

compassion

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The nurse showed great compassion for the injured children.

Not to be confused with:

empathy – ability to imagine oneself in the condition of another; a vicarious participation in another’s emotions: *The widow expressed empathy for the woman who had just lost her husband.*

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What does the Bible say about compassion?

The Hebrew and Greek words translated “compassion” in the Bible mean “to have mercy, to feel sympathy and to have pity.” We know that, according to the Bible, God is “a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness” ([Psalm 86:15](#)). Like all of God’s attributes, His compassion is infinite and eternal. His compassions never fail; they are new every morning ([Lamentations 3:22-23](#)).

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, exemplified all of the Father’s attributes, including His compassion. When Jesus saw His friends weeping at the grave of Lazarus, He felt compassion for them and wept alongside them ([John 11:33-35](#)).

Moved with compassion for the suffering of others, Jesus healed the large crowds who came to Him ([Matthew 14:14](#)), as well as individuals who sought His healing ([Mark 1:40-41](#)).

**When He saw the large crowds as sheep without a shepherd, His compassion led Him to teach them the things the false shepherds of Israel had abandoned. The priests and scribes were proud and corrupt; they despised the common people and neglected them, but Jesus had compassion on them, and He taught and loved them.
(Mark 6:34)**

When asked what was the greatest commandment, Jesus responded that it is to love God with all our heart, mind and strength. But He added that the second commandment “is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:34-40). The Pharisee had asked Him which single command of God is the greatest, but Jesus provided two, stating not only what we are to do, but also how to do it. To love our neighbor as ourselves is the natural result of our loving devotion toward God.

First John 3:17 asks, “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need, but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” Originally made in His image, man is to exemplify God’s traits, including compassion. From this it follows that “If anyone says, ‘I love God’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 John 4:20). The Bible is clear that compassion is an attribute of God and of God’s people as well.

Conclusion:

Sympathy forms a kinship over the emotions with the individual regarding the problem.

Compassion rises out of ones spirit to do something about it.