

## A Call to the Cause of Compassion

Psalm 126:5 and 6

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*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

### Introduction:

This message will begin and end with our text—Psalm 126:5 and 6. These verses absolutely pulsate with compassion. There is something in these verses that we see too little of in today's churches—and that is **tears and weeping!** We've become too sophisticated to cry! I have a message on Philippians 4:4 on joy in the Christian life—and how we need more believers who rejoice and radiate Christ. I've come up with this little poem: **"If you've been saved by grace, please inform your face!"** Yes, we need to be cheerful, but we also need to be far more tearful than we are in our calloused, complacent, apathetic, and uncaring hearts. We need to laugh, but we also need to cry.



The title of this message:

### **A Call to the Cause of Compassion**

Isaiah 41:21 says, *Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.* There are many secular causes that people are all caught up in and fired up about in today's culture. There is PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals), environmentalists, and thousands of people trying to save endangered species of animals, like whales and owls. Spotted owls are being so safely guarded in some areas that logging is prohibited. We could go on and on with the causes people are involved in today. At the end of a forty-day standoff between the army of Israel and Goliath of Gath, David stood up to King Saul and the cowering army of Israel when he said, **"Is there not a cause?"** David's cause was the honor of God, because His name was being blasphemed by this giant towering over nine feet tall. **The greatest cause in the world is the winning of souls to Jesus Christ—in the cause we call the *Great Commission*.** I believe the missing ingredient many

**Christians lack in their witnessing is compassion—a tender heart, a great burden for the lost, and tears!**

I'm not a lawyer, but I want to take on that role here today. I want to produce my cause and bring forth some strong reasons why we need compassion. I will present my case from the Word of God, and then I will call for a verdict from all of you. I want to encourage an increase of compassion. Christians today have far too few tears. Our hearts have become hardened to the plight of a lost world.

#### PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, may the truth of Psalm 126:5 and 6 burn in our hearts today. Help us to see the world through the eyes of Your dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who showed such great compassion during His earthly ministry. May You open our eyes to see the billions of lost souls on this planet, and may You break our hearts over their eternal plight if they stay in their lost condition without Christ. Help us to obey the last command of Christ before He ascended up to the Father's right hand—may we "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Forgive our disobedience. Forgive our apathy. And Lord, please give us tears for the lost around us. In the name of our compassionate Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen

#### STRONG REASON # 1

### **The Evil Condition of our Nation** Acts 17:16

*Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.*

The Apostle Paul went on to Athens alone and was waiting for the rest of his mission team to join him. Looking around this Greek cultural hub, he was so burdened for these people, because of their many false gods and goddesses and false philosophies. Athens was the headquarters for the thinkers of Paul's day. They were intelligent in the eyes of the nations around them, but the Greeks were ignorant and blinded when it came to spiritual truth. Paul saw the evil condition of that city and that nation. The abundance of idols stirred his heart. We have cities all across America like Athens of old.

I have experienced being stirred like Paul was stirred! This stirring is not being stirred to anger—it is being stirred to tears, and being moved to

compassion! The old chapel at West Point (much smaller than the present chapel) has a verse in large letters above the pulpit area. This verse reads, *Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.* Proverbs 14:34

Isaiah 1:4 tells us, *Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.* If you don't think our nation is sinful, you are totally blinded to the spiritual crisis going on around us!

- Yes, we are in a political mess;
- Yes, we are in a financial mess;
- But, the moral and spiritual decay of our land is at an all-time low!

Abortion, Pornography, "Gentlemen's Clubs," Sexual Predators of children, Alcohol & Drug Addiction, unbridled Adultery and Fornication, Same Sex Marriage, Violence in our Schools, Gambling, an ever-increasing Divorce rate, Rampant Materialism—Covetousness on Steroids. **And that's the short list!**

My questions to you: "Does the sinful condition of our nation bother you? Does it affect you? Does it move you to tears?" When my parents came for their first visit to New York City during our church planting days in Queens (1974-1986), we took them into Manhattan in our vehicle to show them around. Crossing a bridge from Brooklyn into lower Manhattan, we came directly into the Bowery. A drunkard came up to our window at a red light and was washing our window to raise money for more alcohol. This dear man had not bathed in who knows how long. His clothes were filthy and tattered, his hair hadn't been washed or combed for some time, and he was a pitiful sight to look on. My wonderful Mom, Shirley Lowery, was sitting in the front seat with me. I looked over at her and she was crying. Tears were running down her cheeks at the sight of this man's condition. I'll never forget that scene. Many people would recoil in disgust, and shoo this poor man away from their vehicle with unkind gestures. But, my dear and godly Mom cried, and she was just seeing one man. Folks, the world's population (as of this date in June of 2012) stands at approximately 7.018 billion souls. (Source: Wikipedia)

