

## Compassion - Part 2

John Pollock

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Today we are going to do a brief review of the sermon entitled Compassion - Part 1 that was given on April 1, 2017 and then we'll move on to the second part of this subject. In doing so we will cover four points which we can implement in our lives, four points that will aide us in helping each of us to build what I refer to as active compassion. The title of today's sermon is simply

### Compassion - Part 2

It's sad to say, but in western society today compassion is no longer considered a natural human emotion. It's as though people have to work on it, or work it up I guess, to express any compassion. That is speaking of all western societies. I personally feel it's mainly due to technology. Each of us having become callous to pain and suffering and the largest contributor of this is the worldwide explosion of mass communication and most specific and most recent that of social media. One might say that the social media explosion began some ten to fifteen years ago with very innocent sites such as My Space or even classmates.com. Today most everyone is familiar with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. I want to take a moment and give you a partial list of other social media sites or applications that are out there being used by millions, if not billions of individuals. We find out there LinkedIn, Global Plus, Snapchat, Pinterest, Tumblr, Vine, Reddit, Flickr, Swarm, Kik, Yik Yak, Shouts, Periscope, Medium, SoundCloud, Tinder, WhatsApp, Slack, Peach and my favorite, and I'm saying this tongue in cheek, Blab. Again, this is only a partial list of the social media applications that are available to millions, if not billions of individuals. Understand, I'm not saying that social media is to blame for all of the lack of compassion, but I believe it's a highly contributing factor to the lack of compassion due to the massive, and I really want to emphasize the word massive, amount of information available and the calloused attitudes that it brings. Is information valuable? Absolutely it is. Is the massive amount we are inundated with day after day, or maybe I should say hour after hour, is that good for us? That's yet to be determined. The jury is still out on that.

At any rate, with this as a background, with this as our introduction, let's begin a brief review of part 1 of this subject of compassion. I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time in this review. If needed, one can request the sermon itself, or you can view it on the website. We began part 1 with a short story of compassion then made the following statement and asked the following question. Compassion – we may think we know what it is, but do we really? In part 1 we asked what is the dictionary definition of compassion and what does God have to say about it? Are there examples of compassion in scripture? Is it something that a Christian should have and if so, how do we apply compassion in our lives? These are all good questions. We then began our study by defining compassion. We found that The Bing Dictionary, powered by Oxford Dictionaries, defines compassion as *sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings and misfortunes of others*. We found that synonyms for compassion from the same

resource are *pity, sympathy, empathy and fellow feeling*. The Guidepost Family Topical Concordance of the Bible defines and I still believe this to be the best definition of compassion as *suffering with and for another, desire to relieve another's distress*.

In part 1 we then referenced many scriptures regarding compassion, scriptures that supported our definition. Our first reference scripture was 1 Peter 2:21 and we read the following.

**1 Peter 2:21.** *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you ... (NIV)*

Here we found the application of our definition; Christ suffering for each of us.

*21b) ... leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. (NIV)*

We noted in part 1 that there are three aspects of this scripture that should jump off of the page as we read it. Number one, Christ suffered and was compassionate for each of us. In number two we found that we should follow the example that Christ left for us. We asked the question: What was that example? Of course, that example is suffering. In number three we found actually at the beginning of the verse; to this you were called. We asked the question: To what were we called? The answer was found within the context of verses 19, 20 and 21.

We found in part 1 that all of us are called to suffer. Christ suffered for each of us. Christ left us an example that we should follow in his steps, suffering one for another. We then began a scriptural search of compassion from Christ's example. We referenced Matthew 11:28-30 where we find Christ's compassion expressed towards the weary, those who are heavily laden with the burden of labor.

We then turned to Hebrews 2:14-18. In verse 14 we found that the Word, who was born in the flesh as Jesus Christ, did so to experience suffering as a human. In verse 18 we read of his desire to remove another's distress, as he himself suffered for each and every one of us. Christ's compassion here is directed to those tempted, to those facing trials.

From there we moved to Mark 9:17-27. Here we saw the desire on the part of Christ to help a boy, the desire to relieve another's distress. A great deal of compassion was found here, even to the point of Christ physically helping the boy to get back on his feet, Jesus Christ himself expressing compassion towards the helpless, a young boy who was demon possessed.

We read of Jesus Christ's compassion towards the sorrowful in Luke 7. We found Christ suffering with another, a widow whose only son had died; Christ, having the desire to relieve another's distress, in this case a mother, a widow.

