



Mission: Compassion

This study is part of a longer work that would be suitable for a retreat or special meeting. It was prepared by the LWML Oklahoma District Christian Growth Committee (1992-1994). Additional materials and information are available at lwml.org. Type *Mission: Compassion* into the search box and click *enter*.

Opening Prayer:

“Lord Jesus, teach us to

be open to the challenging experiences that loving others in Your name brings, so we might trust in You all the more and rejoice exceedingly when others come to faith in You because they have known us as Your people. Amen.”*

R.C.H. Lenski, in his book *His Footsteps* (page 245), says, “The compassion of Jesus is one of the deepest, richest, and most comforting of all His Savior qualities.” Discuss your opinion of Lenski’s comment.

God’s Compassion *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort ... (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV)*

Read **Matthew 9:35-10:8**. Jesus’ earthly mission, which led ultimately to the cross of Calvary, was a mission of compassion. How is Jesus acting on His compassion in **Matthew 9:35**? _____

What suffering moved Jesus in **Matthew 9:36**? “The people were _____ and _____.” Torn ... exhausted ... in various abject conditions, the people, like a haggard flock of sheep, were a sight which rent Jesus’ heart. He was moved to _____.

Jesus’ compassion was not mere sympathy for the people. His compassion moved Him to action. Jesus responded! Look at **Matthew 10:1**. What did Jesus do? _____

What authority did Jesus give His disciples?

Matthew 10:1

- (a) _____
- (b) _____

Matthew 10:7-8

- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____
- (d) _____
- (e) _____

Why should these disciples go forth and show compassion to the people? Reread **Matthew 10:8**. _____

Jesus’ heart was ever filled with merciful kindness and feelings of pity for the distressed of every description. Whenever and wherever suffering and sorrow of body or soul met His eyes, His heart was moved with compassion and to action. As His disciples had experienced His compassion in action for them, He called them to share His compassion and to be ministers of His compassion to others. In your own words, write your personal definition of Jesus’ compassion: _____

God’s Compassion ... For Me ... *who comforts us in all our troubles (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV)*

After studying each passage below, list ways that God shows compassion for our spiritual needs.

Psalm 51:1 _____

Psalm 103:8-13 _____

Micah 7:19 _____

Mark 6:34 _____

Luke 15:20 _____

John 14:1-4 _____

John 14:16-17 _____

Read **Mark 6:34** again. Jesus’ teaching takes place shortly before the feeding of the 5,000. How has Jesus fed us when we are spiritually hungry? _____

Sometimes when we sense that hunger, instead of searching for Jesus, we may try to fill up on something else first. List some alternate fill-ups. _____

In the account of the healing of the paralytic in **Mark 2:1-12**, Jesus first took care of the man’s spiritual needs and then attended to his physical needs. Why could Jesus forgive the paralytic man’s sins (verses 7, 10)? _____

What is Jesus’ priority concerning the needs of people? _____

How did Jesus show His ultimate compassion for your spiritual needs? See **Romans 5:6-8**. _____

How did God show compassion for the physical needs of His Old Testament people?

Nehemiah 9:19-21 _____

Psalms 103:2-5 _____

Psalms 119:156 _____

Isaiah 49:10 _____

How did Jesus show compassion for the physical needs of His New Testament people?

Matthew 6:25-33 _____

Matthew 14:14 _____

Matthew 15:32 _____

Matthew 20:34 _____

Mark 1:23-26, 32-34 _____

In the account of the raising of Jairus' daughter in **Mark 5:38-43**, Jesus showed compassion for her by restoring her physical life. He took care of the big things. Reread verse 43. How did Jesus show He was also concerned about the small details? _____

How does He show His compassion for the small details in your life? _____

Read **Luke 7:11-17**, particularly verse 13. Describe some specific ways in which Jesus' love and compassion have affected your life. _____

God's Compassion = My Mission ... so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God (2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV).

THE REASON: Name three reasons King David gives in **Psalms 103:2-4** for showing compassion to others.

What are some other benefits you have received through God's compassion? _____

Read **Ephesians 4:32** and **Colossians 3:12-14**. What are we called to be? _____

List some specific ways God gives in these passages to share compassion: _____

About whom did the Old Testament prophet seem particularly concerned in **Zechariah 7:9-10**? _____

Scan **Acts 6:1-6**. The early New Testament church also shared this concern and delegated responsibility for widows and orphans to certain men in the church. Most of our congregations today also include widows or widowers, the elderly, the invalid, divorced individuals, as well as single parent families with special needs. List specific ways to show compassion to these members. _____

In **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**, how is compassion a sharing process? _____

THE RISK: Read **Mark 1:40-42**. What is significant about Jesus' reaching out His hand and touching this leper?

What would it mean to you to have Jesus *touch* you? _____

Where do you need this special touch this week? _____

How can you "touch lepers" in your part of the world? _____

What are the risks involved in doing so? _____

THE REWARD: Our salvation is by grace, but Scripture also promises reward for these acts of compassion. Write in your own words the promise found in the following passages:

Proverbs 19:17 _____

Matthew 25:31-40 _____

Luke 14:12-14 _____

Have you experienced these rewards in your life? Share with the group. _____

If Time Allows: How does it make you feel when you realize that you have special gifts to contribute to the world's needs? a. Lump in my throat b. Scared stiff c. Pretty responsible d. Eager to do something e. Mixed feelings f. Question God's choice of me

Closing Prayer: Read together 1 John 4:10-11 aloud as printed below. Put your name in the blanks provided:

*This is love: not that _____ loved God, but that He loved _____ and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for _____'s sins. Dear friends, since God so loved _____, _____ also ought to love one another (NIV). "Lord, make me more like You, that I grow in faith and love for my neighbor. May people see You in my actions as I reach out to them with Your love. Amen."***

Closing Hymn: Sing or say together "Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service" (LSB 848) or "Oh, How Great Is Your Compassion" (LSB 559; LW 364; TLH 384).

*The Lutheran Study Bible, page 1982

**The Lutheran Study Bible, page 1735

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