

CLI Leadership Bible Study: Lesson 14

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of a Leader (Day One) *Love me Tender*

Lesson 13, *Spiritual Warfare*, was about standing your ground and taking back strongholds from Satan and his demons. You *are* confident in combat because you know that you do not stand alone. The Holy Spirit lives in you, providing counsel and battle plans as well as the strength and power to succeed.

Sometimes the battle plans we receive may contradict (disagree with) worldly wisdom. Indeed Jesus' strategy was to accept an excruciating death sentence on the cross. He won the war with Satan and sits at the right hand of the Father. We are left with individual battles and skirmishes until King Jesus returns and sets up His Kingdom.

In the same way, our battle plans from the Holy Spirit may sometimes appear strange and illogical. In those times refer back to Jesus' life; read one or more of the gospels. Our instructions come from the mind of God and will agree with His Word. Meditate on Jesus, our leadership model. He has shown us the way by going before us.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:11b-13 and answer questions 1-3:

In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.¹² We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.¹³ This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 1 Corinthians 2:11b-13

1. Who knows the thoughts of God (v. 11b)?

****See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.** *When all the questions have been completed, return your answer sheets to CLI. You may keep this lesson for your own study or review. You may also pass it on to another or discard.*

2. Christians have not received the _____ of the _____ but the _____ who is from _____ (v. 12a).
3. Christians do not speak or act in human wisdom but by the _____ (v.13a)

The Holy Spirit gives us discernment (sensitivity) in knowing God's will and plan for the battle field. He gives us the ability to judge between human wisdom and God's truth. For example, read the title of this lesson, *The Tender Heart of a Leader*. In our human experience, it would seem an oxymoron (opposite meaning) to be a warmhearted warrior. How can you be involved in combat and exhibit a gentle spirit?

Read Matthew 23:37 and answer questions 4-5:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." Matthew 23:37

4. Jesus acknowledges the evil that exists among the people and yet says, "how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a _____ gathers her _____ under her _____, but you were not willing."
5. By identifying with a hen gathering chicks, what kind of picture is Jesus painting of Himself?

Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. 1 John 2:6

6. Read 1 John 2:6. If you claim to live in Jesus, how must you walk?

Jesus could have compared Himself to any kind of impressive animal, such as a tiger, bear, rhinoceros or eagle, yet He likens Himself to a lowly hen. She has no sharp teeth, claws or armor. Even her ability to escape danger is limited; she cannot fly, run fast or take many defensive maneuvers. In fact, hens do not have much respect in our world unless, of course, they are being served as food.

But oh, how she loves her babies. Chicks love to nestle under their mother's soft wings for comfort and refreshment. If life gets too difficult in the field or the farmyard, they run for mama.

One of the dangers they face on the farmyard or in the field is fire. When a forest fire burned down a farmhouse a few years ago, the owner returned to inspect the damage. As he slowly walked through the ravaged yard, he noticed a burned lump on the ground. Not knowing exactly what it was, he took a stick and turned it over.

To his great surprise, four baby chicks scampered out from under the charred body of their mother.

One of the dangers that everyone on planet earth faces is the fires of hell. In fact, in the same breath that Jesus cries out with tenderness, He warns of the Jews separation from God (Matthew 23:38) and then warns of the total destruction of the Temple (Matthew 24:1). We do not know at what hour our earthly life may end, but like the baby chicks took refuge in their mother, we need to run and take refuge in Jesus.

Jesus' body was hardly recognizable when His lifeless body was removed from the cross (Isaiah 52:14). But just like the hen gives her life for her brood, so Jesus gives His life for us. By describing Himself as a mother hen, Jesus is revealing Himself as a *tender* and nurturing defender. He goes to war with heavenly plans and not in earthly wisdom; He is a *strong* and *tender* warrior.

Jesus cares for you and expresses His feelings for you in many ways. Open your heart to new ways of His tenderness and care. He is considerate and protective of you and will never let you go. Listen and look daily for the Holy Spirit whispering His tender love for you in varied and marvelous ways.

Definition: The word tender is an adjective describing a very loving and gentle person. A tender person is kind, sympathetic, sensitive and caring toward others. It also means being responsive to God's guidance. A tender person often feels emotions intensely.

God the Father is **Tender**. God the Spirit is **Tender**. God the Son is **Tender** and is our Model of the **Tender Leader**. Remember that God has many characteristics and one does not reduce the reality of the others. For example, God's righteousness and power do not diminish His love and tenderness for His people. The same is, or should be, true of our character.

Read Isaiah 53:2-4 and answer questions 7-11:

He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.
Isaiah 53:2-4

7. The prophet Isaiah prophesied about the Messiah long before He was born. In verse 2 Isaiah says that Jesus grew up like a _____ shoot, and like a root out of dry ground.

