

Going Deeper Study Guide

When Compassion Dies- Obadiah 1:10–14

Main Idea

When pride replaces a right view of God, compassion dies. A lack of compassion is never merely a failure toward other people—it is ultimately sin against God. Those who lose compassion begin by standing by, then celebrating evil, and eventually participating in it. But God Himself is perfectly compassionate, and His people are called to reflect His character.

Sermon Summary

This week's message continued our study through Obadiah by examining God's indictment against Edom. Though Edom and Judah were related through Abraham's family, Edom responded to Judah's suffering with indifference, celebration, and participation instead of compassion.

Patrick reminded us that the purpose of studying Obadiah is to enlarge our view of God. God is not divided between an "Old Testament God of wrath" and a "New Testament God of love." He is perfectly holy, just, merciful, compassionate, sovereign, and loving throughout all of Scripture.

Biblical compassion is much deeper than simply feeling sorry for someone. It flows from loving God first and therefore loving others because they bear His image. Pride, however, causes us to make ourselves large and God small. When that happens, compassion dies.

The passage revealed three downward steps:

1. When compassion dies, we sin against God.

Edom stood intentionally against their own brother instead of helping him. Their violence against Judah was ultimately rebellion against God because all sin against others is first sin against Him.

2. When compassion dies, we celebrate wickedness.

Rather than mourning Judah's discipline, Edom rejoiced in it. They gloried in another person's suffering instead of grieving over it. God's people must

never delight in the downfall of others, even when those people are experiencing the consequences of sin.

3. When compassion dies, we participate in wickedness.

Edom moved beyond standing by and cheering. They entered the city, looted possessions, captured fugitives, and handed survivors over to Babylon. Pride always progresses unless it is confronted by God's grace.

The sermon concluded by pointing us to Christ. Where sinful humanity exploits weakness, Jesus entered our weakness. Rather than rejoicing over guilty sinners, He came to save them. His compassion led Him to the cross, where He bore God's wrath so that those who repent and believe might receive mercy instead of judgment.

Key Takeaways

- A small view of God produces pride.
- Pride kills compassion.
- Indifference toward suffering is not neutrality.
- Rejoicing over another person's failure reveals a sinful heart.
- God's compassion is the model for Christian compassion.
- Christ did not merely feel compassion—He acted to rescue sinners.

Digging Deeper

Read

- Obadiah 1:10–14
- Psalm 103:8–14
- Luke 10:25–37
- Matthew 22:34–40
- Colossians 3:12–14
- Ephesians 4:31–32

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Passage

1. Why was Edom especially guilty for how they treated Judah?
2. What progression do you see from verses 10–14?
3. Why does God treat violence against others as sin against Himself?

Seeing God's Character

4. How does this passage deepen your understanding of God's justice and compassion?
5. Why is it important to keep both God's mercy and His holiness together?

Heart Application

6. Is it possible to participate in evil simply by remaining passive?
7. Why can pride make compassion disappear?
8. Have you ever been tempted to feel satisfaction when someone who hurt you experienced hardship?
9. How does remembering the compassion Christ showed you change the way you treat difficult people?

Gospel Connection

Every one of us has been more like Edom than we would like to admit.

We have ignored people in need.

We have celebrated when our enemies failed.

We have chosen ourselves over others.

Yet Jesus responded differently.

He did not stand aloof from sinners.

He entered our suffering.

He bore our shame.

He showed perfect compassion by giving Himself on the cross so that all who repent and trust in Him might receive forgiveness and new life.

The gospel transforms proud hearts into compassionate ones because those who have received mercy become people who extend mercy.

Family Worship Guide

Read Together

Obadiah 1:10–14

Big Truth

God calls His people to reflect His compassion because He has shown compassion to us in Christ.

Talk About It

For Younger Children

- What does compassion mean?
- How did Edom treat Judah?
- Should we be happy when someone else gets hurt?
- How did Jesus show compassion to people?

For Older Children

- Why was simply "standing by" still sinful?
- How can pride keep us from loving others?
- What's the difference between worldly kindness and biblical compassion?
- How does the gospel help us love people who are difficult to love?

Family Application Challenge

Choose one intentional act of compassion this week.

Ideas include:

- Visit or encourage someone who is lonely.
- Pray together for someone who is hurting.
- Write an encouraging note.
- Help a neighbor without expecting recognition.
- Forgive someone who has wronged you.

When you do, remind one another:

"We show compassion because Christ first showed compassion to us."

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Prayer

Father, thank You for showing us mercy when we deserved judgment. Forgive us for the times we have been proud, indifferent, or pleased by the suffering of others. Give us hearts that reflect Your compassion. Help us to love our neighbors, serve our families, forgive those who wrong us, and point others to Jesus through both our words and our actions. Make us more like Christ each day. In His name we pray, Amen.