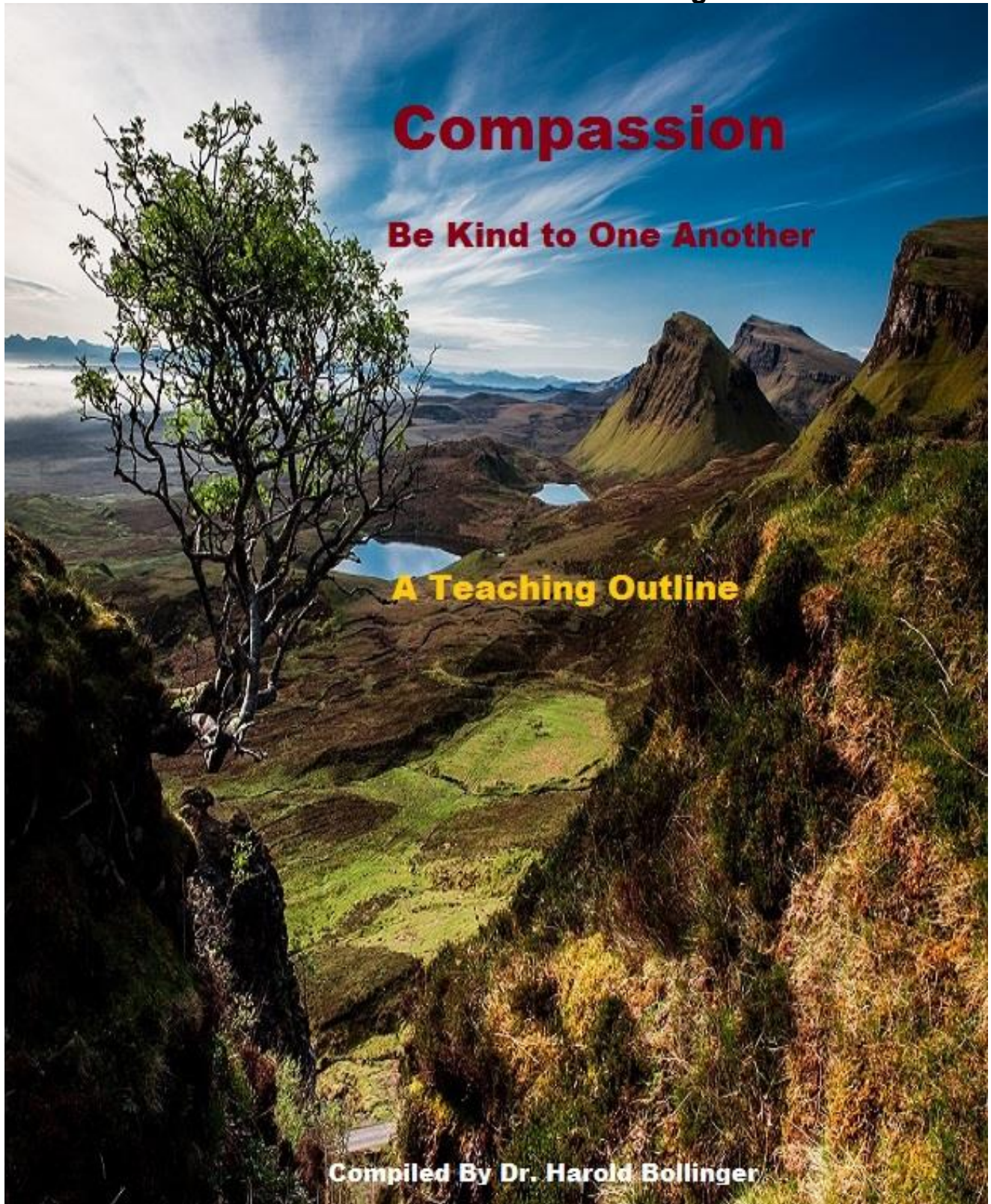


Instructions for Classroom Grading



Compassion

Be Kind to One Another

A Teaching Outline

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

Be kind to one another.

