn against Jesus. Spending time with sinners? The thought was foreign to them. If Jesus was truly a prophet and a Godly man, then surely He would not spend time with such terrible people. Jesus knew the thoughts and intentions of their proud hearts, so He spoke up in response, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who were sick.” In this simple statement, Jesus shows why compassion is needed for sinners.

### A. The Spiritual Sickness of Man

Jesus is using a practical illustration to illustrate a spiritual truth. He describes sin as a spiritual sickness that impacts all mankind. We don’t like the idea of being labeled a “sinner,” but the truth is that all of us are sinners. The Greek word for sin means “to miss the mark, to fall short.” **Romans 3:10, 23** says it simply, “As it is written, ‘There is none righteous, not even one’...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Some might say, “Not me, I’m a pretty good person. **1 John 1:8** says, “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.” We have all sinned against God and fallen short of His glory. We have all missed the mark, and as such we are sinners. As bad as that is, that is not the worst of it. **Romans 6:23a** says, “For the wages of sin is death.” Without Christ, we are dead in our trespasses and sins, condemned to hell, to be separated from God for all eternity. Ephesians 2 tells us that without Jesus we all live in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind, and by our very nature are children of wrath. The religious leaders could not

understand why Jesus would be hanging out with such sinful people, but Jesus knew the depth of their spiritual sickness. He knew that there was no way they could overcome their sickness of sin in their own power. He knew that religion only offered a bunch of rules and restrictions, but it could not transform them and bring them into a relationship with God.

## **B. The Spiritual Need of Man**

What sinners need to be cleansed of their sins and cured of their spiritual sickness is a physician. **\*\*ILL:** Surely, we all understand this. If we are sick, we go to the doctor. Some of us when sick will go to the doctor immediately, while others like myself tend to be a little more stubborn. Perhaps we buy all the over-the-counter medicine we can, load up on vitamin C, get extra rest, and wait it out, but if this doesn't work, then we finally come to the end of ourselves and realize we need a doctor's help. Why do we go to the doctor? Because it is the doctor who can accurately diagnose our problem and provide us with a cure. When it comes to our spiritual sickness of sin, we, too, need a physician. **Matthew Henry** said it well, "Sin is the sickness of the soul. It is deforming, weakening, disquieting, wasting, killing, but, blessed be God, not incurable." Jesus is the Great Physician of our souls. He is the One who came and gave His life on the cross to pay the price for our sins. He came to lay down His life in our place so that we might be set free and live for Him. No other person can save us, set us free, deliver us from the addictions or afflictions of sin, or pardon and forgive us, but by turning from sin and turning to Jesus we can experience deliverance and forgiveness today. He did not come to merely offer a cure but to be **the** cure for our sins and rescue our souls. Jesus said it plainly in the prior verse in **Matthew 9:6b**, "The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Jesus is the Great Physician who offers to forgive us and make us whole. He is the one whom the prophet Isaiah spoke about. In **Isaiah 1:18** God declared, " 'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.' " And, how is this cleansing possible? **Isaiah 53:5** continues, "He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed." Jesus came to meet our greatest need by laying down His life on the cross for our sins, so that through Him we may have eternal and abundant life.

## **III. Jesus Encourages Us to Show Compassion to Sinners (vs. 13)**

Jesus' example and explanation were very clear, but perhaps it would be easy for His audience, including us today, to simply write it off as if this applied only to Jesus. We might reason, "Well sure, He was the Son of God who did everything perfectly." Jesus though takes a moment to give a word of instruction that encourages us to consider how this should be applied in our lives today. I believe His words bring every Christian to two primary applications:

### **A. Learn From Jesus**

He says simply, "Go and learn what this means." The word for "learn" here refers to a learning of facts and knowledge from experience. It often implies deep reflection and evaluation. Interestingly, the Greek word used is the root for where we get our English word for "math or mathematics." Most people do not understand mathematical concepts on the first try, but only after much reflection and evaluation. It is only through these that they understand the concept,

and then it is through application and experience that they figure out the solutions/answers. With the same sort of diligence, Jesus says, “Go and think on this, reflect on what I have modeled and what I am saying.” What are we to learn? He desires compassion, not sacrifice.

There is nothing wrong with sacrifices given to the Lord. The word “sacrifice” means “an offering or a sacrifice as prescribed by God.” God would not require sacrifices if He did not desire them. Jesus is not dismissing the giving of offerings, but He is dismissing sacrifices given to the Lord while denying compassion for the lost. To better understand, we must remember who He is saying this to. The Pharisees were a religious group who identified themselves by the keeping of the Law. They had 613 laws they abided by, most of which were restricting certain actions. They were so focused and consumed with what they were abstaining from that they had no heart or compassion for those who needed the Lord. In fact, they were so focused on their good works that they began to puff themselves up, which also meant that everyone who did not meet their manmade standards was also put down. This is why Jesus calls for compassion. The original word in Greek was most often translated as “mercy, pity, and compassion.” The word was defined as “kindness or goodwill toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them.” Sadly, the proud Pharisees were too consumed with self to heed the words of the Savior. They condemned the sinners, crucified the Savior, and cemented their eternity without God.

