

Compassion and Truth

There are times when it *seems* like two truths are in conflict with one another. But Bible truths are never in conflict. When we *think* they are, we are merely misunderstanding God's word (usually the context). Today many in our nation are struggling to balance God's call for compassion, on one hand, and God's call for justice on the other. "How can we show compassion if we don't allow any and all into our nation?"

Some believe the world should be one big happy family with no borders and limitless compassion. In reality, God, Himself, both establishes different nations and sets their borders. In Acts 16:26 God writes through Luke's pen that God, "made from one *man* every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation." Yes, God is at the helm of national borders!

Similarly, some believe that compassion should trump safety. But never forget, God's truths do not trump one another. The proper balance is best understood by recognizing the difference between the personal responsibility of Christians, and the God given responsibility of governments. In Romans 12 God gives us instructions for personal compassion. But in Romans 13:1-6, God gives instructions for how the *government* is to behave in its protection of its citizens. Common sense dictates that governments must carry out those God-given mandates. Notice this, *those* instructions include using the sword to stop violence (verse 4).

When we combine the personal truths of compassion taught in Romans 12 with the government's responsibility in Romans 13, it should become evident that the two are not the same. Pray for all, certainly. When you have opportunity to do good, do so (Galatians 6:10). But let us all recognize that God establishes governments and national boundaries for the protection the citizens and defense of its borders.

Never attempt to pit some of God's truths against other of God's truths. Focus on context. Accept God's word, even when the culture is confused.

-Ray Wallace