

Expand Your Borders

by K.P. Yohannan

K.P. Yohannan's sermon encourages believers to expand their compassion and love beyond their immediate circles to embrace a broader community in need.

Scripture: Job 23:16, Isaiah 58:10, Matthew 25:40, Mark 3:35, Luke 6:36, Romans 12:15, Galatians 6:2, Philippians 2:4, Colossians 3:12, 1 John 3:17

Topics: "Compassion", "Expanding Our Borders"

Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the need for believers to expand their compassion beyond their immediate circles, urging them to embrace a broader sense of family that includes those suffering for their faith and those in need. He challenges the self-centered mindset prevalent in society, advocating for a heart transformation that allows God's compassion to flow through us. By sharing personal experiences and scriptural references, he encourages listeners to pray for a softened heart and to actively engage with the struggles of others, reflecting the love of Christ in their actions.

Transcript

"KEEP OUT" - "Genius at work, don't disturb" - "Knock before you enter" - "Don't touch" - "Private supply" - "Don't bother me"--these are just a few examples of the signs you can pick up at the store to hang on your doorknob. Some of them are illustrated with intriguing pictures, but they all convey the same message: "This is my world. Respect it, or I will treat you as an intruder." We live in a culture in which we are raised and taught to be independent, private and protective of our personal rights, space, time and comforts.

Others should not cross the line we draw around ourselves or encroach upon our personal world. We are not thrilled when others interrupt or disturb our own pursuits with their concerns and problems. The Lord, instead, tells us: "Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36) and "As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies . . ." (Colossians 3:12). Whenever close family members of mine travel to places that could be potentially unsafe, I think about them and pray for their safety with much compassion and deep concern.

I am involved in their trip with my whole heart--my thoughts, emotions and imagination. And I am ready to help in any way I can. Generally, we are prepared to show this type of compassion to our immediate family and close friends when they are sick, hurting or in danger. We take the interruption into our personal life in stride during their time of need. But what about those outside our small circle? When new families join our growing church or ministry, do we expand our feelings of closeness and relationship to include them?

And what about those farther away: national missionaries who suffer persecution while preaching the Gospel . . . the Bible school student who was tortured by his relatives and barely escaped with his life . . . the teenage girl who received Christ and whose parents beat her daily, made her sleep outside the house and told her that she was no longer their daughter? Should we feel compassion toward these as well, even if we have never met them personally? Is it not enough if we stick with our efforts toward our own families?

Speaking of family, Jesus, our brother and Lord, clearly defined for us who our family members are: "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother" (Mark 3:35). This means that those suffering missionaries are my brothers and sisters; the Bible school student who barely escaped with his life is my son; and the teenage girl living on the street--rejected and forsaken by all--is my daughter. The Lord wants us to expand our borders. He wants to weep, touch, feel, pray, fast and show compassion through us to more than just our close circle of friends and family.

As believers, we have given Him our lives, which include our hearts, minds, mouths, ears, eyes, hands, feet and everything we are. Though He has bought us with a heavy price, we may have not consciously surrendered all these aspects of our lives to His leading. Instead of being totally available to Him, we can often find ourselves self-centered, calloused and disconnected toward the crises we hear about. How do we transition to the place at which the Lord's heart of compassion flows through us freely?

Before the inception of this ministry, my heart had become cold, and I found I was more concerned about the small things in my life than I was about the lost world. That's when I desperately prayed: "God, You have to change me; I cannot change on my own." And by His grace, He began to break my heart and make it tender and compassionate toward others. If you hunger to have the Lord's compassion flow through your life, I encourage you to ask God to do for you just what He did for me.

I am confident He will. However, I want you to know that He will bring you to a place at which you must die to your own self, your freedom and your attitude of self-preservation. One book that greatly helped along this line and taught me to understand how to love others is *The Calvary Road* by Roy Hession. God not only wants us to expand our capacity of love and compassion to the rest of the Body of Christ but to the lost world as well. We must continually let His heart flow through us; otherwise, we will not be able to embrace even one additional person or maintain the increased number of our relationships.

For this reason, we must constantly yield our hearts to Him so that He can continue to break them and fill them with genuine compassion toward others. In my own life journey, one of the things I pray on a regular basis is, "Lord, always keep my heart soft." There is a Scripture in Job 23:16 that says, "For God maketh my heart soft" (kjv). The Lord is more than willing to accomplish this in each one of us. God, break our hearts with the things that break Your heart.

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