8. How is Jesus described physically (v. 2)?

9. How was Jesus treated by the men He created (v. 3)?

10. Isaiah says “we” esteemed (respected) him not (v. 3). Who are these people that Isaiah identifies with by including himself with the word “we”?

11. What kind of person would take up your diseases and carry your sorrows (v. 4)?

Jesus grew up like a tender or young sprout. He was a seedling or sapling from King David’s dynasty. David’s royal line (his family) had not been producing kings; they were stuck in dry ground.

Even though Jesus was a King in the line of David, He was different from the people’s view of a king. In fact, He was not like earthly kings at all. He had no majesty or beauty in His appearance and was despised and rejected by those He had come to serve and save.

There was a time in our lives when we were in sin and rejected our tender King. Yes, the “we” in Isaiah 53:2-3 applied to the Israelites and to every person ever born, including you and me. Sadly, there are still times as Christians that we do not value the “Man of Sorrows.” We do not want to identify with Him in His rejection, sadness and grief. We only want to identify with Him in His resurrection joy and glory.

We fail to understand that our glory, like Jesus’ glory, comes after the earthly life. In our efforts to avoid carrying our own cross in identification with our Leader, we may reject Him in many varied and subtle ways. For example, to avoid rejection, pain or discomfort, we may try and take control or manipulate situations or circumstances.

Jesus asked to be released from the cross, but immediately prayed, *yet not my will, but yours be done* (Luke 22:42). By His actions Jesus has shown us how to handle difficult situations. We pray about the difficulty but are willing to accept the assignment or situation on God’s terms. Our contentment is in God, not in circumstances.

12. Examine your own heart. Do you have a situation or lifestyle that rejects or despises the "Man of Sorrows"? Yes No (Circle One) If yes, what are you going to do about it?

Jesus was, is, and always will be a tender Leader. He does not come dressed in the garments of earthly leadership but of heavenly headship. Our royal Model is clothed with compassion, mercy, sympathy, empathy, sensitivity and love. These are characteristics that define the "tender leader."

13. Are compassion, mercy, sympathy, empathy, sensitivity and love words that describe your heart of leadership? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One)

14. Which of the characteristics in #13 do you most struggle with and how may we pray for you?

Personal Application:

Read and meditate on Deuteronomy 32:1-3; Proverbs 4:3-4 and Mark 10:13-16. Ask God to speak to you through these verses.

15. What did God say or impress upon you through these Scripture passages?

16. How will you change in thought, attitude or action because of your answer above?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Two) The Royal Cloth of Compassion and Mercy

Jesus, our leadership model, is clothed in a royal robe of many colors. Each color is brilliant and blends marvelously together with the others. The royal cloth is made with the color of (1) compassion, (2) mercy, (3) sympathy, (4) empathy, (5) sensitivity and (6) love. These are all characteristics of our tender Leader and ones that we will want to study and embrace.

I. Compassion

Definition: Compassion is the concern for the sufferings of others and the desire to help.

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. Exodus 34:6

17. Read Exodus 34:6. When God passed in front of Moses, what was the first adjective He used in describing Himself?

The triune God is compassionate. He knows of our sufferings and struggles and wants to help us. In fact, He longs to help. God tells us plainly throughout Scripture that He is tender hearted.

When you put on the royal cloth of compassion you are able to feel pity for others and want to help them in their sufferings or difficulties. You are concerned about individuals or groups of people in need. You want to copy the compassion of God.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Matthew 9:36 (Harassed is being disturbed with trouble or cares)

18. Read Matthew 9:36. Why did Jesus have compassion on the crowds?

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."⁴¹ Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured. Mark 1:40-42

19. Read Mark 1:40-42. When a man with leprosy begged Jesus to make him clean, how did Jesus feel and how did He respond?

The NIV (New International Version, 1995) translates the Greek word *splagchnizomai*, (σπλαγχνίζομαι) with the English phrase "filled with compassion." It can also be translated "moved by compassion" or pity. Jesus had compassion, moved forward and took action. He reached out and touched a diseased man. Not just any diseased man, but a man with a horrible, ugly, infectious disease. The NIV translates the infectious skin disease as leprosy. Those with leprosy¹ can have many deforming lesions and patches on their skin.

Joseph de Veuster (1840-1889) from Flanders in Belgium desired a heart of compassion like Jesus. He joined the priesthood of the Catholic Church and went to Hawaii as a missionary in 1864. The native Hawaiians were being infected and dying from various diseases, including leprosy that had been introduced by traders and sailors.²

¹ Hansen's disease is a chronic infectious disease caused by the bacterium mycobacterium leprae. Leprosy is primarily a granulomatous disease of the peripheral nerves and mucosa of the upper respiratory tract,; skin lesions are the primary external symptom. Left untreated, leprosy can be progressive, causing permanent damage to the skin, nerves, limbs, and eyes. Wikipedia:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leprosy>

² Ibid

The king of Hawaii ordered that those infected with leprosy be moved to the north side of the island of Molokai. This was done to protect the rest of the population from contracting the disease. It became a chaotic leper colony with 816 men, women and children. There was no Christian or secular leadership; sin was rampant. Think about it, in addition to the ugliness of this infectious disease, a trip to Molokai most likely meant a death sentence.

