

“Releasing God’s Compassion”

Isaiah 58:6-12

Introduction

In 1969, the Apollo 11 space crew deposited a reflective panel made of one hundred mirrors on the moon. Later, other Apollo crews and Soviet rovers delivered four more reflective panels to the moon. The reflectors made it possible to reflect light in all directions. For decades, scientists have been able to bounce laser beams off those reflectors to determine the precise distance between the Earth and the moon. This phenomenon demonstrates the way God meets our needs. When believers dispense compassion to others like a laser beam of light, God boomerangs the blessing back to them. God meets the needs of His people as they seek to meet the needs of others who are oppressed.

There are three reasons why we must be compassionate. First, it is a command of God. If we want God to release compassion to us, we need to obey this command. Second, we need God to show compassion in every area of our lives. What we want to receive from God, we must be willing to give. In His great kindness, God uses others to meet our needs. Third, this is the heart of God—to be compassionate and a giver. God gives so that people can benefit. He wants us to be a reflection of Him.

Our compassion can bring relief to people who are oppressed by life’s circumstances, whether the oppression is spiritual, social, or economic. Spiritual oppression is caused by sin. Social oppression encompasses things like poverty or homelessness. Economic oppression involves forces at work that keep people from maximizing their full potential. Bringing relief to people allows us to represent the hands and feet of Jesus. When we do this, God rewards us with increased spiritual support. We will receive more answers to prayer because God sees that He can use us to answer the prayers of others. Also, we gain a stronger testimony as we make a social impact. By servicing others, people will witness the difference we make. We will be deemed the true representatives of the heart of God. Ultimately, we get back the compassion that we release to others.

Getting Started

1. How can other types of reflectors or mirrors be beneficial?
2. What are some examples of how people are subdued spiritually, socially, or economically?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Share an example of a period when you obeyed God’s command to be compassionate and how it impacted your life.
2. How have you experienced oppression in your life? Did someone bring you relief when you needed it?
3. What obstacles keep you from showing compassion to others when you know you should?

Take the Next Step

1. What are some ways you can be compassionate to others? Ask someone to hold you accountable to show compassion in one of those ways this week.
2. What are some ways you could bring relief to people from their social or economic hardship? Work with a friend or family member to help relieve someone's oppression this week.
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Isaiah 58:6-12; Luke 4:14-19; Luke 10:30-37; James 1:27; James 2:1-13; 1 John 3:16-18; Matthew 25:31-46; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 1:13-20; Matthew 14:14; Hebrews 10:34.

Renew Your Mind

*“And if you give yourself to the hungry
And satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
Then your light will rise in darkness
And your gloom will become like midday.”*

Isaiah 58:10
