

Applying a Biblical Worldview of Love & Compassion

Isaiah 58:6-12

At salvation each of us were designed by God to impact the world around us.

The way God describes our choices to fulfill our duty was simply stated in Acts about how David lived. David accomplished God's will by doing what God desired for him to do.

Acts 13:36 (ESV) For David, after he had **served the purpose of God** in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption,

Acts 13:36 (NKJV) "For David, after he had **served his own generation by the will of God**, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption;

God wants us to serve those people He puts around us during our lifetime.

Jesus saved us to live for Him in our corner of the world.

He called us to become salt and light to the world we live in.

Salt speaks of us spreading the healing, and life giving work of the Gospel.

Light speaks of us shining Christ as the Way, Truth & Life, in this world of darkness.

That means simply:

LIVING FOR GOD

The early believers were known for their love, patience, endurance, and compassion.

They rescued orphans. They took in the helpless. They fed and clothed the needy.

Wherever they lived life was better around them.

They were different. They were hopeful. They were joyful.

They were real people, struggling through life like everyone else, only with a contagious hope.

Much of the early church at first was Jewish. They had heard the Scriptures all their lives. They knew God's desire for compassion on the foreigners, and on the needy. The compassionate lifestyle we see in our Isaiah 58 passage is what all Jewish background believers would have heard growing up. As we saw last time, the first step in embracing a Biblical or Christian worldview is for each of us to start carefully:

LISTENING TO GOD

God is love (1 Jn. 4:8,16).

Jesus said that His love reflected through us would be the way people would know we are His disciples (Jn 13:35).

The Spirit of God overflows us with love from God (Rm. 5:5).

God wants us to be kind and tenderhearted and compassionate like Him (Eph. 4:32).

This is the most understandable attribute of God.

When God explains His character in 1 John, He says: God is love. God loves us. We are to love one another.

When God explains to us what He desires to be our attitude towards the world He demonstrated it by His ministry: Jesus who is the exact image of God the father showed such tender compassion for both saved and lost people. He felt for their needs and extended compassion towards them.

God wants to have us reflect His love in this world. Jesus said that the badge of love would be how the world would know that we are His people. God wanted Old Testament Israel to live in such a way that the world around them saw, and felt the love and compassion of God. That is how:

GOD EXPLAINS HIS DESIRES IN ISAIAH 58

One of the clearest passages where God explained His desires for the compassionate worldview of His people is here in Isaiah 58:6.

As we turn there think again about this question. Are we living the way God wants us to live by embracing a biblical worldview in a fallen world? Prayer is seeking God. Fasting is denying self.

In Isaiah 58:6 God says this is what I want you to long for. This is what I want you to discipline your personal appetites and desires to accomplish. Please stand as we hear the way God wants us to operate while living in our fallen world:

Isaiah 58:6-12 (NKJV) “*Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke? ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him, And not hide yourself from your own flesh? ⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning, Your healing shall spring forth speedily, And your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. ⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, ‘Here I am.’ ‘If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, ¹⁰ If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday. ¹¹ The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. ¹² Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.*”

A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW PRODUCES COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE

In Isaiah 58:6-12 we can find that God explains what He wishes to see happening inside of us as we live and work in a sin-stained society. He wants us to not get hardened or insulated from the needs of fellow humans all around us.

The first impact that God wants to have in our lives through fasting is to stir a longing in us for the needy people living in the darkness of sin all around us.

1. God desires us to:

SEEK BIBLICAL DELIVERANCE FOR PEOPLE CAPTIVATED BY ENSLAVING SINS AROUND US, BY TELLING THEM THE GOSPEL.

Isaiah 58:6 “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, To undo the heavy burdens, To let the oppressed go free, And that you break every yoke?”

Remember that Jesus used this verse as He launched His public ministry in Nazareth, as recorded in Luke 4. Jesus used this verse with a spiritual application. Turn there and see the launch of Christ's ministry.

Luke 4:17-20 (NKJV) And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to *the* poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to *the* captives And recovery of sight to *the* blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

Jesus was not advocating social revolution. He did not seek to overthrow the corrupt government. He was not calling for emptying all the jails and prisons. He was not advocating for liberation from the Roman Army's occupation.

Jesus said His ministry was spiritual, not political. His Kingdom was other worldly, not this world. Jesus came to rescue humans needing the power of God to be set free from the bondage of sin. That is also our calling. We follow His lead.

2. God desires us to:

SEEK TO FEED THE NEEDY AND THE HUNGRY AROUND US, BY SHOWING THEM CHRIST'S LOVE AND COMPASSION.

Isaiah 58:7a Is it not to share **your** bread with the hungry,

Notice the personal element here.

I take my own supply for today's meal and share that with those who have nothing. Remember back when the philosophers were describing early Christianity? The actually witnessed this happening. Let me read that again.