Who would want to go to an island and serve such an unappealing group? Who would have compassion on these tormented souls? Who would take pity on this particular crowd that was harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd? Who would reach out and touch them?

God saw the anguish and the hurt. He needed a leader with compassion like His Son's. "Here am I," said Joseph, "I will go." Joseph, better known as Father Damien, went to Molokai in 1873. He built a church, homes, beds and coffins. Although not medically trained as a doctor, he dressed the leper's ulcers and their wounds with love and comfort. Father Damien also presided (in charge of) over funerals and dug graves for the dead.

Like his Master, Father Damien also gave his life for his flock. The man from Flanders contracted leprosy and died on the Island of Molokai after 13 years of compassionate service. Even with the deadly disease, he kept right on serving until his physical strength was gone.

20. Would you have been willing to serve in such a leper colony? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

21. What do you think gave Father Damien the courage and ability to give up his life for such physically and spiritually unattractive individuals?

We may think that we are a tender hearted leader but when we read about men like Father Damien, we realize that we have a long way to go. The only way Father Damien or any of us can have real compassion is through Jesus. **Let us pray:**

Holy Father,

I pray in Jesus' name to have true compassion. O Spirit, move in my heart and help me cooperate with You so that I may look on crowds and individuals like Jesus did. Move me immediately into action and use me to provide spiritual and physical comfort to those in need. Help me to develop compassion in those I am leading by modeling compassionate behavior. Amen.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have

*received from God.*⁵ *For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.* 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

22. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. What is God telling you through these verses?

II. Mercy

Mercy is similar to compassion and the word in Greek, *eleos* (ἔλεος), translated mercy in English also means having compassion. However, we are going to stress a certain aspect of mercy. In other words, God is fine-tuning (adjusting precisely) your tender heart! He wants precise “heart adjustments” so that you and those you lead will have hearts like His.

Definition: Mercy can be defined as kindness or forgiveness toward another person, especially one in another's power.

A merciful leader refrains from inflicting (causing) punishment or pain on someone when it is in his or her power to do so. Certainly Jesus modeled mercy on the cross as He died a horrible death for the unrighteous (Romans 3:10). Being God, it was within His power to inflict punishment and pain to those who crucified him. Nevertheless, He remained on the cross and asked God to forgive them (and us). God is merciful and expects us to be merciful, also.

In addition, Jesus withstood insults and false accusations while He walked the earth. Indeed, He still sees and hears all the insults and false accusations that pervade (spread through) the earth and the people whom He created. Still, He shows mercy, wanting all to come to repentance and spend eternity with Him (1 Timothy 2:4).

God shows mercy to sinners because He wants them to come to repentance. He knows that if they fail to turn from their wicked ways, they will end up in hell. When Jesus walked the earth, He engaged with sinners for the purpose of their salvation. He did not engage in their sins or condone (overlook) them. No matter who He was with, He shared about the Kingdom of God.

When Jesus was eating with Matthew, tax collectors, and other "sinners," the Pharisees questioned His disciples about it in a negative way (Matthew 9:11-13). They were not concerned about the "sinners" who needed to hear about God but were only interested in rule keeping and rule giving. They did not read or search out the Scriptures with the intent of knowing God's heart and His ways.

The Pharisees were the religious leaders and had power over the people. They could have shown kindness to the people and helped them in their relationship with God. Instead of showing them how to live by God's law and have their sins forgiven (sacrificial system), they chose to separate themselves and feed their condemning (judging) spirit. They were not merciful.

In the same way, we are spiritual leaders. We have the truth of Jesus Christ and can show kindness to others and help them in their relationship with God. We can forgive others when they hurt us and always speak the truth in love.

23. Prayerfully consider who you need to show mercy to this week. In other words, is there someone that you need to forgive or to show a special kindness? Write how God leads you and what happened.

In your zeal to be merciful, remember that God does not want us to engage in the wrongdoing of others. Jesus always had a holy purpose in seeking the lost. He never participated in their sin or agreed with their lifestyle. He entered into our world, not to fit in, but to fit us into His.

Read Psalm 1:1 and answer questions 24-25:

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. Psalm 1:1

24. Does God bless men and women who do not follow sinners? Yes No (Circle One)

25. Were Jesus and His disciples taking advice and instruction from sinners? Yes No (Circle One)

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.⁹ He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. Psalm 25:8

26. Read Psalm 25:8. Does God instruct sinners in His ways? Yes No (Circle One)

Neither Jesus nor His disciples were taking advice from sinners, nor were they following them in any way. They were in the company of sinners to give them instruction or counsel in the ways of God. Their intent was that sinners would turn from their evil ways and follow God.

