

# A Life of Compassion

LUKE 10:25-37

*In this lesson we discover the true meaning of compassion.*

It is not enough to recognize and bemoan the abundance of needs in the world. It is only enough when we see a need that God has shown us and act to help meet that need as best we can. Only then have we fulfilled the dual commands of Scripture to love God and our neighbor.

## Group Questions

1. Have someone in your group describe a time when he or she showed compassion or witnessed an act of compassion.

As a group, ask people to share their definitions of compassion.

2. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37. Discuss what you think is the main point of the story.
3. Compassion is not academic. The lawyer at the beginning of the story was the equivalent of a modern-day theologian, but he did not show compassion to the wounded man on the road to Jericho.
  - a. What is the difference between *knowing* God's Word and *understanding* God's Word?

- b. Why do you think those who know the most about the Bible can be in danger of failing to show compassion?

4. Discuss as a group: *What is compassion?*

- a. List all the ways the Good Samaritan showed compassion.

- b. Why is compassion always costly?

5. What's the difference between *looking* at your neighbors and *seeing* them with eyes of compassion?

- a. Who are your neighbors? What are their needs?

- b. Take a few minutes to pray for the needs of your neighbors. And ask God to give you the courage and strength to help them in practical ways.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

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As mentioned, the Jerusalem-to-Jericho road was a favorite haunt for thieves and brigands in Jesus' day. It was referred to as the "Way of Blood" because of the frequent attacks. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus provides a clue as to why there might have been such an abundance of thieves in that day. King Herod had released some 40,000 workers who had been laboring on the temple and other projects. Many of these unemployed workers turned to thievery simply to stay alive after being let go from their construction jobs. It's another example of the connection between the New Testament and the time-and-space historical realities of the day.

### Note

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1998), 105.