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

We can bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit by the way we live. Paul warns us against unwholesome language, bitterness, improper use of anger, harsh words, slander, and bad attitudes toward others. Instead of acting that way, we should be forgiving, just as God has forgiven us.

Are you bringing sorrow or pleasing God with your attitudes and actions? Act in love toward your brothers and sisters in Christ, just as God acted in love by sending his Son to die for your sins.

The Lord is gracious in mercy and lovingkindness.

Psalms 145:8

The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.

Sometimes our burdens seem more than we can bear, and we wonder how we can go on. David stands at this bleak intersection of life's road and meditates on the Lord, the great burden bearer.

God is able to lift us up because

- (1) His greatness is beyond discovery (145:3);
- (2) He does mighty acts for each generation (145:4);
- (3) He is full of majestic, glorious splendor (145:5);
- (4) He does awe-inspiring deeds (145:5, 6);
- (5) He is righteous (145:7);
- (6) He is kind, merciful, patient, loving, and compassionate (145:8, 9);
- (7) He rules over an everlasting kingdom (145:13);

(8) He is our source of all our daily needs (145:15, 16);

(9) He is righteous and kind in all his dealings (145:17);

(10) He remains close to those who call on him (145:18); (11) he hears our cries and rescues us (145:19, 20).

If you are bending under a burden and feel that you are about to fall, turn to God for help. He is ready to lift you up and bear your burden.

Jesus felt compassion for the people.

Matthew 9:36

Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus was overwhelmed with compassionate pity for the people. His response echoes the deep inner mercy of God, often described in the Old Testament. Ezekiel also compared Israel to sheep without a shepherd (Ezekiel 34:5, 6). Jesus came to be the Shepherd, the one who could show people how to avoid life's pitfalls (see John 10:14).

God being compassionate, forgave their iniquities.

Psalm 78:38

But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; and often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath.

Over and over the children of Israel claimed that they would follow God, but then they turned away from him. The problem was that they made commitments to God with their mouths and not with their hearts; thus, their repentance was empty. Talk is cheap. God wants our conduct to back up our spiritual claims and promises.



Compassion in Christians

Ephesians 4:32

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We can bring sorrow to the Holy Spirit by the way we live. Paul warns us against unwholesome language, bitterness, improper use of anger, harsh words, slander, and bad attitudes toward others. Instead of acting that way, we should be forgiving, just as God has forgiven us. Are you bringing sorrow or pleasing God with your attitudes and actions? Act in love toward your brothers and sisters in Christ, just as God acted in love by sending his Son to die for your sins.

Compassion of Christ

Matthew 11:28-30

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. [29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. [30] For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

A yoke is a heavy wooden harness that fits over the shoulders of an ox or oxen. It is attached to a piece of equipment the oxen are to pull. A person may be carrying heavy burdens of (1) sin, (2) excessive demands of

religious leaders (23:4; Acts 15:10), (3) oppression and persecution, or (4) weariness in the search for God.

Jesus frees people from all these burdens. The rest that Jesus promises is love, healing, and peace with God, not the end of all labor. A relationship with God changes meaningless, wearisome toil into spiritual productivity and purpose.

In what sense was Jesus' yoke easy? The yoke emphasizes the challenges, work, and difficulties of partnering with Christ in life. Responsibilities weigh us down, even the effort of staying true to God. But Jesus' yoke remains easy compared to the crushing alternative.

Jesus doesn't offer a life of luxurious ease—the yoke is still an oxen's tool for working hard. But it's a shared yoke, with weight falling on bigger shoulders than yours. Someone with more pulling power is up front helping. Suddenly you are participating in life's responsibilities with a great Partner—and now that frown can turn into a smile, and that gripe into a song.

Compassion of God

2 Corinthians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

Many think that when God comforts us, our troubles should go away. But if that were always so, people would turn to God only out of a desire to be relieved of pain and not out of love for him.

