

COMPASSION FOR AUTHORITY

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

POWER BELIEVERS COMPASSION DO GOOD

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

2 Kings 5:1-15

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn that it is also necessary to show compassion to those who have been placed in a place of power

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Naaman was a distinguished captain of the armed forces in Aram (Syria) and he had leprosy. One of his Hebrew slaves felt a lot of compassion for him, and she told him that from what she had heard, there was a prophet in Israel who could cure him.

Because the national security depended on Naaman, it was necessary that he be healed. So, the king of Syria sent Naaman with a letter to the king of Israel so he could be healed. The king of Israel did not have the power to heal him and he was scared when Naaman came to him. He was sure the king of Syria was trying to have an excuse to start a war with Israel.

Right then, Elisha sent a message. His sure and strong words, "Have the man come to me," was a big contrast to the weak words of the king, "Am I God?" The king of Israel was not close to God, but the prophet was.

Naaman hurried to Elisha's house and hoped that the prophet would salute him with all the respect that his great position deserved, and that he would be healed quickly and magically. But it was not like that at all. Elisha sent his servant with a message to him: "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed" (v. 10).

Naaman got really angry. Did this prophet not understand that the leader of Syria's armed forces was here? And he wants me to wash myself in the muddy waters of the Jordan? Why not the cleaner rivers of Syria? (Obviously, Naaman had forgotten that he

had already tried all of the resources Syria had to offer.)

His servants reminded him that he had been willing to trying anything to be healed, so why not try this simple act? Finally, he decided he had nothing to lose, and as soon as he did it, he was healed, and his skin became clean like that of a young boy. No one doubted that this was a supernatural gift from God. Elisha rejected the gifts that Naaman offered him. He wanted to show Naaman that the grace of God is not something that you win, buy or that you even deserve.

God calls us to have compassion on everyone equally. It may be easier to see the needs of the sick, those that have suffered through accidents, people who have physical disabilities or those who are poor. However, sometimes behind the outward appearances of the wealthy, and those who hold high positions, hide other realities: empty lives, needs that they try to fill with material objects, big houses, and cars. These appearances are just masks hiding what is there.

Sometimes we think of powerful people only as people who have a lot of money, positions in the government or big company owners. But there are also other people who have authority like professors, parents and pastors.

The thing that puts us all in the same social level (the rich and poor, educated people and not, sick and healed, etc.) is the unavoidable need for Christ in our lives (Romans 3:23). Regardless of what status we have, we all need Christ.

As Christians, we should always show compassion, towards the wealthy, the important, etc. because even though they have a lot, many are missing something very important, the presence of Christ in their hearts.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Tell the group: "God calls us to have compassion on everyone equally." Then ask: "Who might be easier to show compassion to?" (allow several responses) Then say: "It may be easier to see the needs of the sick, those that have suffered through accidents, people who have physical disabilities or those who are poor." Ask the children: "Are there any people that it might be harder to think of needing our compassion?" (allow several responses)

Then tell the group: "Sometimes behind the outward appearances of the wealthy, and those who hold high positions, hide other realities: empty lives, needs that they try to fill with material objects, big houses, and cars. These appearances are just masks hiding what is there. Sometimes we think of powerful people only as people who have a lot of money, positions in the government or big company owners. But there are also other people who have authority like professors, parents and pastors. The thing that puts us all in the same social level (the rich and poor, educated people and not, sick and healed, etc.) is the unavoidable need for Christ in our lives (Romans 3:23). Regardless of what status we have, we all need Christ. As Christians, we should always show compassion, towards the wealthy, the important, etc. because even though they have a lot, many are missing something very important, the presence of Christ in their hearts."

TEACH THE LESSON

Are you kidding me?

"Oh no!" cried the young servant girl. "Leprosy? No!" Naaman, her master, had a terrible disease and no one could cure it. She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." Naaman's wife commented to him what the servant had told her.

"Could he really help me?" Naaman asked her. He went to ask the king if he could go to Israel to find this prophet Elisha. The king of Syria said, "By all means, go. I'll send a letter to the king of Israel."

Naaman went to Israel with his servants, horses and chariots. The letter he took to the king said, "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy." As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

When Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. Elisha sent a messenger to say to him: "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Yahweh his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could not I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

Naaman's servants cared for and loved their master and wished that he would be cured. They knew he had already tried

everything and nothing had healed him, so they said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed!'"

So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan River seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. Naaman stood before Elisha and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel."

Naaman was so excited that Elisha had compassion on him that he tried to give him lots of gifts, but the prophet refused because he wanted Naaman to understand that it was not he who healed him, but God. And that no one could buy favor in the eyes of the Lord. (2 Kings 5)

CONNECT THE LESSON

Review

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #307-A and #307-B to review the lesson.

What would have happened?

Give the group Student Activity Sheet #307-C and ask the children to think about what would have happened to the characters in the Bible story if no one had showed anyone compassion. Read each question and let the children express their ideas and feelings. What would have happened...?

1. If the servant girl had not cared enough to talk to Naaman's wife?
2. If Naaman's wife had not cared enough to tell him what the servant said?
3. If Elisha had not told Naaman what to do?
4. If the king of Syria had not given Naaman permission to visit Israel?
5. If the servants of Naaman had let their master leave after not wanting to wash himself in the Jordan?

Compassion for those who have power and authority

Pass out Student Activity Sheet #307-D. Have the group write answers to each of these questions:

1. Who are people that have power and authority? (Kings and queens, presidents, teachers, pastors, parents, etc.)
2. Why do people with power and authority need compassion? (Because sometimes they feel alone. They have problems just like the rest of the people, some have lots of money but money does not buy everything; for instance health or happiness. We all need Christian compassion.)
3. How can we be compassionate towards them?

(We can write them letters of appreciation, etc.)

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Tear papers into strips and write one word of the verse on each of them. (It may be easiest for this exercise to just use whole pieces of paper, or even half, and write one word per sheet.) Fold them in half. Invite everyone who wants to participate. Have each child choose a piece of paper and tape them up on the board in the correct order.

WRAP-UP

Pray

For the end-of-session prayer, ask the Lord to help the group to show compassion to others, especially those in leadership.

Encourage

Thank the group for their attendance and encourage them not to forget what they learned.

Invite

Announce something about the next session to increase the group's interest. Remind them that visitors are welcome.