The Pharisees did not want to forgive or help “sinners.” They had no mercy in their hearts. They were in love with their own self-righteous rituals and not in love with God. They missed the whole point of the law: Love your God, love your neighbor.

But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matthew 9:13 (Jesus quoted Hosea 6:6)

27. Jesus answers the Pharisees in Matthew 9:13. He says, "But _____ and _____ what this means: 'I desire _____, not _____.' For _____ have _____ come to _____ the righteous, but _____."

By the way, Jesus was not saying that the Pharisees were righteous because we know *that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). He was making a distinction between the humble who recognize they are sinners and the proud who do not. The rest of the gospel account makes it clear that the Pharisees were indeed sinners.

Jesus says to go and learn what God means when He says *'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'* The first place the Pharisees should have gone was to the Hebrew Scriptures, which is today, our Old Testament. This is where we should go also to learn why Jesus quoted this verse. Read all of chapter 6 in Hosea and chapters 9 and 12 in Matthew to get a fuller understanding.

For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings. Hosea 6:6 (Underlining by author)

Poetry is literature written in high quality verse. Hebrew poetry often pairs words with equal or strongly related meanings. This form of poetry is called parallelism (parallel, similar) and is found throughout the Old Testament. In other words, a verse expresses one idea in terms of another.

God pairs sacrifice with burnt offerings and mercy with our acknowledgment of Him. Acknowledging the Lord means giving thanks to Him for food, shelter, clothing and all the good things He has provided. It also means recognizing He is our covenant partner. For the Israelites that would mean the Old Covenant and for us, the New Covenant (Jesus effected on the cross). Being in covenant (treaty, agreement) with God means loving and being faithful to Him.

Let us look at how *The Message* and the *New Living Translation* translate Matthew 9:13:

¹¹ "What kind of example is this from your Teacher, acting cozy with crooks and riffraff?" ¹²⁻¹³ Jesus, overhearing, shot back, "Who needs a doctor: the healthy or the sick? Go figure out what this Scripture means: 'I'm after mercy, not religion.' I'm here to invite outsiders, not coddle insiders." ^{MSG}

Then he added, "Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to be merciful; I don't want your sacrifices.' For I have come to call sinners, not those who think they are already good enough."^{NLT}

28. In Matthew 9:13, what does God mean when He says, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice”?

God is more interested in our hearts than our rituals (pattern of behavior). For us, rituals may be attending church or reading the Bible out of habit. We may be more interested in proving our self righteousness and in a sense, condemning others than seeking God. Our motivation and reasoning behind our activity is more important to God than the rules we champion or the animal sacrifices the Israelites offered.

God wants us to be merciful as He is merciful. He wants us to have a heart like His. He desires us to forgive others and help them know Him. How can a sinner acknowledge God if he does not know who God is and what He expects? Jesus modeled the perfect behavior toward sinners.

"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.²⁹ If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic.³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

Luke 6:27-30

29. Read Luke 6:27-30. For the next week, practice living in Jesus' "mercy" commands. Write of one experience God gave you during this time:

30. Memorize Luke 6:27-30.

Personal Application: Read the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant: Matthew 18:21-35

Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?
Matthew 18:33

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to convict you (to show guilt) of any unmerciful acts that you have done or any unmerciful attitudes that you have in your heart. With each remembrance, ask God if there is anything that He would like for you to do about it now. Do it immediately. Ask God's forgiveness in the blood of Christ and move on in mercy in the power of the Holy Spirit.

31. How have you been unmerciful and what does God want you to do about it?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Three) The Royal Cloth of Sympathy

III. Sympathy

Definition: Sympathetic means that one has the ability to share another's emotions or sensations.

The leader feels sorrow or pity toward someone who is suffering pain or grief. In the same manner, he feels happy or joyful toward one who is experiencing blessings or good things. Because of our jealous nature, sometimes it is easier to feel sorrow with another rather than joy.

To be in sympathy with another also means that you have similar beliefs, opinions or tastes. In this respect Christians are in sympathy with one another because of the same belief in our Lord Jesus Christ. He gives us the right and holy opinions and tastes!

Read John 11:32-35 and answer questions 32-35:

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.³⁴ "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied.³⁵ Jesus wept.

John 11:32-35

32. When Jesus saw Mary and the other mourners weeping, how do you think He felt and what was His response (v. 35)?

Jesus was sympathetic. He was deeply moved and troubled; He wept. Please see the order of Jesus' actions. He did not slough off (shed, cast) Mary and the Jews' emotions even when He knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. He shared in their grief and then raised him.

