

Read: Mark 6:30-34

Jesus Was a Compassionate Teacher of the Word

Mark 6:34

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What does it mean to be compassionate? According to Google, it's more than simply telling someone that you care. Compassion is "feeling or showing sympathy and concern for others." To be compassionate is to feel deeply for another person as they experience the ups and downs of life. It's a frame of mind, making it easy to treat others with love and understanding.

In our Bible reading, when Jesus saw a large crowd of people, "he had compassion on them." They followed him even when Jesus was trying to find a quiet moment of rest. He didn't think, "Man, I can't get away from these people!" Or, "Why can't I be alone for a few minutes?" He could've been frustrated. But no, Jesus had compassion on them. He saw them as "sheep without a shepherd." Compassion is not an outward show but an emotion from the inner and deepest part of the body. God's gut feeling for sheep is deep inside him and can't be rooted out. Jesus knew sheep would be lost, confused, and in danger if he were not there to guide and help them. "So he began teaching them many things." Jesus didn't run and hide. He didn't ignore the people while he ate his lunch. He saw people running on empty, who were hurting and hopeless and needed much more. He not only loved them in his heart, but he also showed his love by continuing to care for them. His love flowed out into his actions.

Jesus is a compassionate teacher to us as well! His love flowed out through his actions when he willingly gave his life on the cross and rose from the dead for all of us. Through his amazing, selfless example, he displayed how we might live a compassionate life. He inspires us to love deep down in our hearts and for our love to pour out in our actions. So, the next time your little sister asks you yet again to help her fix her Lego creation, show compassion. When your big brother just needs some time alone, show compassion. When Mom and Dad need your help around the house *again*, show compassion! Work to have your love shower on others through your actions just as Jesus showers us with his love as our compassionate teacher every moment of every day!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Jesus couldn't get away from the people following him. Instead of getting mad, how did he feel about them? (*Hint: it begins with the letter "c."*)
- What does it mean to be compassionate?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- If you were one of Jesus' disciples trying to leave the crowd of people, how might you have felt when they followed you?
- Name two ways you might show compassion to others?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- What makes it difficult for you to show compassion to others?
- List examples from today how you might have showed compassion rather than become frustrated.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, we are thankful for your compassion every day. Help us to show compassion to others by letting our love show in our actions. Amen.

Hymn: CW 365:1 – Love Divine, All Love Excelling

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
Fix in us your humble dwelling,
All your faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, you are all compassion,
Boundless mercy from above.
Visit us with benediction;
Comfort us with heav'nly love.