

Ezekiel 3:15

by Chuck Smith

The key to compassion is understanding, and the responsibility of the ministry is to watch over God's flock and to give them His word, and to warn them of the consequences of their actions.

Scripture: Ezekiel 3:11, Ezekiel 33:8-9, Matthew 25:21, John 15:16, Acts 20:26-27, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 11:23, Galatians 6:2, 2 Timothy 4:3, 1 Peter 5:2-3

Topics: "Compassion", "Responsibility in Ministry"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the significance of understanding in ministry, drawing from Ezekiel's call to serve those in captivity. He highlights that true compassion stems from understanding others' struggles and experiences, urging ministers to deliver God's word faithfully despite potential rejection. Smith illustrates the importance of empathy by encouraging individuals to 'sit where they sit' to grasp their challenges better. He warns that ministers are responsible for sharing God's warnings and truths, as neglecting this duty could lead to dire consequences for both the minister and the congregation.

Transcript

Understanding, The Key To Compassion

I. Ezekiel's call to the ministry. Vs.11 A. The importance of the call of God. 1. Jesus said to His disciples, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should be My disciples." 2. Paul wrote, "Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." 3. The ministry is not an easy task, their will be many discouragement's. a. The people will not always want to hear the message of God. "Tell them thus saith the Lord, whether they will hear or forbear." b.

Sometimes people are angry with God, they falsely blame God for some calamity that has taken place in their lives. They will often seek to take our their anger on the servant of God. B. The specifics of the call. He was to go to those in captivity in Babylon and speak to them the word of the Lord. 1. The primary duty of a minister is to give to the people the word of the Lord. a. In many of the pulpits across the country the word of the Lord has been replaced with the words of psychologists. b.

The popular subjects for the pulpit are "How to get what you want out of life, or becoming a better you. c. Jung, Freud, Maslov, and Pavlov are quoted more often than the scriptures. 2. As Paul wrote, he said, "That which I have received from the Lord, I also delivered unto you." a. I am to bear God's message to the people. b. Why do men turn from teaching the word of God to relational teaching? 1. Some do not

believe that the word of God is actually the word of God. 2. Many people do not want to hear the word of God, but as Paul said, they have itching ears, and only want to be entertained. 3.

Love or compassion is the only true motive for the ministry. A. Paul said that the love of Christ constrained him. B. Understanding is the key to compassion. 1. Many times a persons actions are repulsive to us, and we are prone to react in negative ways. 2. Quite often their is a reason for their repulsive behavior. a. Directing summer camps in Arizona. C. Ezekiel said, "I sat where they sat." 1. Before he sought to bring them the word of the Lord, he sat down with them and was speechless for seven days. 2.

What a wonderful way to gain insight and understanding. 3. Sit where they sit, walk in their shoes. 4. When I hear the stories of the difficulties some of these single moms are going through, my heart goes out to them. I try to put myself in their place, and wonder just what I would do. 5. When I hear the stories of the abuse that some of these children are being subjected to, I find my heart breaking for them, and a strong desire to take them under my wing, and be to them the kind of parent that would truly represent a Godly example to them. 6.

Put yourself in the other persons place. a. You husbands try to in your mind put yourself in your wife's place. 1. First of all having to live with you, and put up with your moods and attitudes. 2. Spend the day supervising the home, seeing the kids are off to school with a good breakfast and clean clothes. 3. Watching the babies that are still to young to go to school. Cleaning the house, making beds, and planning dinner. 4. Being nurse, comforter, and sometimes referee for the daily bumps and bruises of this junior world that she must oversee. 5.

When you come home and plop down in front of the T.V. as you wait for your dinner to be served, she is often longing for adult conversation, a sounding board to unload some of the daily frustrations upon. All she gets from you is grunts that indicate your total lack of interest or concern. 6. Think of it, all day long baby talk, coo, ta ta, then when you get home, ugh, O, ah. b. In the same token you wives try to put yourself in your husbands place. 1. Heavy pressure to perform on the job. 2.

Miserable drive home in the rush hour traffic. 3. Bone tired, worried, weary he falls into the chair and seeks a moments diversion to help switch gears to forget the problems of the day, and immediately he hears of how Johnny threw a ball through the large window of the neighbor's house who will be over later to see how you intend to pay for it. c. Before you react or respond, try to first put yourself in their place, sit where they sit for a while, discover the pressures that they are experiencing. This is what Ezekiel did.

III. The responsibility of the ministry.

A. God holds your responsible to watch over His flock and to give them His word.

1. Ezekiel was to give them warnings from God.

2. When God said to the wicked that they were going to die, He was responsible to warn them.

a. Hell is a very unpopular topic.

b. In our soft society we do not like to speak of

punishment.

c. We are reluctant to hold a person responsible for their actions.

1. This begins with childhood. One of the great problems with our society is that so many parents were influenced by

Dr. Spokes recommendation for slackness in the disciplining of the child.

2. This also influenced the public schools.

3. The Biblical warnings were ignored that declared that a child left to himself would bring a reproach to his parents.

4. These undisciplined children have grown up to be the monsters in our society.

d. If God has prepared a place of punishment and torment for Satan, and all who will follow in his rebellion against God, a place where in the words of Jesus there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, where the fire is not quenched, and I fail to warn people of that horrible fate that awaits all who do not receive God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ, then I will be held responsible by God for my failure as His minister for not warning them.

B. As the overseer of the flock of God I am held responsible by God to warn the flock, and in so doing, I deliver my soul.

1. When Paul was speaking to the elders at Ephesus for possibly the last time, he said, "I want you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. For the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

2. The reason why I have chosen to go straight through the whole Bible year after year, not skipping any part, is that when my ministry comes to an end, and I stand before God to give an account, I want to be able to say, I have declared to them Your whole counsel, I have not withheld any truth, I warned them night and day.

3. I desire then to hear His words, "Well done, you have been a good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of Your Lord."

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