

Moving from Perfection to Compassion: A Way of Understanding the Good News

Moving from an attitude of “striving” for our agenda
to a spirit of “receiving” God’s love
(adapted from notes by Michael Crosby)

1. We are not called by the Good News to be perfect .	1. We are called by the Good News to be compassionate towards ourselves, others and creation.
2. Becoming compassionate , however, is not something that we can simply decide to do all by ourselves.	2. Becoming compassionate results from willingness both to receive God’s mercy and to allow it to flow through us.
3. Likewise, receiving God’s mercy is not something that we can simply decide to do all by ourselves.	3. Receiving God’s mercy is a grateful surrender while doing what we know we are called to do.
4. Even then, grateful surrender is not something that we can simply decide to do all by ourselves.	4. Grateful surrender results from awareness of our weakness along with awareness of God’s love . It is facing the pain of displeasing ourselves – the pain of failure. It is setting aside our agenda, our ambition and an ego driven existence.
5. Therefore, ministry is not something that we can simply decide to do all by ourselves.	5. Ministry is a “fruit” - we do not create, we co-create. “I am the vine, you are the branches.”
6. We are not “achievers” who decide to give our love to ourselves, others and God.	6. We are mediators who allow God’s love to flow in us (love for self), through us (love for others) and back to God (love for God).
7. So, we do not have to work to prove our love for God.	7. We simply allow God’s love to find a home in us and, of itself, this is our love for God.
8. Our love for God , then, is not generated by us and then given to God.	8. Our love for God is God’s love willingly received from God and willingly returned to God in surrender and gratitude.
9. Likewise, our love for ourselves, others and creation is not generated by us.	9. Our love for ourselves, others and creation is really God’s love in us and mediated through us.
10. In the Old Testament , awareness of this developed to the point where it was clear to God’s people that God was in love with them.	10. In the New Testament , Jesus reveals even more clearly that God is in love with us and that God is, in fact, Love itself.