We must understand that being "comforted" can also mean receiving strength, encouragement, and hope to deal with our troubles. The more we suffer, the more comfort God gives us. If you are feeling overwhelmed, allow God to comfort you. Remember that every trial you endure will help you comfort other people who are suffering similar troubles.

A mother shows compassion for her child.

Isaiah 49:15

"Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.

The people of Israel felt that God had forgotten them in Babylon; but Isaiah pointed out that God would never forget them, as a loving mother would not forget her little child. When we feel that God has forsaken us, we must ask if we have forsaken and forgotten God (see Deuteronomy 31:6).

Jesus felt compassion for the crowd.

Mark 6:34

When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.

This crowd was as pitiful as a flock of sheep without a shepherd. Sheep are easily scattered; without a shepherd they are in grave danger. Jesus was the Shepherd who could teach them what they needed to know and keep them from straying from God. See Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 34:5ff; and John 10:11-16 for descriptions of the good shepherd.

Be kindhearted and humble in spirit.

1 Peter 3:8

To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

Peter lists five key elements that should characterize any group of believers:

- (1) One mind—pursuing the same goals;
- (2) Sympathy—being responsive to others' needs;
- (3) Love—seeing and treating each other as brothers and sisters;
- (4) Tenderness—being affectionately sensitive and caring; and
- (5) Humility—being willing to encourage one another and rejoice in each other's successes.

These five qualities go a long way toward helping believers serve God effectively.

Those without compassion do not show God's love.

1 John 3:17

But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

These verses give an example of how to give up our life for others—to help those in need. This is strikingly similar to James's teaching (James 2:14-17). How clearly do your actions say you really love others? Are you as generous as you should be with your money, possessions, and time?

The Lord is abounding in lovingkindness.

Psalm 103:8

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.

God's law was given first to Moses and the people of Israel. God's law presents a clear picture of God's character and his will for his people. It was God's training manual to prepare his people to serve him and to follow his ways. Review the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) and the history of how they were given, asking God to show you his will and his ways through them.

**Be Healed
In
Jesus Name**

Jesus felt compassion and healed the sick.

Matthew 14:14

When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and felt compassion for them and healed their sick.

Jesus sought solitude after the news of John's death. Sometimes we may need to deal with our grief alone. Jesus did not dwell on his grief but returned to the ministry he came to do.

Jesus performed some miracles as signs of his identity. He used other miracles to teach important truths. But here we read that he healed people because he "had compassion on them." Jesus was, and is, a loving, caring,

and feeling person. When you are suffering, remember that Jesus hurts with you. He has compassion on you.

With compassion, their eyes were healed.

Matthew 20:34

Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him.

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The Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

Psalm 103:13

Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

God is like a father—tender and compassionate. Not every child has a tender and compassionate father, however. Too often, sadly, the cycles of abuse and dysfunction rob children of loving fathers. If that is your situation, God offers himself to you to be the Father you never had or perhaps felt you never needed. Of course, you can't "go fishing" with God or be held physically by him, but you can receive his love in your heart by means of his Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). God can tenderly heal your deep loss.

We are fragile, but God's care is eternal. Too often we focus on God as judge and lawgiver, ignoring his compassion and concern for us. When God examines our lives, he remembers our human condition. Our weakness should never be used as a justification for sin. His mercy takes everything into account. God will deal with you compassionately. Trust him.

**Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility,
gentleness and patience.**

Colossians 3:12

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

Paul offers a strategy to help us live for God day by day:

- (1) Imitate Christ's compassionate, forgiving attitude (3:12, 13);
- (2) Let love guide your life (3:14);
- (3) Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart (3:15);
- (4) Always be thankful (3:15);
- (5) keep God's Word in you at all times (3:16);
- (6) Live as Jesus Christ's representative (3:17).

Jesus felt compassion for a sorrowful woman.

Luke 7:13

When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep."

Honoring the dead was important in Jewish tradition. A funeral procession, with relatives of the dead person following the body that was wrapped and carried on a kind of stretcher, would make its way through town.

Compassion is given according to his lovingkindness.

