



Call to Compassion or Commercial Opportunity

Living in the Image of God Module 02 Session 05

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Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities and blesses those that do
- Program seeks to understand the meaning, resources, and human responsibilities and benefits of *Living in the Image of God*

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What We Will Learn

- Understanding similarities and differences between call to compassion and call to commercial opportunity.
- Providing goods or services free or for-fee to alleviate a need.
- Motivation (for-fee or free?)
- Guidance, principles, and examples for responding to a commercial opportunity consistent with *Living in the Image of God*

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Free Service Related to Compassion (1)

- God directs a person's attention to a need
- First, recognize the need
- Second, care about the needy
 - Care—hunger for righteousness
 - Care—hunger for commercial expansion
- Commit to providing to address the need
- Persevere in seeking to alleviate the need
- Free or for-fee?

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Free Service Related to Compassion (2)

- Assess potential paths to providing to alleviate the need
- In a call to compassion
 - Provide goods and services free
 - Provide for fee, if necessary to sustain the goods or services
 - An example: Food storage and distribution in Egypt under Joseph [Genesis 41:41–57]
- Commercial opportunity: provide goods and services for fee

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Motivation for Free Service

- Sustain supply of goods or services in responding to a call to compassion
- Hunger for commercial expansion
- Parable of the Talents explains commercial expansion as a motive in human interactions [Mathew 25:14–30]
 - God rewards commercial expansion guided by *Living in the Image of God*
 - Punishes stagnation

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Fee Service Principles

- Purpose of for-fee service should be to sustain goods and services to alleviate a need
- Fair fee for service and fair value for goods
- Avoid exploitation of advantages
 - Monopoly over certain goods or services
 - Power of cartel
 - High demand not matched by supply
 - Using access to authority to manipulate costs
- Proverbs 28:8

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Fee Service Principles

Proverbs 28:8 Whoever increases wealth by taking interest or profit from the poor amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor.

- Avoid interest or profit from the poor
 - Fair fee for service and fair value for goods
 - No exploitation of advantages
- Kind to the poor even in for-fee service

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Fee Service and Blessing

- God blesses the provider in a call to compassion even if he/she charges a fee to sustain goods or services to alleviate the need
- Provider in commercial expansion is rewarded only through his or her potential profit
- Could earn additional reward through dependent blessing (blessing dependent on others)
- No independent blessing for activities motivated by commercial expansion, recognition from others, or other earthly reward
- Mathew 6:1–2

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Matthew 6 (NIV)

1 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

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Fee Service Examples

- To care for the robber victim in the Parable of the Good Samaritan [Luke 10:35]:
 - The Samaritan provided free service
 - The inn provided for-fee service

Luke 10:35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

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Fee Service Examples

- Jacob served Laban 14 years for fee equivalent to bride-price to marry Leah and Rachel [Genesis 29:15–20]
- Jacob served Laban again for fee based on a labor-and-wage deal on sharing offspring of the flock [Genesis 30:25–43]
- Workers in Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard provided for-fee labor service

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What We Learned

- A person may provide goods or services free or for-fee to alleviate a need
 - Free in a call to compassion
 - Also, for-fee in a call to compassion if fee is necessary to sustain goods or services to alleviate the need
 - For-fee in a call to commercial expansion.
- In either case, the person is to recognize, care, commit, and persevere.
- Provider in a call to compassion earns blessing
- Provider in a call to commercial expansion earns rewards through potential profit but no independent blessing.

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Call to Compassion or Commercial Opportunity

Living in the Image of God M02S05

A person may provide goods or services free or for-fee to alleviate a need. Preferably free to respond to a call to compassion, or for-fee if necessary to sustain the goods or services. In all cases, including commercial enterprise, adhere to fair fee for service and fair value for goods. God blesses the provider in a call to compassion. However, one motivated by commercial expansion could earn rewards through potential profit and blessing dependent on others, but no independent blessing.

We discuss differences and similarities between a call to compassion and a call to a commercial opportunity. In a call to compassion, a person is directed to an opportunity to develop goods and services to benefit others. In contrast, a commercial opportunity alerts a person to develop goods and services for personal commercial benefit. The two types of opportunities at times differ only by a thin line. In fact, the human attributes for recognizing and understanding a call to compassion are essentially the same as the attributes for recognizing and understanding a commercial opportunity.