About A.D. 133 Aristeides¹, a teacher of philosophy, presented a defense of Christianity to Emperor Hadrian.

Now the Christians, O King...have the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ himself engraven on their hearts, and they observe, looking for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. They do not covet men's goods; and love their neighbors; they despise not the widow, and grieve not the orphan. He that hath distributeth liberally to him that hath not. If they see a stranger, they bring him under their roof and rejoice over him, as if it were their own brother; for they call themselves brethren, not after the flesh, but after the spirit and in God.... **And if there is among them a man that is poor and needy, and they have not an abundance of necessities, they fast two or three days that they may supply the needy with their necessary food.**

3. God desires us to:

SEEK SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS AND THE UNPROTECTED AROUND US, BY SHOWING THEM CHRIST'S LOVE AND COMPASSION.

Isaiah 58:7b And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; When you see the naked, that you cover him,

4. God desires us to:

SEEK TO NEVER GET CALLOUSED & INDIFFERENT FOR THE OPPRESSED AROUND US, BY MAINTAINING CHRIST'S LOVE AND COMPASSION IN OUR LIVES.

Isaiah 58:7c And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

5. God desires us to:

SEEK TO REFUSE PREJUDICE IN ANY FORM AROUND US, BY TREATING OTHERS THE WAY CHRIST'S LOVE AND COMPASSION WAS DISPLAYED TOWARDS SINNERS.

Isaiah 58:9b "If you take away the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,

6. God desires us to:

SEEK TO DISPLAY CHRIST'S LOVE FOR THE POOR, NEEDY, OUTCAST & AFFLICTED IN SOCIETY AROUND US.

Isaiah 58:10 If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul,

We are to notice and respond to the needy that God has placed in our path. It was those who walked along the same road with the Good Samaritan that Jesus condoned. Not everyone was responsible for the man beaten and left for dead along the road. Just those who traveled that road.

We are responsible to have love and compassion for those who God places along the road

¹ Drawn from the Godward Life.

of our lives. Remember that our love and compassion is contagious? Listen now as God describes what the lives of those who allow His Spirit to flow through, fill, and like a river of living water flow out of their lives. This is what God wants all of us to be.

It is Christ in me the hope of glory, that is what God has planned, designed, and desired from us. Listen to what Paul says in:

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE JUST REFLECT CHRIST'S COMPASSION

In this sin-parched world, we are overflowing with Spirit of God generated streams of living water.

In this sin-darkened world, we are reflecting the Light of the World who lives in us.

In this sin-cursed and starving world, we are sharing the Bread of Life who lives in us.

In this sin-enslaved world we know the Truth who lives within us, and can point people to how He can set them free.

In this sin-blinded world we have had our sight restored by the touch of Jesus and we want all we meet to also feel His touch and have their eyes opened as they are turned from darkness to light.

That is the abundant life with which:

GOD PROMISES TO BLESS HIS FOLLOWERS

Isaiah next lists of the ten blessings God pours out through His Spirit into the lives of those who follow Him, love Him, and serve Him.

Each of these blessings are just reflections of Christ living in us, shing through us, and flowing out of us. It isn't us. It is never about us.

1. Isaiah 58:8a Then your light shall break forth like the morning.

We can call this the **Enlightened Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would "not walk in darkness...but have the light of life" (John 8:12)

2. Isaiah 58:8b Your healing shall spring forth speedily.

We can call this the **Strengthened Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would like Him "have food to eat ye know not of..." (John 4:32)

3. Isaiah 58:8c And your righteousness shall go before you.

We can call this the **Holy Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Mt. 5:6)

4. Isaiah 58:8d The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

We can call this the **Secured Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the

Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would know that "Lo I am with you always..." (Mt. 28:20)

5. Isaiah 58:9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

We can call this the **Godward Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would find that "whatever you ask...I will do it" (John 15:16).

6. Isaiah 58:8a, 10b Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.

We can call this the **Enlightened Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would "not walk in darkness...but have the light of life" (John 8:12)

7. Isaiah 58:11a The Lord will guide you continually.

We can call this the **Confident Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would have "My peace I give unto you..." (John 14:27)

8. Isaiah 58:11b And satisfy your soul in drought.

We can call this the **Satisfied Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would have "Life, and live more abundant..." (John 10:10)

9. Isaiah 58:11c And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

We can call this the **Renewed Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would have "never thirst...out of him flow rivers of living water..." (John 6:35; 7:37)

10. Isaiah 58:12 Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

We can call this the **Rewarded Living** that Jesus spoke of when He promised in the Gospels to all that follow Him, that they would "lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven..." (Mat 6:20)

Each of these blessings are just reflections of Christ living in us, shining through us, and flowing out of us.

It isn't us. It is never about us.

Is Christ reflecting His LOVE through you?