



COMPASSION MINISTRY

*Helping people experience
restoration with
God, self and others.*

Sunday, May 2, 2021

Welcome

Good morning! We are so glad you have joined us this morning for the commissioning of our Compassion Ministry.

God has called His Church to declare and demonstrate the Good News of the Gospel. This means that we share the restoring message of Jesus and live out this message through compassionate love.

For the past two years, God has been leading Grace Church to reconsider its approach to benevolence, the term often used for helping individuals who are struggling with material poverty. We believe that benevolence does not need to be separated from the mission of the church, and we are excited to launch an approach to benevolence that is merged with discipleship. As we strive to make and mature disciples of Jesus, we will also strive to express the radical generosity of Christ as we come alongside those inside and outside of our church who struggle through the brokenness of material poverty.

I am looking forward to seeing how God will use this ministry to bring Himself glory and build up His church.

Pastor Austin Branson
Lead Pastor

gracechurch
An Evangelical Free Church

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WORSHIP SERVICE: SUNDAYS AT 10AM

PRELUDE
I Surrender All

CALL TO WORSHIP
Romans 5:6-8

WORSHIP IN SONG
Christ Our Hope In Life and Death

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

COMMISSIONING OF THE
COMPASSION MINISTRY
Grace's Story
"A Theology of Compassion"
Testimonies
Grace's Future
Prayer

WORSHIP IN SONG
*Great Are You, Lord
Living Hope*

BENEDICTION

Connection Cards

Are you new to Grace? Do you have a prayer request? We invite you to fill out a Connect Card found at the Welcome Center or online.

Tithe Online

To give electronically, you can visit the "Give" page of our website -or- download the "Give Plus" app found in your phone's app store.

Weekly Email

If you would like to receive a weekly email that include reminders and updates, please visit the home page of our website to subscribe.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

Monday, May 3-Thursday, May 6

BFHS AP Testing7:30-11:30am

Wednesday, May 5

Designed to Lead Training 2:00-4:00pm

Sunday, May 9

Worship Service..... 10:00am

Iglesia Jesucristo es mi Refugio 12:00pm

Contact: Pastores Ricardo y Berna Ramos, (815) 355-7482

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Child Dedications: Informational Meeting TODAY

A brief informational meeting will be held after today's worship service in FH1 for any parents interested in dedicating their child(ren) on Sunday, May 16. Forms are available at the Welcome Center and can be brought to the meeting.

BFHS AP Testing

Big Foot High School will host their Advance Placement testing at Grace Church throughout the weeks of May 3-7 and May 10-14. Most of the testing will take place between 7:30am-3:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. We ask that the church family and ministry leaders be conscious of this and plan their activities after testing has taken place to allow for a quiet, distraction-free environment for the students.

Compassion Ministry Workshop

Would you like to know more about the Compassion Ministry at Grace Church? Are you interested in getting involved? Join us for a 45-minute workshop on Sunday, May 23 at 11:30am in FH1. Let us learn together how we can more effectively live as a compassionate community of Christ followers.

SERMON NOTES

A Theology of Compassion

I. Building a Foundation

- a. Brokenness in four key relationships: God, others, self, and creation
- b. Biblical reasons for material poverty: false gods and erroneous stories of change, destructive formative practices, broken systems at community and macro levels, broken relationships, and demonic forces

II. The Old Testament

- a. God's Purpose for Israel
 - i. A nation whose laws reflected the inherent dignity and worth that all people are deserving of as image-bearers (Gen. 1:27)
 - ii. A nation whose values reflected God's own values (Deut. 10:17-18)
- b. The Pentateuch
 - i. God views our treatment of foreigners, widows, and orphans very seriously (Ex. 22:21-24)
 - ii. God also views our treatment of the poor seriously as well (Deut. 15:7-8)
 - iii. God freely gives and expects His people to do the same:
 - Gleaning Laws (Lev. 19:9-10)
 - Sabbath Year (Lev. 25:1-7)
 - Year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8-22)
- c. The Prophets
 - i. Deliver from the oppressor (Jer. 22:3)
 - ii. Seek justice (Is. 1:17)
 - iii. Caring for the needy over religion (Is. 58:6-7)
 - iv. Mercy over sacrifice (Hos. 6:6)

III. The New Testament

- a. Jesus
 - i. Unto the least of these (Matt. 25:31-46)
 - ii. The Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37)
- b. The New Testament Church
 - i. Sharing with those who had need (Acts 2:45)
 - ii. Caring for the neglected widows (Acts 6:3)
- c. The Apostles
 - i. How does God's love abide in him? (1 Jn. 3:17)
 - ii. Love in deed and truth (1 Jn. 3:18)
 - iii. Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:17)

IV. Our Calling and Responsibility

- a. Clarification from the Apostle Paul (Gal. 6:10)
 - i. First helping those within our church body
 - ii. Then helping those we are able to help (issues of proximity)
- b. Motivation for helping the vulnerable
- c. Bringing restoration to the brokenness

QUOTES

“What the church does in its particular work for the materially poor puts on display what God does in his particular work for the spiritually poor.”

- MARK TATLOCK -

“This duty is absolutely commanded, and much insisted on, in the Word of God.

Where have we any command in the Bible laid down in stronger terms, and in a more peremptory urgent manner, than the command of giving to the poor?”

- JONATHAN EDWARDS -

“Widows, orphans, immigrants, and the poor have been referred to as the ‘quartet of the vulnerable.’ Neglecting the needs of this quartet is not just a lack of mercy or charity, but according to Scripture, a violation of God’s justice, or *misphat* (Hebrew word). God loves and defends those with the least economic and social power.”

- TIM KELLER -

“Christians interested in only alleviating eternal suffering implicitly deny the place of love here and now.”

- D.A. CARSON -

“If it is really true that justice and mercy to the poor is not optional for Christians and is in fact the inevitable sign of justifying faith, it is hard to believe that the church is not to reflect this duty corporately in some way.”

- TIM KELLER -

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are some ways that brokenness has played itself out in your life or the life of a loved one? What are some of the means that God used in your life to restore that brokenness? His Word? Prayer? Other people? Circumstances?
2. Do the Scripture verses presented on caring for the vulnerable surprise you? Excite you? Encourage you? Frighten you? Why?
3. What is one area from today’s message that has challenged you the most? Why?
4. As a church, what do you view as our biggest strengths when it comes to caring for the vulnerable? What do you see as our biggest weaknesses? Give examples.
5. What questions do you still have about a “theology of compassion” or our new ministry? Does the Bible address these questions?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

These books will be available for check-out from the church library in the coming weeks:

Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty Isn’t the American Dream by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic

Generous Justice: Finding Grace in God through Practicing Justice by Timothy Keller

Helping Without Hurting in Church Benevolence: A Practical Guide to Walking with Low-Income People by Steve Corbett, Brian Fikkert, with Katie Casselberry

What Is the Mission of the Church? by Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert