

One truth shared: God gives us the guts to serve—God, help us to do it to your glory!

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus—Give Us “The Guts” to Serve!

Have you ever wanted to help someone so badly that your gut hurt? That’s what drove Jesus to help others—an insane, looking out for everyone, not passing anyone by, love that led him to serve. It was defined in a simple word in the Greek—*compassion*. It was from a word that literally meant “the inner parts” like the bowels, intestines, heart, kidneys, liver, lungs, etc. When it all hurt from seeing others in need and in pain, suffering from sickness and disease, from poverty and injustice, from racism and social struggles—that “compassion” is what led to Jesus’ action. He worked. He healed. He drove out demons. He fed. He led. He loved. Ultimately, it’s what led Jesus to lay down his perfection to become sin for us on the cross, that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). It was compassion that led Jesus to serve. It was compassion that led Jesus to rise from the grave to serve our ultimate need—proof that our sins are really forgiven, and they are!

Think of all of the times we have passed by people in need; or given in to apathy or resentment in the face of social injustice or racism; or gotten angry with God when our mom got cancer or our dad had a heart attack, or grandma got COVID. How many times have we shown the ugly insides of ourselves and fallen so far short of God’s glory, we thought that there was no possible way to have forgiveness and peace with a perfect God. Every one of those times, Jesus made you perfect, because he felt compassion so deep inside for you—that it led him to die—for you. To rise—for you. That changes things. It changes us. Now, he calls you to be his own and live under him in his kingdom. Now, he calls you to serve.

People look different when you see them through the lens of Jesus’ compassion. They don’t look like a person, or a gender, or a color, or an income bracket, or a gen; they look like a soul that is precious to Jesus and worth everything—including, but not limited to, our care; our inner parts; our compassion, our service, and our love. After all, you are a little Jesus! It’s really the love of Jesus *through* us that he already showed to us. And it’s his call that leads us to serve!

Who are you able to serve with compassion today? Look around, consider starting within your very own home, and you’ll probably be surprised at how many people are hurting that God has placed you, his forgiven child, in the life of. God bless your compassion as Jesus guides your inner part—right down to your very soul!

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for seeing me, helpless and harassed by the world and my own thoughts of doubt and anxiety and sadness—and sin—and then for having compassion on me. You know and feel my sins right down to your deepest and most inner parts—and you died for them all. Risen in glory, dear Savior, help me show compassion to others and, I pray boldly, give me chances to see them—by first seeing what you have done for me. In your name I ask it. Amen.

Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

Year A – Proper 6

Holy Ministry

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Jesus—Give Us “The Guts” to Serve!

***Starting the Discussion:** This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

What different thoughts pop into your mind when you realize that the word used for Jesus having “compassion” literally means bowels, intestines, kidneys, liver, heart, etc.?

***Connecting:** This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they’ve looked at it.*

- Every part of our bodies (even our “guts”!) has been given as a gift from God to serve. What exactly are you passionate about—so passionate that you feel it to your core?
- How does that passion translate into compassion for others? Let’s find out ...

***Digging In:** Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- If you can, share one of Jesus’ miracles where he showed compassion on those he ministered to.
- If you’re comfortable, share a personal experience where someone showed compassion to you in a way you’ll never forget. What did that experience teach you that you’ll never forget?
- Share two ways Jesus’ compassion for you has affected your life.
- Discuss together what compassion to your community looks like. What one thing are you (individually or as a group) able to do this week that serves and shows compassion to others?

***Conclusion:** Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the “connecting question” above.*

Give one takeaway from today’s discussion about compassion. What can you do to ensure that compassion is not just discussed but becomes action? Conclude in prayer asking for God’s help to make it happen.