



“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – June 26, 2022

To Know Christ...

Have you ever considered that Jesus read the Old Testament Scrolls during His life on earth? There are times Jesus even quotes the Prophet Hosea. [Hosea prophesied about Jesus’ resurrection - Hosea 6:1-2] Notice Hosea 6:6-7. **“For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. But like Adam they have transgressed the covenant; There they have dealt treacherously against Me.”** Loyalty can also be translated with words like “mercy” or “compassion”. Loyalty to the Lord means showing mercy and compassion to others who are completely unworthy. A great recipient of this is Gomer, Hosea’s undevoted wife. Yet Hosea shows Gomer “loyalty”, “mercy”, and “compassion”. It is completely undeserved.

Jesus taught about compassion on several occasions. Jesus was eating at the house of Matthew, the tax collector. (Matthew 9:9-13) Many tax collectors and sinners (unreligious Jews) were there eating with Jesus. The Pharisees were outraged as Jesus was intermingling and eating with such lowly people. The Pharisees asked Jesus’ disciples, **“WHY is your teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?”** Jesus stepped in to answer, He said the healthy do not need a physician, but those who are sick. **“But go and learn what this means: “I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE.”** The Pharisees were only looking at these tax collectors and sinners as the scum of Israel, yet Jesus saw the outcasts as needing compassion and mercy. Jesus says, I came for sinners! The Pharisees had transgressed the covenant and dealt treacherously with Jesus. (Sounds like Hosea 6:7!) Their sacrifices meant nothing to God because they never learned to show compassion and mercy toward those who had not “earned” it. I wonder which role we are more like in this story. (Matthew, the Pharisees, tax collectors, sinners, or Jesus) Perhaps we need to learn compassion and mercy too or our offerings & worship will not be accepted either.

Jesus' disciples had just walked through the grainfields picking the heads off of the wheat on the Sabbath day, and the Pharisees exclaimed, "**Look, Your disciples do what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.**" (Matthew 12:1-7) Jesus speaks of the story where David goes to the city of Nob and asks a priest for food because David and his men are hungry. The priest gave David consecrated bread that was only for priests. Lawbreaker! NO, compassion and mercy! Was Jesus right or wrong? Are there compassionate and merciful exceptions to rules due to the situation? Then Jesus speaks of the priests who break the Sabbath because they must work all seven days of the week. Should priests understand merciful exceptions? Listen to Jesus, "**But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' you would not have condemned the innocent.**" The Pharisees had condemned Jesus' disciples for being hungry and picking grain as they walked through the grainfields on the Sabbath. I wonder how much we consider mercy and compassion before condemning the innocent too. Commandments are not to be ignored, but the Lord desires compassion, and not sacrifice. Gomer failed the commandments of a wife, but Hosea was commanded to offer mercy and compassion. Who are we like in our lives?

- Carey Terry