Listen, people need the Lord! Yes, we should hate what sin is doing to our once-righteous nation; but, never lose your burden for those who are held in sin's grip, and bound by Satan's chains! Are you concerned enough for America (or your nation) to cry over our beloved land?

Perilous Times—Perverted Times—Promiscuous Times

But, this is our Time and is perhaps the Greatest Time to Share the Gospel!!!!  
 Phil. 2:15—*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*

STRONG REASON # 1

**The Evil Condition of our Nation**

STRONG REASON # 2

**The Eternal Reality of Hell**

*Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. Matthew 25:41 and 46*

*Just my outline from a sermon on hell*

**Ungodly Separation**

*Matthew 25:41- “Depart from me”*

**Unending Duration**

*Matthew 25:41 “everlasting fire”*

**Unquenchable Fire**

*Matthew 25:41 Mark 9:43-46 & 48 This passage in Mark says 5 times that hell’s fire cannot be quenched.*

**Unearthly Origins**

*Matt. 25:41 “prepared for the devil and his angels” Hell was not originally made for the human race—but for Lucifer and all of his co-conspirators (fallen angels).*

**Unavoidable Entrance**

*Matt. 25:46 “and these shall go away” This scene is the Judgment of the Nations—where Christ gathers the Gentile nations that survive the tribulation period and the Battle of Armageddon. He will separate the sheep (the saved) from the goats (unsaved), and send the unsaved into hell (and they will have no recourse, no appeal, no parole), and the saved will enter with Him into His millennial kingdom.*

**Unparalleled Torments**

*Matt. 25:46 “everlasting punishment”*

*I see 5 torments in hell (beyond it being a place of eternal, unquenchable fire) in the Luke 16:10-31 passage:*

- ❖ *There will be unbearable pain v. 23*
- ❖ *There will be unanswered prayers vs. 24 -31*
- ❖ *There will be unsatisfied thirst vs. 24 & 25*
- ❖ *There will be unforgettable memories v. 25*
- ❖ *There will be unsuccessful escapes v. 26*

A fireman who survived the horrors of 9/11 said of that scene: “It was like looking through the gates of hell.” I believe Christians need to ask God to give them a true picture of the reality of hell. Ephesians 4:15a gives this clear instruction: “*speaking the truth in love...*”. This is especially important when witnessing to the unsaved about the truth of hell—it must be spoken of in love and concern for their souls!

STRONG REASON # 3

### **The Exemplary Lives of Men in God’s Word**

Do you believe the lie, “Real men never cry!”? We’ve made an idol of men being macho! There is nothing weak about a man shedding tears, especially when he is showing godly sorrow over his own sin, or is crying over the needs of others. The Bible speaks of many men who cried or showed great compassion.

**Moses** Exodus 32

31 *And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.*

32 *Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*

**David** A broken heart over his own sin

Ps 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

We see David’s tender shepherd’s heart all through the Psalms.

**Jeremiah**

*Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Jeremiah 9:1*

Jeremiah was an unpopular prophet with a message of judgment—captivity by Babylon! Though he was greatly persecuted, he maintained a burden for the condition of his nation!! Jeremiah 5:7 *How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the*

harlots' houses. Jeremiah 6:15a *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: (Sounds like today!)*

### **Nehemiah**

*And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,* Nehemiah 1:3 and 4 **Talk about a strong leader! Nehemiah rallied Israel around the task of rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, and all they had was the rubble of the former walls to work with. This task was done amidst great opposition, and was completed in 52 days. (Nehemiah 6:15) (The walls of morality and decency, and the traditional family are broken down in our day!)**

### **Paul**

The man who stands out to me in the Bible with the greatest heart for lost souls is the Apostle Paul. Just listen to these statements: Romans 9:3 *For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:* Acts 20:26-31: *Wherefore I take 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. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.* What a heart for lost souls the Apostle Paul had! There is a lesson that pastors, assistant pastors, evangelists and missionaries can draw from these godly men of the Bible: you will never make it in the ministry unless you maintain compassion and love for those to whom you minister.