33. Are you able to share in another's grief and pain? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One)

34. In regard to your answer above, explain why or why not you are able to sympathize with others?

35. How may we pray for you in this regard?

Even if you do not have many hurts or challenges, is it not gratifying (pleasing) to have a sympathetic ear when you do? Is it not healing to have someone listen patiently and show concern for your pain and misfortunes? Those in your charge need to see this side of your leadership. They need to feel it and see it modeled for them. They need to know you care.

As with every good thing, be careful not to overdo it. There is balance in life, even in holy characteristics. Jesus was not continually weeping nor did He encourage it. If you or those you are discipling are always having problems and seeking attention, that is a different issue. This person may need a trained counselor to help get at the root of his problems.

God does raise up and work through trained professionals to heal and serve others. On the other hand you, could simply be dealing with a sin issue whereby the person has a selfish and self-centered agenda. Prayerfully consider how the Lord wants you to proceed. The important thing is that you do not enable anyone to be a constant complainer, grumbler or attention seeker. Your job as a shepherd leader is to allow the Spirit to move you in sympathy and all other godly characteristics appropriately.

Read Romans 12:15-16a and answer questions 36-38:

*Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.*¹⁶ *Live in harmony with one another.* Romans 12:15-16a

36. In addition to mourning with those who mourn, what are two other things we should do?

37. Which is easier for *you*, to be sympathetic in one's suffering or in his or her joy? Why?

38. How will wearing the cloth of sympathy help you to live in harmony with one another?

Not only are we to sympathize with those who are grieving, but also we are to rejoice with those who are rejoicing (Exodus 18:9). Sometimes it may be easier to feel sympathy for someone having a difficult time than it is to be happy for someone's good fortune. It comes down to jealousy.

We are not envious of someone's illness or grief, but what about his new house or car? This takes us directly to the tenth commandment whereby we are told not to covet anything of our neighbors (Exodus 20:17). God is telling us not to have an

unhealthy desire for something that is not ours. A wrong desire in one's heart is the springboard for his outwardly sinful actions.

In the same vein, we are not covetous (desire) of a Christian's struggle with sin, but what about her success in ministry? Sometimes another's success can make us feel unsuccessful or unacceptable. We desire the achievement or accomplishment of the other person. When this happens our focus is off God and His will for us.

Christians can be tempted and succumb (surrender) to earthly success and earthly approval even in ministry. **Guard your heart and remember to be happy for those upon whom God smiles!** It does not mean that God loves you less; it just means that His plan for you is different.

Understanding and sharing another's feelings, whether sad or happy, can help us live in harmony with one another. Living in sympathy with one another is paramount to living in harmony. It would be difficult to argue and disagree when you are trying to understand another's circumstance or situation.

IV. Empathy

Definition: Empathy is similar to sympathy but takes feelings deeper. Empathy is the ability to identify oneself mentally with a person and understand his or her feelings, motives and particular situation. In a sense, as you empathize, you become the other person.

Read Hebrews 2:17-18 and answer questions 39-41:

For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Hebrews 2:17-18

39. In what way was Jesus made like people (v. 17a)?

40. What was the purpose of Jesus being made like you and me (v. 17b,c)?

41. Why do you think Jesus is empathetic in your suffering and pain (v.18)?

Jesus really understands us, not only because He is God, but also because He was made like us in every way. He was made human so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest, reconciling human beings to the triune God. During His earthly life, Jesus was challenged with many trials and temptations as well as suffering extreme emotional and physical pain.

When we are communicating empathically, we are totally receptive to what other people are expressing. We are not thinking about how we will respond but how others are feeling. Our focus is such that we can emotionally experience what is

being shared. We are involved in understanding and identifying with the other person. The goal is unity and not separation.

Christ became man and totally identified with us. He empathizes with our suffering and encourages us with His love. We should have the same empathetic attitude in love and purpose. Jesus actually took the concept of empathy to a degree that we cannot replicate. However, it should lead us to praise God everyday. He actually took our sins into His body on the cross and paid the price for our transgressions; by His wounds we are healed. Although we do not have the capacity to take someone's sins, we do have the ability to tell others about the Christ who did.

Personal Application:

Memorize: Philippians 2:3-8

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:3-8

42. Write your memory verses, Philippians 2:3-8, without referring to your Bible or notes:

43. Pray and practice being a sympathetic and empathetic leader this week and answer the following question. What did you learn or discover about yourself from this experience?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Four) The Royal Cloth of Sensitivity

V. Sensitivity

Definition: Sensitivity means responsiveness or openness through one's senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste or smell. It is also an awareness and understanding of the feelings of other people.

Jesus had a tender and soft heart toward God. Jesus was always open and sensitive to the Father's leading no matter how difficult the assignment. He was responsive,

which means He reacted quickly, strongly, and favorably toward God and what He desired.

