

# How to Be a People Person

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## INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about Ronald Reagan asking Tip O’Neill if it were six o’clock, Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #4092.
  - 1. Just as Pres. Reagan wanted Tip O’Neill to be on friendly terms, we want people to be on friendly terms with us.
  - 2. There are so many times we need friends, times when life seems as though it would be unbearable without dear, dear friends.
- B. But, as you well know, in order to have close friends, we must be a friend ourselves.
  - 1. Solomon reminds us, “There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Prov. 18:24). But, in order to have those friends who stick closer than a brother, we need to be that kind of friend.
  - 2. This morning, we want to learn how to be a people person, how to be a friend.
    - a. We want to examine closely the example Jesus left for us.
    - b. “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps” (1 Pet. 2:21).
      - 1) The context in 1 Peter has to do with enduring persecution, not moral instruction.
      - 2) But, the principle does apply: Jesus left us an example that we should follow in his steps.

## JESUS CARED FOR PEOPLE

- A. Jesus cared for people who found themselves in a wide variety of situations.
  - 1. “When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Mt. 9:36).
  - 2. Jesus felt compassion for two blind men — “Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him” (Mt. 20:34).
  - 3. When a leper asked Jesus to cleanse him, “Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed” (Mk. 1:41).
  - 4. Jesus had compassion on those who mourned.
    - a. When Jesus saw a widow in Nain mourning over her only son, “He had compassion on her and said to her, ‘Do not weep’” (Lk 7:13).
    - b. When Jesus saw Mary and Martha grieved over the death of their brother, he wept (Jn. 1 1:35).
- B. God calls upon his children to be compassionate, as well.
  - 1. Scripture over and over calls on us to be compassionate.
    - a. “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15).
    - b. “As the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering” (Col. 3:12).
    - c. “All of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous” (1 Pet. 3:8).
  - 2. We have so many opportunities to express compassion — visit the funeral home when our brethren experience loss, visit the hospital when our brethren are ill, call those you know need lifting, send a card to those you know are struggling, pray for those who hurt and who struggle.
  - 3. Illustration about Francis of Assisi’s kissing the leper, Encyclopedia of 15 000 Illustrations #7591.
  - 4. Will we show mercy to those about us, or will we not?
- C. Jesus demonstrated mercy and compassion because he loved.
  - 1. Jesus demonstrated the utmost love in his life and death.
    - a. “Greater love has no one than this. than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13).
    - b. “By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us” (1 Jn. 3:16).
    - c. Jesus put the needs of others before his own interests; he cared about people.
  - 2. We, too, need to put the needs of others before our own; we need to love people.

- a. “Love one another fervently with a pure heart” (1 Pet. 1:22).
- b. “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 13:35).
  - 1) Love would distinguish Christ’s disciples from other groups.
  - 2) Christ’s disciples would not be distinguished by their adherence to Scripture, by the way they worshiped, or anything doctrinal; it would be the way they loved.
  - 3) The reason for this is obvious — the world doesn’t care about doctrine (they don’t know it matters), but they see the way we love each other and the way we love them.
3. Are we loving our brethren? Are we compassionate?

## JESUS FORGAVE PEOPLE

- A. Throughout Jesus’ entire life, he demonstrated forgiveness to those who needed it.
  1. When an adulteress was brought before him and the mob wanted to stone her, Jesus told her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more” (Jn. 8:11).
  2. When a paralytic was brought before him, Jesus told him, “Son, your sins are forgiven you” (Mk. 2:5).
  3. About those who crucified him, Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Lk. 23:34).
  4. Jesus had authority to forgive people’s sins.
    - a. “The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” (Mk. 1:10).
    - b. Jesus, because of his deity, has the right to forgive the sins of people.
- B. We need to forgive people as did Jesus.
  1. When people wrong us, we need to demonstrate forgiveness.
    - a. “Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses” (Mk. 11:25).
    - b. Jesus told the disciples, “If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him” (Lk. 17:4).
    - c. “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:32).
  2. People are going to wrong us — someone will hurt our feelings, someone will lie about us, someone will lose his temper with us, someone will get the parking place we were waiting for, and the like.
    - a. Our duty is to forgive; notice that Mark 11:25 says that we need to forgive others in order to receive forgiveness from God.
    - b. Illustration about the cross at the Coventry Cathedral after it was bombed on November 14, 1940, Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #3999.
    - c. Will you express forgiveness or will you harbor bitterness and resentment?

## JESUS MET PEOPLE’S PHYSICAL NEEDS

- A. Jesus met people’s physical needs in a variety of ways.
  1. Jesus fed five thousand who were hungry (Mt. 14:13-21).
  2. He healed so many people.
    - a. “Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people” (Mt. 4:23).
    - b. “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Mt. 9:35).
    - c. “They brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick” (Mt. 8: 16).
    - d. Think of all the instances Jesus healed — he cast out demons, healed the blind, lame, mute and dumb, and people with all kinds of diseases.
- B. We cannot heal people of physical ailments, but we can help to meet physical needs.
  1. Scripture calls upon God’s people to meet people’s needs.

- a. "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).
  - b. "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).
  - c. "Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share" (1 Tim. 6: 18).
  - d. "Do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:16).
2. We have so many opportunities to be benevolent, to meet people's physical needs — we can provide clothes for those whose homes have burned, we can provide meals for those who have been in the hospital, we can clean house for those who cannot do so themselves, we can contribute to orphan's homes, to disaster relief.
  3. Will you help meet people's physical needs?

## **JESUS MET PEOPLE'S SPIRITUAL NEEDS**

- A. Throughout his life, Jesus met people's spiritual needs; he explained to people the things of God.
  1. On many occasions, Jesus taught multitudes of people.
    - a. In Matthew 5, Jesus saw the multitudes, and he went up on a mountain and taught them (Mt. 5:1).
    - b. Once "great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat" and he taught in parables (Mt. 13:2-3).
  2. When people came to Jesus, he took the time to teach.
    - a. He took the time to teach Nicodemus when he came to Jesus by night (Jn. 3).
    - b. He took the time to teach the Samaritan woman (Jn. 4).
    - c. When John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus, he took the time to answer John's questions (Mt. 11:1-6).
  3. Jesus told people what they needed to hear, not necessarily what they wanted to hear.
    - a. In Matthew 23, Jesus announced woes upon the scribes and Pharisees.
    - b. Jesus told the Parable of the Good Samaritan to demonstrate the need to care for the less fortunate (Lk. 10:25-37), and remember, the Jews hated the Samaritans.
- B. We, too, need to meet people's spiritual needs by explaining the will of God.
  1. God has called upon us to share our faith.
    - a. "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15).
    - b. "Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15).
  2. Can we really consider ourselves a people person if we do not point people to God?
  3. Illustration about the businessman waiting in Dallas handing out tracts, Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #14594.

## **CONCLUSION**

- A. Jesus cared about people deeply, and he sought to meet their needs. Let us follow Jesus' example, and seek to meet the needs of people.
- B. Do you need Jesus' to meet your needs?