Understanding the opportunity determines whether to provide goods or services free or for-fee to address the need. In a call to compassion, the motivation to address the need is driven by care of the needy (i.e., hunger and thirst for righteousness). In contrast, the motivation to address the need in a commercial opportunity is driven by care of the provider's commercial interest (i.e., hunger and thirst for commercial expansion). In either case, the provider is driven by care to link the recognition of a need to commitment to address the need and perseverance in seeking to alleviate the need. Thus, a person disposed to recognize and respond to a call to compassion also will be disposed to recognize and respond to a commercial opportunity.

In previous studies such as under [Responsibility in Call to Compassion](#), we discuss guidance for recognizing and responding to a call to compassion. This bible study focuses on the guidance, principles, and examples for developing a commercial opportunity in a way consistent with *Living in the Image of God*.

Commercial Opportunity and Call to Compassion

Similar to a call to compassion, a commercial opportunity occurs when God directs a person's attention to a need. First, the person has to recognize the need, whether in a call to compassion or a call to commercial opportunity. To recognize the need, a person has to be sensitive to the needs of others and not disposed to dodge responsibility. Second, the person has to care. In a call to compassion, care of the needy is motivated by hunger and thirst for righteousness. In a call to commercial opportunity, care is motivated by hunger and thirst for commercial expansion. Third, the person has to commit to doing something to address the need. Fourth, he or she should persevere in seeking to alleviate the need.

The four steps are the same in a call to compassion or a call to commercial opportunity and will lead to free or for-fee activities depending on the person's assessment. A call to compassion often is best satisfied by providing goods and services free. However, providing for-fee could be considered if necessary to sustain the goods or services. For example, developing a long-term food supply to alleviate hunger among a people could be accomplished more effectively by charging a fee for the food. Similar to the food storage and distribution program in Egypt under

Joseph (Genesis 41:41–57). Therefore, providing for-fee in a call to compassion should be considered when a fee is necessary to sustain an effective supply of goods or services to alleviate the need.

In contrast, development of a commercial opportunity is motivated by hunger and thirst for commercial expansion and will result in providing goods and services for-fee. The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30) explains commercial expansion as a motive in human interactions. The parable explains that God rewards commercial expansion but punishes stagnation. However, activities for commercial expansion have to be consistent with *Living in the Image of God* to fit with his over-all purpose for every person to represent him in every human interaction.

Fee for Goods or Services

In any for-fee activity, whether in a call to compassion or in pursuit of commercial expansion, the purpose of charging a fee should be to sustain an effective supply of goods and services to alleviate the need. The fees must be based on the principle of a fair fee for service and fair value for goods. Avoid fee structures that exploit advantages, such as monopoly over goods and services, power of cartel, high demand not matched by supply, or using access to authority to manipulate costs: “Whoever increases wealth by taking interest or profit from the poor amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor” [Proverbs 28:8].

To avoid taking interest or profit from the poor, charge a fair fee for service and fair value for goods. Also, do not exploit advantages to charge an unfair fee for service or unfair value for goods. Kindness to the poor implies charging fees only as necessary to sustain goods and services to alleviate the need.

Reward for Commercial Activity

God blesses the provider in a call to compassion even if the provider charges a fee necessary to sustain goods or services to alleviate the need. However, the provider motivated by hunger or thirst for commercial expansion is rewarded only through his or her potential profit. Also, such provider could earn additional reward through dependent blessing: that is, blessing dependent on others, like where the recipient of for-fee goods or service prays for blessing for the provider.

However, there is no independent blessing for activities motivated by commercial expansion, recognition from others, or other earthly reward: [Mathew 6:1–2]: “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.”

Commercial Activity Examples from the Bible

To care for the robber victim in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, the Samaritan provided free service and the inn provided for-fee service [Luke 10:35]: “The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’”

Jacob served Laban 14 years for free equivalent to the bride-price to marry Leah and Rachel (Genesis 29:15–20). He served Laban again for fee based on a labor-and-wage deal on sharing offspring of the flock (Genesis 30:25–43).

The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1–15) is based on workers providing for-fee labor service.

Summary of What We Learned

A person may provide goods or services free or for-fee to alleviate a need. Preferably free to respond to a call to compassion, or for-fee if necessary to sustain the goods or services. In all cases, including commercial enterprise, adhere to fair fee for service and fair value for goods.

God blesses the provider in a call to compassion. However, one motivated by commercial expansion could earn rewards through potential profit and blessing dependent on others, but no independent blessing.