Jesus was always aware of God the Father and God the Spirit. He listened and watched. He complied with and acted upon what He heard and observed. (He is also sensitive in that He is responsive to the feelings and circumstances of others.) *but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.* John 14:31

44. Read John 14:31. What are the two things that the world must learn?

The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said. Exodus 8:19

45. Read Exodus 8:19. Who had a hard heart and was not responsive to God?

The opposite of having a soft (sensitive, aware, responsive) heart to God is having a hard (insensitive, unaware, unresponsive) heart to God. After the third plague (gnats), even Pharaoh's magicians were aware that God was working powerfully in Egypt. But Pharaoh refused to listen.

They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.¹³ "When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen," says the LORD Almighty. Zechariah 7:12-13

Read Zechariah 7:12-13 and answer questions 46-49:

46. Did God's people, the Israelites make their hearts hard as flint (v.12)? Yes No (Circle One)

47. How did the Israelites respond to the law and God's words through the prophets (v.12)?

48. Was the LORD Almighty very angry (v.12)? Yes No (Circle One)

49. How does God respond to people with hard hearts that are not sensitive toward Him? (v.13)

Zechariah began preaching in about 520 B.C., roughly 900 years after God freed the Israelites from Pharaoh's captivity. They had hardened their hearts and would not listen to God through the law and the prophets; these were important ways God communicated with His people. The Israelites were not sensitive to God and His desires so that when they called on Him for their selfish motives, He would not answer.

Another 900 years go by and Jesus is born. Religious groups called the Pharisees and Sadducees were leading God's people at the time. Their hearts were so hardened that they were unable to recognize the Son of God. God was working around them with signs, miracles and healings and yet they attributed His work to the devil (John 8:52).

This lie spread. Even after Jesus' death, the miracles done through His disciples were considered from the devil. A Jewish text, the Babylonian Talmud, which was finalized in the sixth century, has two references to Jesus and His unusual powers. The references charge that the "Nazarene" practiced sorcery and led Israel astray. The Talmud warned others not to have anything to do with these people.³

Read John 12:42-43 and answer questions 50-53:

Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue;⁴³ for they loved praise from men more than praise from God. John 12:42-43 (confess - admit, say clearly)

50. Can a person believe Jesus is the Son of God and still have a hard and unresponsive heart (v.42)? Yes No (Circle One)

51. What is one reason that people believe in Jesus and yet do not respond to Him (vs.42-43)?

52. Why do you think some people are more sensitive to other humans rather than to God (v.43)?

53. How should *you* respond to Jesus?

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. Hebrews 3:12

54. Read Hebrews 3:12. Could you or any Christian leader be in danger of developing a hard heart? Why or why not?

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Hebrews 3:13

55. According to Hebrews 3:13, what is one way that you can lead and help others have a soft heart toward God?

³ Bock, Darrell L., Studying the Historical Jesus. Baker Academic. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 2002. 58-59.
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You can support and cheer on one another in many ways (Ephesians 5:19-20). However, the encouragement is centered on God. It is not about making someone feel good about himself apart from Christ, but in Christ. Therefore, encourage saints daily in order that they remain strong and sensitive toward God.

We live in a day or era of grace. Our sins are forgiven in Christ. But sin is devious and cunning. Sin does not always present itself as sin. For example, God has impressed upon you that you are to rest or worship on a particular day. He wants to spend time alone with you. Then someone calls with a physical need and you immediately rush off to help.

Did God change His mind about your spending time with Him? This is where we need to be careful. Perhaps your impression of what God wanted was incorrect. It is possible for us to be mistaken. On the other hand, God may want someone else to help this person and not you. There is also the possibility that you may want to help because you are afraid of what the person or others may think of you and your reputation as a caring Christian.

Thus sin tries to deceive you into disobeying God with a “good work.” Anything that takes you out of God’s will, no matter how honorable it appears, is sin. It usually comes down to seeking man’s approval and praise rather than God’s. In this regard, we are presented with tests everyday that reveal where our true sensitivities lie.

Now it is excellent to help others and we are commanded to do so, but nevertheless, it is always a matter of God’s will and His priorities. Consider Lazarus and how Jesus did not answer his sister's urgent message immediately. He waited two days before responding (John 11:1-12:19).

Personal Application:

56. Ask God to tenderize your heart and to give you practical ways to develop sensitivity. What are some of the ways God has led you in developing a soft heart?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Five) The Royal Cloth of Love

VI. Love

In Lesson 2: *Triple Love Poured Out*, you learned of God’s amazing love for you. Your belief and trust in God’s unfailing love is an act of faith, just like your salvation. Although during your lifetime as a Christian you will *feel* and *see* the

effects of both God's love and salvation, there may be times that you do not. But you are still loved and still saved.

This belief will help you tremendously when you put on **the royal cloth of love**. It is easier to love others when you are resting and trusting in God's love yourself. **Love is the sixth and final characteristic** of the tender hearted leader.