### **The Lord Jesus Christ**

**The greatest example of compassion in all of the Word of God is the exemplary life of the God-Man, Christ Jesus! One of the greatest examples of this compassion is found in Matthew 9:36-38:**

*But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

**Luke 19:41** *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,*

#### STRONG REASON # 4

### **The Effective Impact of Compassion**     **Jude 22 and 23**

*And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.*

One of the greatest examples of this is John 4—the story of Christ and the woman at the well! His compassion made a world of difference in the life of this scorned woman! She was drawing water at noon, because the other women of Samaria didn't want them around them early in the morning when they came to fill their water pots.



Someone has said, **People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care!!** I'm sure many of you have unsaved friends and relatives, and I'm sure you want to see them saved. Ask God to give you tears for them!! It will make a difference.

- ❖ **The Evil Condition of our Nation**
- ❖ **The Eternal Reality of Hell**
- ❖ **The Exemplary Lives of Men in God's Word**
- ❖ **The Effective Impact of Compassion**

#### STRONG REASON # 5

### **The Explicit Promise of Scripture**

**Psalm 126:5 and 6**

*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. (Emphasis mine)*

### **To sow we must first go, but to reap we must first weep!!**

Dr. John Vaughn preached from Psalm 126 at a pastors' conference in California. He gave the historical setting of Israel's enemies sowing their fertile soil with salt—so it wouldn't produce crops. At this time in their history, the land was just starting to bear crops again. They had been sowing in tears because nothing was being produced—but now, they were going to see a harvest. When you study the New Testament, you see the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. The seed in that parable is the Word of God. I Peter 1:23, which says, *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* We have been commissioned to go into all the world and sow the seed of God's Word—and present the Gospel to every person on earth. (Mark 16:15) But, when we do this, this passage admonishes us to do it with tears (with compassion)! No—not every person you witness to will be saved, not even the ones you weep over; but, this passage gives an explicit promise of success in witnessing when we are COMPASSIONATE. How many more could be saved and would be saved if we would weep for souls! Compassion makes a dramatic difference!



God greatly worked in my heart in the summer of 1971, when I served on the Mission Manhattan team—6 students from Bob Jones University working through First Baptist Church on 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway. I had been involved in many areas of Christian ministry since my freshman year in 1966, but this summer gave me a greater burden for the lost. This international city with its millions of people worked its way into my heart that summer.

The team's married couple and the three single guys all returned to Greenville, South Carolina, for another year of college, but God led me to remain in the City to disciple the many folks who had made professions of faith that summer. Just before leaving Manhattan in January of 1972, the Lord broke



my heart one evening in the basement of First Baptist Church. I began crying over the lost in New York City. Those tears flowed for at least 10 minutes. When the tears were subsiding, I picked up my guitar and began singing a prayer to God. This was completely impromptu. I had never come up with my own poem or original melody for a song before—but, that night the words and melody just poured out. These are the words to that song:

### Weeping For Souls

Dear Lord, please give me tears as I tell souls of Thee

Dear Lord, please give me tears I pray.

Help me weep for the lost and to count not the cost,

As I tell them of Thy perfect love.

Chorus:

Weeping for souls, Jesus take control. Help me to win souls for Thee.

Help me plant the seed, so they'll see their need

Lord, give me souls to bring to Thee.

Dear Lord, help my tears to increase through the years,

Lord, help me win them one by one.

Then one help me to stand with no blood on my hands,

So that I may hear Thy voice say, "Well done!"

I was saved in April of 1963. This song was penned in January of 1972. Nearly nine years passed in my Christian life, and this was the first time I ever wept over lost souls. I thank the Lord for breaking my heart that night. Tears were shed in those previous nine years at funerals or when girls dumped me or I had my feelings hurt by others—but these tears were for others and their need of a Savior. I am also grateful that God has given me tears many times since that eventful night in January of 1972.

Have you ever wept for souls? Has there ever been a time in your Christian life that you cried over the condition of America and wept because you knew someone who was headed for hell unless he or she got saved? If not, I hope you have listened to these five strong reasons. I've asked for a verdict. Will your verdict be, "I see from God's Word that I need more compassion for the lost in my life, and I need to ask God for tears for the lost."?

