

## *Acts of Compassion* group study

### **Session 5 Growing Compassion**

#### **1. Preparation: Read Chapters 10-12 in *Acts of Compassion***

#### **2. Opening prayer**

Pray that God will help you be a source of compassion for the members of the group.

#### **3. Warm-up question**

If you are at the zoo, what animal do you enjoy watching most and why?

#### **4. Chapter summaries and key points**

Chapter 10—Compassion in communities

This chapter focuses on the importance of compassion in communities, including schools and neighborhoods.

- How to ask kids about their school day.
- Compassion when you least expect it.
- University of Iowa “wave” during football games is known nationally.

Chapter 11—Compassion in organizations

Many organizations provide relief after disasters, help people with food insecurity and promote working on building homes for those in need.

- Disaster recovery team that leaves homeowners with a Bible after completing repairs.
- Important work done by American Red Cross and Habitat for Humanity.
- How to show compassion through listening.

Chapter 12—Compassion at work

Receiving compassion with joy demonstrates value for the caring of others. Be willing to allow others to show compassion and be sure to appreciate their efforts. Showing gratitude validates the people who show you caring and kindness.

- Example of store clerk who took care of customer’s extra payment.
- Recognizing when someone in a work setting needs help.
- Research that shows kindness and compassion are contagious.

#### **5. Scripture reading Luke 10:33-37**

One of the most familiar parables of Jesus is the story of the good Samaritan. It describes a man who was robbed, beaten and left half dead. A priest and a Levite both avoided him by passing by on the other side of the road.

*But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.<sup>33</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.<sup>34</sup> The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him,” he said, “and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”<sup>35</sup>*

Jesus followed the story with a question, “Who was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

### **6. Discussion questions**

What group or organization have you belonged to that shows compassion for people?

Where in our neighborhoods or communities is there a greater need for compassion?

How can one group member who expresses compassion influence the behaviors of others in the group?

In what situations are groups better at showing compassion compared to individual actions?

What are the biggest challenges for trying to show compassion in a work or neighborhood setting?

### **Actions for this week**

Notice times or people who need compassion in your community, organizations or work setting. Make an effort to respond to these needs when possible. Write a few notes about this.

Read Chapters 13-14 in *Acts of Compassion*.

### **Closing prayer**

Ask God to help you recognize the need for compassion in your work, community and organizations and give you the ability to show caring when you get the opportunity.

### **Additional scriptures**

If time permits, have someone read these scriptures, then talk about how compassion is described in each of them.

The kind of behavior God would like of us: Colossians 3:12-13

Instruction on showing compassion: Ephesians 4:32

The gifts of our compassion to others: 1 Peter 4:10