

**First Baptist Church Merritt Island**  
**Executive Pastor Carey Dean**  
**November 19, 2023**  
**Moved With Compassion**  
**Matthew 9:35-36**

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God has been good because He IS Good.

*Psalm 107:1 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!*

It is very tempting for us on this day to think primarily about all the ways God has been good to us and overlook the most important truth: God Alone is Good. Let's take just a moment and sit in this truth.

Belief Statement 1: God alone is good.

God alone is **ABSOLUTELY** good

- The perfection and completeness of His Goodness has no Achilles heel, no chink in the armor, and no crack in the foundation.

God alone is **FOREVER** good

- "He has been good."
- "He is good."
- "He will forever be good."

God alone is **UNCHANGEABLY** good

- His goodness never changes. It is never greater or lesser at any point in time.

God alone is **IMMEASURABLY** good

- His goodness has no length that ends, no height that is reached, no depth that bottoms out.

God alone is **SUPREME** good

- His goodness overpowers every evil, every time, in every way.

But how is it even possible for people like me and you to know and experience His goodness? Really, who are we that we would be able to taste and see that He is good! Let's be honest, we are not deserving of His goodness. We deserve His wrath, not His loving-kindness. Without His grace and mercy, we would still be sheep. Without Him loving us first, we never would love Him.

How then is it possible? There is only one way through one person. Jesus. God saw us in our desperate need for Savior. Out of God's great love for us, He sent us His only Son to be our Great Shepherd.

Belief Statement 2: Jesus came to us and was moved with compassion.

Although it would be impossible to write down everything Jesus did and said, Matthew gives us a concise, yet beautiful, summary of his three-year earthly ministry when he came to us.

**Matthew 9:35-36 ESV**

***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 points to the threefold earthly ministry of Jesus: teaching, preaching, and healing.

He came to teach and preach the good news with all authority. Jesus went directly to the people. The centerpiece of the Jewish community was the synagogue. It was the place of learning and worshipping. And that is exactly where Jesus went in every city and village in the Galilee region.

He brought words of life and light like had never been heard before. He was the Living Word speaking directly to their ears. Emmanuel, God with us, walked into synagogue after synagogue after synagogue. Life came to where they lived. Truth came to where they learned. The Son of God came to where they worshipped.

He came to heal with all authority. Jesus healed every disease and affliction. Throughout the Gospels, we see Jesus healing...both Jew and Gentile, men, women, and children, the demon-possessed, blind, deaf, and mute, the poor and the rich alike, synagogue leaders and the outcast of society.

As Jesus taught, preached, and healed, Matthew reveals what was happening inside Jesus' heart. Matthew 9:36 says, *"when he saw the crowds, his heart was moved with compassion."*

A motivator of Jesus' heart is compassion. He saw people through the lens of holy compassion and not flesh's anger, agitation, or annoyance. This Greek word for compassion is splahnk-NEEZ-oh-my (splanchnizomai). It is the strongest verb for compassion in the Greek language. It is to be moved in the visceral parts of the inward being when someone's suffering is encountered. This word doesn't just have a strong inward feeling at the sight of suffering. It feels something with a strong desire to relieve or remove the suffering.

Here is the most significant and interesting thing about this word! Splahnk-NEEZ-oh-my is found only in the Gospels and used only of Jesus or by Jesus. Jesus is the incarnation of God's full compassion.

The way God saw people before Jesus came, is the same way Jesus saw people while on earth. Jesus was fully God and fully man on this earth. The attitudes and emotions he had in heaven are the same he had on earth. He never ceased being God.

So, Jesus was moved with compassion when he saw people...harassed and troubled, helpless and scattered, hungry and hopeless and afflicted and tormented.

God alone is Good. Jesus came to us and was moved with compassion. This brings us to our last belief statement of the morning.

### Belief Statement 3: Because Christ lives in us, we are moved by His compassion.

I received this message yesterday from our Agape Women's Ministry executive director, Ann Marie Gustke. I had prepared a whole teaching section for this belief statement but when I read this text, its testimony preached this belief statement stronger than I ever could.

Context: 2 years ago, the Lord did a crazy thing. He opened wide the doors for our Agape Women's Ministry to start ministering to ladies inside the entertainment clubs in Cocoa Beach. We are partnered with Church of Viera and go to three clubs, twice a month.

Last night they delivered 150 Thanksgiving baskets to dancers at all three clubs. Oh yeah, it is important to know that the Agape ladies that enter the club are affectionately known as "The Church Ladies."

Here is the praise report from Friday night...

Thanksgiving outreach was a beautiful day in dark places.

I keep thinking how Jesus purposely went to connect with the woman at the well. He went to her. That is what we are doing as the church ladies. We are going to their shameful, dark, messy, world. Their sin and shame would never allow them to come to us first. There's a wall. It is only Jesus that can go and chip away at the wall.

We prayed, we hugged, we learned real names, we saw pictures of kids, we listened to heavy stories, we talked about eternal life, we gave out bibles, we discussed Bible translations, we were given money for the ministry from dancers and customers, we had customers ask what church we are part of and were in disbelief that a church would dare enter a place like the clubs, we helped girls with their wardrobe, we sang happy birthday to a dancer, one church lady is now called auntie by a dancer, we met new owners at the club that offered for us to use their building for an event We go because of Jesus. It's what He would do. It's what He IS doing.

The Lord is doing a mighty work on Magnolia Avenue. Because Jesus lives in us, His compassion is moving FBCMI to see our neighbors as He sees them. His compassion is revealing itself through our Agape Women's Center to women who are in crisis,

though MICS to students who are learning to walk by faith, and through the House of Hope to those who are need basic needs met and struggling with addiction.

We are learning of Christ and living out the truths. We have the compassion of Jesus alive in us. We see with His compassion. We see sheep who are harassed and troubled. We see sheep who are helpless and miserable. We see sheep that need Jesus, the Good Shepherd. We are moved by His compassion and move toward those who are vulnerable instead of walking by them.

Let me leave you with a parable Jesus spoke.

*Luke 10:30–37 Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” 37 He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”*