



Then Act – Compassionately Bible Study

[**Please provide:** musical accompaniment; Bibles, hymnals, and copies of the Bible study for attendees.]

Let us begin with prayer. Dear Lord God, our Heavenly Father, we come before You and humbly ask for Your blessing on this study of Your Word. Help us to learn to share Your gifts of love, forgiveness, and mercy. Teach us how to be patient, as You are patient; compassionate, as You are compassionate; and caring, as You care for us. Bless our relationships that we may serve You wherever there are special needs that You place before us. Open our mouths to share our faith when You see the time is right. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to save us from our sins and win for us eternal life. In Christ's holy name we pray. Amen.

What comes to mind when you hear the word compassion?

Webster's New World Dictionary defines compassion as deep sympathy, consideration, clemency, kindness, pity. The Greek word, *splagchnizomai*, literally means "his gut moved."

Read the following verses. Note each of the circumstances and how Jesus responded.

Luke 7:13

Matthew 9:36

Matthew 15:32

Matthew 14:14

Name a time when you personally have felt a "gut reaction" like Jesus did and what your response was.

Did you respond with Christian character? Of all the identifying marks of a Christian, Jesus said love would be the identifying characteristic. Read John 13:35, and note His words.

What are some ways you are able to show love and compassion in the following cases:

- A friend's spouse has died.
- Your neighbor has lost her job.

- A family member is considering an abortion.

Because of the great compassion God lavished upon us, we share it with the world – both in words and in sacrificial service.

How did Jesus demonstrate love to His disciples? Read John 13:3-5.

Did all of the disciples respond in a positive manner? Read John 13:6-11.

Read James 2:14-18. Can you think of a time when you attempted an act of compassion, but were rejected? Did you keep trying?

How often have you said “Let me know if you need anything,” instead of setting a date and time right then when you will perform a compassionate act? Most people are reluctant to ask for help, so it is important to take the initiative and seize an opportunity. It may be by bringing a casserole, lending an ear or a shoulder, or offering a friendly LWML hug.

List some ways you can help feed the hungry in your area, or in the world:

How would you be able to make a difference in a lonely person’s life?

What could you do when someone you know is not married, pregnant, and afraid?

How might you help a veteran who is struggling?

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. What can we offer that God Himself offers us?

Read Matthew 10:42. What is the small act of love described in this verse?

Read Colossians 3:12-14. What does God call on us to do in these passages?

Being compassionate to others brings special happiness and joy. When someone is hurt or sad or lonely, Christians take the time to help and show kindness, even when the person does not deserve it. It is never right to ignore someone who is in need when you can help.

Read Proverbs 3:27. Who are “*those to whom it is due*”?

Read Ephesians 4:32. What Christ-like act is most important in this passage?

The following poem by William Arthur Ward helps illustrate Christian character:

I Will Do More

I will do more than belong, I will participate.
I will do more than care, I will help.
I will do more than believe, I will practice.
I will do more than forgive, I will forget.
I will do more than teach, I will inspire.
I will do more than dream, I will work.
I will do more than give, I will serve.
I will do more than earn, I will enrich.
I will do more than live, I will grow.
I will do more than be fair, I will be kind.
I will do more than be a citizen, I will be a patriot.
I will do more than be friendly, I will be a friend.

(www.achievebalance.com/data/articles/promise.htm)

Pray about this, and then act, compassionately.

Close by singing “Love in Christ Is Strong and Living” LSB 706, LW 376.

Then Act – Compassionately
Written by Jan Bloss, Berthoud, Colorado
Published by Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, 2015