Lamentations 3:32

For if He causes grief, then He will have compassion according to His abundant lovingkindness.

To submit "to the yoke of his discipline" means to willingly come under God's discipline and learn what he wants to teach. This involves several important factors: (1) silent reflection on what God wants, (2) repentant humility, (3) self-control in the face of adversity, and (4) confident patience, depending on the divine Teacher to bring about loving lessons in our life. God has several long-term and short-term lessons for you right now. Are you doing your homework?

This call to "turn the other cheek" reminds us that sometimes God calls us to suffer criticism and abuse for his purposes.

Jesus taught his followers to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39), and he exemplified this at the highest level just before his crucifixion (Matthew 27:27-31; Luke 22:64; John 18:22; 19:3). This, however, should never be used to justify anyone's continued suffering of spousal or any other kind of abuse.

Yes, our God is compassionate.

Psalm 116:5

Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; Yes, our God is compassionate.

God is so responsive that you can always reach him. He bends down and listens to your voice. This writer's love for the Lord had grown because he had experienced answers to his prayers. If you are discouraged, remember that God is near, listening carefully to every prayer and answering each one in order to give you his best.

God stays close to us even in death. When someone we love is nearing death, we may become angry and feel abandoned. But believers (the Lord's loved ones) are precious to God, and he carefully chooses the time when they will be called into his presence. Let this truth provide comfort when you've lost a loved one. God sees, and each life is valuable to him (see Jesus' statement in Matthew 10:29).

Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort

2 Corinthians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

Many think that when God comforts us, our troubles should go away. But if that were always so, people would turn to God only out of a desire to be relieved of pain and not out of love for him. We must understand that being "comforted" can also mean receiving strength, encouragement, and hope to deal with our troubles. The more we suffer, the more comfort God gives us. If you are feeling overwhelmed, allow God to comfort you. Remember that every trial you endure will help you comfort other people who are suffering similar troubles.

God is abundant in loving kindness and truth.

Psalm 86:15

But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.

It is right to pray for a sign of God's favor. As David found, it may be just what we need. But let us not overlook the signs he has already given: the support of family and friends, the fellowship of other Christians, the light of each new day. And we can be confident that he knows our situation no matter how desperate it becomes, and he cares.

Matthew 6:7 "Blessed are
the merciful for they
shall receive mercy."

With compassion, Jesus cleansed the men.

Mark 1:41

Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."

In keeping with the law in Leviticus 13 and 14, Jewish leaders declared people with leprosy unclean. This meant that lepers were unfit to participate in any religious or social activity. Because the law said that contact with any unclean person made a person unclean, too, some people even threw rocks at lepers to keep them at a safe distance. Even the mention of the name of this disabling disease terrified people. How astounding it was, then, when Jesus reached out and touched this man who had leprosy. The real value of a person is inside, not outside. Although a person's body may be diseased or deformed, the person inside is no less valuable to God. In a sense, we are all people with leprosy because we have all been deformed by the ugliness of sin.

By sending his Son, Jesus, God has touched us, giving us the opportunity to be healed.

God has compassion on whom he will.

Romans 9:15

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

The fallacy of gaining salvation by human effort remains as strong as ever—people still think good intentions are the key to unlock the door to eternal life. By the time they get to try the lock, they will find that their key does not fit.

Others imagine that their efforts are building an invisible ladder to heaven made up of service, family, position, reputation, good work, and desire, although none of these rungs will support a feather. People are so busy trying to reach God that they completely miss the truth that God has already reached down to them. We cannot earn God's mercy—if we could, it would not be mercy.

Jesus had compassion on the hungry.

Mark 8:2

"I feel compassion for the people because they have remained with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

Do you ever feel that God is so busy with important concerns that he can't possibly be aware of your needs? Just as Jesus was concerned about these people's need for food, he is concerned about our daily needs. At another time Jesus said, "Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs" (Matthew 6:32).

Do you have concerns that you think would not interest God? Nothing is too large for him to handle and no need too small to escape his interest.



An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

New American Standard Bible