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# COMPASSION

(Multiple articles by Mike Glenn)

Compassion is a sympathetic understanding of another's distress. Zechariah 7:9 says, "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother.'"

Compassion is mentioned 20 times in the New Testament and another 21 times in the Old Testament. Other verses talk about the concept of compassion. 1 John 3:17 says this, "*But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*" The point the Apostle John was making is that without compassion residing within a man's heart, it is impossible for the love of God to be there as well.

James 2:14-17 is another passage that shows the true nature of compassion. "What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also, faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead, being alone."

We need to ask ourselves, "Do I show compassion?" How do I know if I am a compassionate person? See if the following acronym applies to you...

**C**aring that others are in pain.

**O**pening up my heart to reach out to help.

**M**aking time for kindness.

**P**utting time in my schedule to visit the lonely.

**A**nswering a call for help.

**S**howing my love.

**S**haring my blessings without complaint.

**I**ntentional growth in how to show compassion God's way.

**O**ften searching out those in need.

**N**ever turning my back on the less fortunate.

James describes pure and undefiled religion in compassionate terms in James 1:27, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit the orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." The phrase "to visit" carries the idea of taking care of the needs of those who are truly in need of help. This is the heart of compassion, helping those who cannot help themselves or who are so overwhelmed by a tragedy or circumstance in life that they need support from others.