

When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. Mark 6:34

Can sheep live without a shepherd?

Compassion Fatigue

It is a kind of fatigue that surfaces in our lives which causes us to lose a genuine desire to be compassionate with those around us who are struggling.

*Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown; and His disciples followed Him.
Mark 6:1*

When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? Mark 6:2

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. Mark 6:3

Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household." Mark 6:4

And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He wondered at their unbelief. And He was going around the villages teaching. Mark 6:5-6

Compassion fatigue can occur when we sense people are questioning our character.

*And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; and He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff.
Mark 6:7-8*

*No bread, no bag, no money in their belt but to wear sandals; and He added, "Do not put on two tunics. "And He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town."
Mark 6:9-10*

*Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them. They went out and preached that men should repent.
Mark 6:11-12*

*And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.
Mark 6:13*

Compassion fatigue can occur as we are experiencing the highs and lows of service.

Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded him to bring back his head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison, and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. Mark 6:27-28

When his disciples heard about the death of John the Baptist, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb. Mark 6:29

Compassion fatigue can occur as we encounter mean people.

*The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught.
Mark 6:30*

And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) Mark 6:31

They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves. Mark 6:32

Compassion fatigue can occur in the height of busyness.

The people saw them going, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities and got there ahead of them. Mark 6:33

Compassion fatigue can occur when people want more from us than we can give.

How do we regain our sense of compassion if we have experienced compassion fatigue?

We have to regain a sense of His perspective toward scattered sheep.

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We have to remember that it is never too late for scattered sheep to be fed.

When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This place is desolate, and it is already quite late; send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." Mark 6:34-36

We have to stop sending away the scattered sheep God is calling us to feed.

But He answered them, "You give them something to eat!" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?" Mark 6:37

We have to stop looking for excuses and start looking for answers.

And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Mark 6:38

And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. Mark 6:39-40

We have to ask God to help us to deal with scattered sheep.

And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves, and He kept giving them to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. Mark 6:41

They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. There were five thousand men who ate the loaves. Mark 6:42-44