

# Cultivating a Culture of Compassion

The Opportunity is Ours – by Pastor Ryan Kolander

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## Compassion Ministry: Pitfalls

1. Why is it important to think of the tasks Jesus gives the church of preaching the gospel and loving neighbor and each other as a “both/and” not an “either/or”?
  - What’s plurality got to do with it??
  - **Galatians 6:10**, “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”
2. What is the first major pitfall to compassion ministry identified on **p. 4**?
  - What are the noble and faith-borne origins of the Social Gospel movement?
  - Explain the liberal to conservative views and points of emphasis toward social gospel.
3. What is the second major pitfall to compassion ministry identified on **p. 5**?
  - Is it or is it not the Church’s job to alleviate suffering in the world? How does the ministry model of Jesus help us answer this question?
  - What is beneficial about the desire to keep God’s Kingdom “not of this world”? What is the unforeseen harm which flows from this desire?
  - Where/when have you experienced this thinking?
4. How is “Evangelical Gnosticism” defined on the bottom of **p. 5**? What is the result of the sacred/secular divide in our society?

## Compassion Ministry: Fears

5. The first fear has to do with \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - What are the marks of the Church?
  - What valid and acknowledged concerns flow from this fear?

- React to this Matthew Harrison quote from *The Church's Role of Mercy in the Community*, "Wherever the church breathes in the blessed gospel and sacraments, it cannot but exhale mercy and love toward the neighbor."
- To confront this fear, what are we encouraged to embrace on the bottom of **p. 6**?

6. The second fear has to do with \_\_\_\_\_ .

- What valid and acknowledged concerns flow from this fear?
- To confront this fear, what encouragement is given on **p. 7**?
- Great footnotes to read on **p. 7**. Consider especially footnote #17. What are the benefits of getting into the mess of someone's life?

7. The third fear has to do with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ .

- What valid and acknowledged concerns flow from this fear?
- Consider this quote from **p. 8**, "Don't think 'mercy ministry is another program'; think, 'it's a way of life.' Compassion is the same divine impulse that pushes the Christian to evangelize the lost *and* love their neighbor. Compassion isn't a program, it's a culture. It isn't just what we do, it's who we are." Gut check time. Is it? How can it be?

8. The fourth fear has to do with \_\_\_\_\_ .

- What valid and acknowledged concerns flow from this fear?
- Why, according to Tim Keller, do we often choose to remain in this state of mind? What is and what causes compassion fatigue?
- How, again, does the ministry model of Jesus both save us and give us an example to follow? How shall we react when we receive guff and static for being compassionate and acting on it? (Consider footnotes on **p. 9**. Unofficial homework: read footnote #23 and thank God for Jesus!)

9. Read the first paragraph on **p. 10**. Is the hypothetical statement of elation true of our congregation in respect to our community? What's stopping us from making an ideal like this our reality?