

Service and Compassion

The compassion and service of Jesus

Foundation

Bible passage : John 10.11-18

In the Bible we see several examples of Jesus showing compassion and serving. We read, for example, in Matthew 9.35-38 how Jesus had compassion on people because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd.

Compassion means to share in the suffering of other, to feel for them in what is happening to them.

A servant may serve because their master tells them to, but with no compassion. Perhaps they serve out of fear for their master, or someone may serve, but just see it as a job for which they are paid.

In a similar way a person might have compassion on others, feel real concern for them, but never actually do something for the person. Instead, they could have spent time with someone who was suffering, or they could have given money to a charity to help such people, or they could have been actively involved in helping those in need.

Inspired by Christ, we see from the Bible how Jesus both showed compassion and how he served. This module is about service, so we will be thinking about what Jesus said about serving, how Jesus himself served, and why serving became so important for his followers in the Bible, in the past and today.



A flock of sheep. This image was also used in Unit 6, about Jesus' compassion in Module 13.

Jesus had compassion on people because they were like Sheep without a Shepherd, but in John chapter 10 we also read about Jesus calling Himself, The Good Shepherd. He said that a hired hand, whose job it was to look after the sheep, might run away when danger came (a wolf or lion).

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” John 10.11

We will also see in this module how Jesus said that He had come to serve, and that he would do this through His death, by giving His life as a ransom for many. We will see what that means.

But when Jesus spoke about being the Good Shepherd he spoke about how He, the Shepherd was not only willing to die for His sheep, but that is why He came - to die for all who trust Him and follow Him.

Words and Bible Translations

In the Bible, as in English, compassion properly means to share in the suffering of others.



Jesus came to die for others, and in doing so showed His compassion for them, and also served them.