



THROUGH *her eyes*

The Posture of Compassion Blynda Lane

Focus Jesus was moved by compassion many times before working a miracle. God showed us compassion while we were still sinners, and He wants us to do the same for the lost. When we demonstrate compassion to others, their hearts can be moved to receive God's miracle of salvation. His compassion saves, sustains, and delivers us from an enemy who wants to hurt and destroy us.

Fun Ask the people in your group to bring a photo of them involved in a summer activity that they enjoy to the next session and give them time to briefly share about it.

Review Key Scripture: 2 Peter 3:9; Ephesians 6:12

1. Know the character of God.

Romans 2:4, 5:8; Jonah 4:4–11

The character of God was demonstrated when, while we were still sinners, He gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to die in our place so we might be forgiven for our sins. He loves us because of who He is—He is a God of second chances! Just as He showed compassion to us, we must have compassion for the lost. The true condition of our heart is revealed when we do what God is prompting us to do even though we may not want to.

2. Know the closeness of God.

Psalms 73:28; James 4:8

Closeness to God brings stability and sustains us in an uncertain world. When we learn to accept His methods and timing, we come to know what He wants from us. Sometimes we misinterpret God's motives or intentions, but when we know Him, we realize we can trust Him in all circumstances. Our walk should be all about trusting God.

3. Know the charge of God.

1 John 3:16, 18

God charges us to *go*. We have never been in a greater position to show compassion and the love of Christ to those around us than we are right now. Compassion should lead the charge in our effort to reach the lost, so love boldly! We do not have to compromise truth or our convictions. As believers, we have the power to demolish strongholds, so we should not fear when we are sent to the enemy's camp.

Group Dynamics Idea A good reinforcement of this week's message on compassion might be to look within the group to see where it can thoughtfully be applied.

Discuss

1. Compassion is *sympathetic pity, concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others, and the desire to alleviate that suffering*. Understanding that compassion requires action, what are some of the steps we can take to demonstrate that we care for the physical and spiritual well-being of those around us?
2. Examine the verses in Jonah 3:1–4 and explain what Jonah did with his second chance. What was the result? Has God ever given you a second chance? If comfortable, share how that affected your life.
3. What is God's desire for us in 2 Peter 3:9? What response is required from us? How does this verse relate to those we encounter daily?
4. Read Ephesians 6:12. Identify the motivating force which is often behind the actions of broken or rebellious people and those who thoughtlessly hurt us or have turned their backs on God.
5. According to this week's message, there are three components comprising the posture of compassion: knowing the character of God; knowing the closeness of God; knowing the charge of God. Which one of these components do you feel you need to work on most? Which one do you feel you have been most successful in achieving?

Take Home

- Just as God demonstrated His love and compassion to us while we were yet sinners, we are to show the same to others.
- Demonstrating compassion to others can soften their hearts, leading them to the miracle of salvation.
- We are the hands and feet of God here on earth.
- When God tells us to *go*, we are not to fear for He is with us.
- God's compassion can sustain us through any circumstance.

Prayer Lord, we thank You and praise You for the times You showed compassion to us when we did not deserve it! Help us to walk in compassion with others, to see them through Your eyes, and to remember Your desire for none to perish. Touch our hearts and fill us with Your compassion so the hurting and lost will be drawn to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

New Leader Tip It's pretty easy to wander off topic in a discussion, particularly if a question generates a great deal of conversation. Feel free to give a gentle reminder that it's time to move on.