Though the Pharisees ignored Jesus’ message, this is what Jesus is calling us to consider today. What does it mean to show kindness and compassion towards those who are lost in their sins, and what does it mean to point them to the truth so that they can be saved and relieved of their burden? Perhaps you think that this sounds too difficult or is too high of a demand, but please recognize that this statement of Jesus is a quotation from **Hosea 6:6**. Remember the story of Hosea in the Old Testament? He was a prophet of God who was called to marry a prostitute. Though many would find this unacceptable, Hosea showed compassion and kindness to the woman and obedience to the Lord. And, if that weren’t enough, she would eventually leave him to go back to her sinful ways, yet the Lord would call him to love her again with a compassionate, merciful, and kind love. Hosea realized that her greatest need was God and without Him, she was hopeless of changing, but with God, she could be transformed. So, with God’s help, Hosea was able to obey the Lord and show his unfaithful wife the compassion that she desperately needed. Of course, God was using this marital relationship as a picture of His faithful compassion for the people of Israel who had sinned against Him, but the point remains. If God lives in us and we rely on Him, then surely we, too, can show compassion for sinners. If, however, showing compassion for the lost still seems impossible, then I challenge you to personally remember where you were when God found you. Remember what He did in your life to save you of your sins and set you free. Remember that you did not deserve His grace and mercy. Remember the one who came and showed you compassion. As we recall what the Lord has done in our lives it will help us to be more compassionate to others, but if you still find it difficult, if you can’t remember these things, then I suggest that the reason you may not remember is not because you have forgotten but because, like the Pharisees, you’ve never personally been changed by the power of salvation.

## **B. Live Like Jesus**

What did Jesus come to do? He came to care for sinners and call them to repent. He likens it to a physician caring for a sick patient. This, too, is what it should look like in our lives. How would you respond to someone who was sick? I hope that you would show kindness, mercy, pity, and compassion. It takes compassion to come to someone in their time of need, but it is not compassionate to leave them in their state of need **if you can remedy** their need. Before I illustrate this, let me explain that I realize that there are several people in our church family who are dealing with various levels of sickness and disease. I want you to know that we love you, regularly pray for you, and want to support you in any way that we can. I don't want be insensitive to your situation today. Remember that in this passage Jesus is talking about man's spiritual sickness of sin and need for salvation, and He is illustrating it through the relationship between a doctor and a patient. What should a compassionate doctor do in treating sickness?

Let's imagine that someone had a serious disease, and they went to the doctor to diagnose the problem and determine a cure. Suppose the patient told him/her their symptoms and he said, "That's disgusting. Yuck! I want nothing to do with that. I want to get out of the room as soon as possible. I'm gonna shut down the office for the day and tell everyone to leave." And in haste, he turns off the light, slams the door, and flees. They are now left sitting in the dark. What would you think of the doctor? We would conclude that he is a harsh jerk and has zero compassion their situation. Yet, when it comes to interacting with those who are lost, many "Christians" act this way. Their behavior or certain aspects of their appearance may be repulsive to us, so we run and flee...from the very ones we've been called to show compassion to.

Let's imagine the situation a bit differently. Suppose the patient goes to the doctor, tells him the symptoms, and he takes it all in. He is kind and considerate, sincerely showing interest in what is happening in their life. He orders a series of tests to determine the ailment, and he discovers that they have a terrible disease that if left untreated will lead to pain, misery, and eventual death. Suppose he also has the cure at his disposal, but he reasons within himself, "Well, I like this patient. They're a nice person and help a lot of people, but they already have a lot going on in their life right now. I just can't bring myself to tell them what's really going on. Besides they probably won't like what is needed to be cured anyway." So, the doctor goes back into the room and has good bedside manners. He's gentle, kind, and warm, and looks at the patient and says, "Well, I'm sorry you feel bad, but I think you're going to be alright. Just go home and get some sleep and eventually you will probably feel better, and everything will just work out." Has the doctor been compassionate? No. Why? Because even though he was kind, he has still left the patient in the dark. Even though there is a cure available, there is no possibility of a cure because he hasn't shared the truth of the situation and pointed to what was actually needed. He hasn't been harsh, but he has been harmful because he has ignored and dismissed the truth. Yet, how often have we done this as Christians? We know the truth, we have the cure, but we are afraid to speak the truth about man's need for Jesus. We may be kind and cordial, and even talk about fun things, but if we miss the main thing, what good have we done and what compassion have we shown?

Brothers and sisters, we aren't the Great Physician of man's soul, but we know the One who is, and we have the cure. The Gospel is the Good News that saves men's souls and sets them free. Like sick patients, not everyone will accept the diagnosis or the cure. Many will turn to denial and debate. Some will reject it, storm off, question our credibility, attack us, blame us,



and a host of natural responses. Their actions, however, only prove the truth of their problem – they are sinners in need of a Savior. But, even then may we continue to live like Jesus by showing compassion to them and to all others that we come in contact with as we live our lives.

I love how this text ends with Jesus' compassion on full display. Look with me at the end of the chapter to see what the Lord Himself calls us to do. **Matthew 9:35-38 (Show Text)**

Everywhere Jesus went, He went about doing good by teaching others, sharing the Gospel, and healing every kind of sickness and disease. When He saw those who were lost, He felt compassion for them and was moved to minister to them. Then He invited us as His followers to participate in His harvest work. Followers of Jesus, this is for us today. As we go through our world today we can't heal every sickness and disease, but we can help and minister to those who are discouraged and distressed. We can assist those in need. As we go through our streets, neighborhoods, and community we can show kindness and compassion and share the Gospel with those we interact with. But, this will never happen if we don't heed the instruction of Jesus, "Go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice.'"

What about you today? As you go throughout your day, are you being burdened for people the way that Jesus was? Are you seeking to minister to others in their point of sickness and disease? Do you feel compassion for those in need? Are you concerned about the state of their souls? May God help us to be moved with compassion for all sinners, remembering that it was His compassion for us that brought us to salvation, and may it be our compassion for them that brings them to the same!