

WORD

³⁷“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’ ³⁸When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ ⁴⁰The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” MATTHEW 25:37-40

WHAT

Jesus teaches us to show compassion to the least of our brothers and sisters. He modeled this on earth, and He showed us compassion and love by dying for us on the cross and saving us from our sin. This love He has shown us compels us to compassion and action. In this lesson, we will look at three groups of people we need to show compassion to—the poor and needy, the stranger and undeserving, and the lost.

1 Show compassion to the poor and needy.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink . . .”

MATTHEW 25:35

He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God. PROVERBS 14:31

One way to honor God is to be kind to the poor. Jesus said that meeting the needs of the least is doing it for Him. Though paying attention to our own needs and ignoring what is happening to those around us is easier, more convenient, and comfortable, we are to do what is harder, inconvenient, and uncomfortable by caring for the poor and needy. Who are some of the poor and needy around us we can show compassion to?

2 Show compassion to the stranger and undeserving.

³⁵“ . . . I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” MATTHEW 25:35,36

³³“But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him.” LUKE 10:33,34 (READ ALSO LUKE 10:30-37.)

Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan to show us how to love our neighbors. We can show this compassion to others out of the love and compassion we ourselves have received from God. And this means we can't pick and choose who we will show compassion to. As followers of Jesus, we are to serve and help everyone—even strangers (those who are different from us and those we don't normally engage) and the undeserving (those who have wronged us or seemingly don't deserve grace). Who are some of the strangers and undeserving around us we can show compassion to?

3 Show compassion to the lost.

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

LUKE 19:10

Beyond meeting our physical or emotional needs, God provided the solution to our greatest need—salvation. He came to seek and save us because we can't save ourselves and we need Him. Now that we have been found, we are commanded to show Christ's compassion to the lost. Who are the lost among us? What's the best way to show compassion to the lost?
