

HOW THE GIFT OF MERCY (COMPASSION) CAN BE MISUSED

1. FAILING TO BE FIRM AND DECISIVE WHEN NECESSARY

Those with the gift of compassion find it hard to be firm and decisive because they do not want to hurt or offend other people. Very often, the lack of firmness or decisiveness only causes greater hurt and disappointment.

2. TAKING UP OFFENCES FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN HURT

When those with the gift of compassion see or hear about someone hurting another person, they can feel the hurt as well, and they will tend to take up offenses, especially if it is a friend who is being hurt.

3. EMOTIONS RATHER THAN ON REASON

Because those with the gift of compassion have such strong emotions and feelings, they tend to base the decisions which they do make on them rather than objective logic.

4. PROMOTING IMPROPER AFFECTIONS FROM THOSE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

A person of the opposite sex tends to be drawn to those with the gift of compassion because of their ability to be sensitive, understanding and responsive listeners. This must be considered in any counseling which is done, and safe-guards must be established in order to avoid improper emotional attachments.

5. CUTTING OFF FELLOWSHIP WITH THOSE WHO ARE INSENSITIVE TO OTHERS

Words and actions which reflect insensitivity to the feelings of other people are quickly recognized and reacted to by those with the gift of compassion. Those that demonstrate the gift of compassion will tend to close their spirit to these people.

6. REACTING TO GOD'S PURPOSES IN ALLOWING PEOPLE TO SUFFER

Unlike exhorters who look at suffering as a means of growing spiritually, those with the gift of compassion tend to react to the idea that God would allow a person to suffer for any good purpose. Their main concern is usually to remove the cause of suffering as soon as possible.

7. SYMPATHIZING WITH THOSE WHO ARE VIOLATING GOD'S STANDARDS

If those with the gift of compassion are not discerning as to why people suffer, they may give sympathy and encouragement to those who are suffering as a direct result of violating God's moral laws.

8. ESTABLISHING POSSESSIVE FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHERS

There is a deep need for commitment and closeness in the friendships of those with the gift of compassion. This can easily result in possessiveness of friendships with others and the tendency to be deeply hurt when there is not a mutual commitment from the friendship. Disappointments in one friendship tend to create greater expectations and possessiveness in a new friendship.