Definition: We are going to define love in terms of the Greek word *agapao* (ἀγαπάω). It means to place first in one's affections and is often used of Christian love. It also means to show or prove one's care or fondness for another.

God loves you and desires for you to love others. For a greater understanding of love, read and meditate on 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Although there are four different words in the ancient Greek language for love, this Corinthian passage and the following verses use *agapao* (ἀγαπάω).

Read Matthew 5:44 and answer questions 57-59:

But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
Matthew 5:44-48

57. According to the definition of love above, describe how you are to treat your enemies.

58. Why is it so difficult to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you?

59. What motivation (inspiration) do you get from these verses to love and pray for enemies?

Israel was ruled by the Roman Empire during the time of Jesus' ministry. The Jewish tax collectors worked for the hated Romans. Not only were the tax collectors considered traitors, but robbers as well. They collected more money than Rome required and kept it for themselves.

Jesus used the tax collectors as a common example of an enemy. Yes, even they loved family or friends who loved them. God's sons (includes women) are to do

more (Galatians 3:26-29). Not only are we to love those who love us, but we are to love our enemies and love them with more than just a mental recognition of the command. We are to go further by praying and desiring good for them as well!

Jesus did not suffer and die just for His family and friends. No, He loved and died for everyone. Some would repent and accept His love and salvation, others would not. We are to love and share God's plan of salvation with everyone. Some will repent and accept God's love and salvation; others will not. Still, our royal cloth of love remains fixed firmly over our tender heart.

We love because he first loved us.²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.²¹ And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. 1 John 4:19-21

Read 1 John 4:19-21 and answer questions 60-62:

60. Why are we able to love (v.19)?

61. Can you love God and hate others (v.20)? Yes No (Circle One)

62. Write the command of verse 21:

If you love God, you will seek to love everyone. Nevertheless it is still a process and may not happen overnight. Do not be discouraged, you will grow in love and holiness. Like anything else, some develop faster than others. Loving those who hurt you is a challenge, and you may not have reached such a level of excellence. But you and those you lead must still seek perfection.

Paul says plainly that he has not been made perfect but he is still straining forward (Philippians 3:12-14). He is not giving up. Peter says to make every effort to be found spotless (2 Peter 3:14). As a Christian, you are more loving today that you were in the past. Rejoice! But continue to weave a greater and richer cloth of love. Depend on the Holy Spirit, God's word, prayer and grace to be made perfect in love.

Remember also that any love that is not based on God's love will be tainted and self serving. Your leadership will become about you and your gifts and abilities. You will desire to lead for your own self satisfaction, emotional support and ego. Keep your heart and your love pure.

Pray that you feel a tender love for your people and that God opens their hearts to see and feel your love in all that you say and do.

Personal Application:

63. Review all the colors of your royal robe of tenderness: (1) compassion, (2) mercy, (3) sympathy, (4) empathy, (5) sensitivity and (6) love. Which one needs the most development and what will you do to improve this characteristic?

Next: Lesson 15: The Leader in Worship

- End Lesson 14 -

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Lesson 14

CLI Christian Leadership Study: The Tender Heart of a Leader

Name & Number: _____ Date: _____

Name of Institution: _____ Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of a Leader (Day One) *Love me Tender*

1. Who knows the thoughts of God (v. 11b)? _____

****See end of lesson for repeat of questions and blank spaces for you to write your answers.** *When all the questions have been completed, return your answer sheets to CLI. You may keep this lesson for your own study or review. You may also pass it on to another or discard.*

2. Christians have not received the _____ of the _____

but the _____ who is from _____ (v. 12a).

3. Christians do not speak or act in human wisdom but by the _____ (v.13a)

4. Jesus acknowledges the evil that exists among the people and yet says, "how

often I have longed to gather your children together, as a _____ gathers her _____ under her _____, but you were not willing."

5. By identifying with a hen gathering chicks, what kind of picture is Jesus painting of Himself?

6. Read 1 John 2:6. If you claim to live in Jesus, how must you walk?

7. The prophet Isaiah prophesied about the Messiah long before He was born. In verse 2 Isaiah says that Jesus grew up like a _____ shoot, and like a root out of dry ground.

8. How is Jesus described physically (v. 2)? _____

9. How was Jesus treated by the men He created (v. 3) _____

10. Isaiah says "we" esteemed (respected) him not (v. 3). Who are these people that Isaiah identifies with by including himself with the word "we"?

11. What kind of person would take up your diseases and carry your sorrows (v. 4)?

12. Examine your own heart. Do you have a situation or lifestyle that rejects or despises the "Man of Sorrows"? Yes No (Circle One) If yes, what are you going to do about it?

13. Are compassion, mercy, sympathy, empathy, sensitivity and love words that

describe your heart of leadership? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One)

14. Which of the characteristics in #13 do you most struggle with and how may we pray for you?

Personal Application:

15. What did God say or impress upon you through these Scripture passages?

16. How will you change in thought, attitude or action because of your answer above?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Two) The Royal Cloth of Compassion and Mercy

17. Read Exodus 34:6. When God passed in front of Moses, what was the first adjective He used in describing Himself?

18. Read Matthew 9:36. Why did Jesus have compassion on the crowds?

19. Read Mark 1:40-42. When a man with leprosy begged Jesus to make him clean, how did Jesus feel and how did He respond?

20. Would you have been willing to serve in such a leper colony? Yes No Maybe (Circle One)

21. What do you think gave Father Damien the courage and ability to give up his life for such physically and spiritually unattractive individuals?

22. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. What is God telling you through these verses?

23. Prayerfully consider who you need to show mercy to this week. In other words, is there someone that you need to forgive or to show a special kindness? Write how God leads you and what happened.

24. Does God bless men and women who do not follow sinners? Yes No (Circle One)

25. Were Jesus and His disciples taking advice and instruction from sinners? Yes No (Circle One)

26. Read Psalm 25:8. Does God instruct sinners in His ways? Yes No (Circle One)

27. Jesus answers the Pharisees in Matthew 9:13. He says, “But _____ and

_____ what this means: ‘I desire _____, not

_____.’ For _____ have _____ come to

_____ the righteous, but _____.”

28. In Matthew 9:13, what does God mean when He says, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice”?

29. Read Luke 6:27-30. For the next week, practice living in Jesus’ “mercy” commands. Write of one experience God gave you during this time:

30. Memorize Luke 6:27-30. Write your verses from memory without looking at notes:

31. How have you been unmerciful and what does God want you to do about it?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Three) The Royal Cloth of Sympathy

32. When Jesus saw Mary and the other mourners weeping, how do you think He felt and what was His response (v. 35)?

33. Are you able to share in another's grief and pain? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One)

34. In regard to your answer in #33, explain why or why not, you are able to sympathize with others?

35. How may we pray for you in this regard? _____

36. In addition to mourning with those who mourn, what are two other things we should do?

(1. _____

(2. _____

37. Which is easier for *you*, to be sympathetic in one's suffering or in his or her joy? Why?

38. How will wearing the cloth of sympathy help you to live in harmony with one another?

39. In what way was Jesus made like people (v. 17a)?

40. What was the purpose of Jesus being made like you and me (v. 17b,c)? _____

41. Why do you think Jesus is empathetic in your suffering and pain (v.18)?

Personal Application:

42. Write your memory verses, Philippians 2:3-8, without referring to your Bible or notes:

43. Pray and practice being a sympathetic and empathetic leader this week and answer the following question. What did you learn or discover about yourself from this experience?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Four) The Royal Cloth of Sensitivity

44. Read John 14:31. What are the two things that the world must learn?

(1. _____) (2. _____)

45. Read Exodus 8:19. Who had a hard heart and was not responsive to God?

46. Did God's people, the Israelites make their hearts hard as flint (v. 12)? Yes No (Circle One)

47. How did the Israelites respond to the law and God's words through the prophets (v. 12)?

48. Was the LORD Almighty very angry? (v. 12) Yes No (Circle One)

49. How does God respond to people with hard hearts that are not sensitive toward Him (v.13)?

50. Can a person believe Jesus is the Son of God and still have a hard and unresponsive heart (v. 42)? Yes No (Circle One)

51. What is one reason that people believe in Jesus and yet do not respond to Him (vs.42-43)?

52. Why do you think some people are more sensitive to other humans rather than to God (v.43)?

53. How should *you* respond to Jesus? _____

54. Read Hebrews 3:12. Could you, or any Christian leader, be in danger of developing a hard heart? Yes No (Circle One) Explain your answer:

55. According to Hebrews 3:13, what is one way that you can lead and help others have a soft heart toward God?

Personal Application:

56. Ask God to tenderize your heart and to give you practical ways to develop sensitivity. What are some of the ways God has led you in developing a soft heart?

Lesson 14: The Tender Heart of Leadership (Day Five) The Royal Cloth of Love

57. According to the definition of love above, describe how you are to treat your enemies.

58. Why is it so difficult to love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you?

59. What motivation (inspiration) do you get from these verses to love and pray for enemies?

60. Why are we able to love (v. 19)? _____

61. Can you love God and hate others (v. 20)? Yes No (Circle One)

62. Write the command of verse 21: _____

Personal Application:

63. Review all the colors of your royal robe of tenderness: (1) compassion, (2) mercy, (3) sympathy, (4) empathy, (5) sensitivity and (6) love. Which one needs the most development and what will you do to improve this characteristic?

Next: Lesson 15: The Leader in Worship

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