We then moved on to the Old Testament and we looked at examples found in the book of Lamentations. From Lamentations we moved to the story of Susan and Marshall Shelley and we read the following, this being a summary of that reading. The full story was in part 1. We found that the Shelleys' first son was born at 8:20 p.m. November 22, 1991 and died at 8:22 p.m. November 22, 1991, two minutes later. The nurse asked, "Do you have a name for the baby?" Susan said, "Toby, it's short for the Biblical Tobiah, which means God is good." A month later when Susan's husband, Marshall, was attending an alumni meeting at Wheaton College, he told a story of Toby's very short life. He summed up his talk by stating, "Life is hard and God is good." We made the statement, "You see brethren that's Lamentations."

In part 1 we then were asked to view compassion from the perspective of our spiritual Father. Do we truly understand the pain our spiritual Father felt at His son's death, the pain felt during the brutal, inhumane beating of His son, the sacrifice that His son went through so that each of us could be reconciled to our heavenly Father? That was the most selfless, most compassionate act that any human being had ever gone through on the parts of both the Father, as well as Christ. We asked the question: Why a compassionate act? We found that it was compassionate, because the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the desire on the parts of Christ and his Father to relieve our distress. They suffered for another, for each of us. It was done for you and it was done for me and it was done to God's purpose.

We found the God described in the Old Testament as a very compassionate God and the mercy He pours on each of us is a never ending amount of compassion. I would like to revisit Lamentations 3:22-23.

***Lamentations 3:22.*** *Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.  
23) They are new every morning ... (NKJV)*

What great compassion the God of the Old Testament had and has to this day. Yet, with all of this compassion we must come to understand that God is indeed sovereign. We then referenced Romans 9:15.

***Romans 9:15.*** *For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."  
(NKJV)*

From there we moved to Colossians 3:12-18, 23-24. As we begin our transition into today's part 2 of this particular sermon, let's read beginning in Colossians 12:3 from the New International Version. We'll go through this, because it's going to help in the transition moving from part 1 into part 2.

***Colossians 3:12.*** *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

13) *Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

14) *And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

15) *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

16) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*

17) *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

...

23) *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,*

24) *since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (NIV)*

Understanding that it is Jesus Christ whom we serve we'll move now into part 2 of this sermon and we'll look at four points that aide us in building active compassion in each of our lives, active compassion in our Christian calling.

Now, I personally believe that compassion has become a lost virtue, even though studies show that humans need and the studies show that humans crave a great amount of compassion. In today's societies compassion just seems to be lacking. It's just not there. People just don't seem to care. People in general lack sympathy. People in general lack empathy. People in general lack compassion.

It brings to mind a time when Christ and his disciples journeyed to Jerusalem. On the way they planned to rest at a Samaritan village. The group sent messengers ahead to arrange accommodations, but the village refused to cooperate. Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem and the Samaritans wanted nothing to do with the trip, because of their animosity towards the Jews. The disciples were furious that these villagers refused Christ. Turn to Luke 9:51-55 from the New Living Translation. I just gave you a short overview bringing us up to this verse.

**Luke 9:51.** *As the time drew near for his return to heaven, Jesus set out for Jerusalem.*

52) *He sent messengers ahead to the Samaritan village to prepare for his arrival.*

53) *But they were turned away. The people of the village refused to have anything to do with Jesus because he had resolved to go to Jerusalem.*

54) *When James and John heard about it, they said to Jesus, "Lord, should we order down fire from heaven to burn them up?"*

55) *But Jesus turned and rebuked them strongly that he did not come to destroy lives, but he came to save lives. (NLT)*

James and John, nicknamed sons of thunder, were zealous for what they believed, but they lacked an important ingredient, the compassion that comes from God's holy spirit. Sometimes it seems that those within the spiritual body of Christ are more inclined to be more like the sons of thunder than compassionate Christians.

I have heard over the years in God's church, and for me that's going on forty-six years, some say that they have little sympathy for certain people in their trials. They feel that afflicted members deserve their problems, because of the circumstances that they may have brought on themselves. That those in trials should develop backbone and work their way out of their problems without complaining or depending on others for a solution. You know, there's a cliché that states that this world is not for the weak and maybe we would be better off without these people to slow it down. Those are awfully strong words, brethren, and they have a certain degree of truth to them. We often bring on our own problems and, when it comes right down to it, we are responsible for the character we build or the character we don't build. We are responsible for working out our salvation, as we see in Philippians 2:12.

***Philippians 2:12.*** *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; (NKJV)*

In the world we live in today compassion faces extinction. We will see that in Romans 1:28-31 as it paints a picture of our time.

***Romans 1:28.*** *When they refused to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their evil minds and let them do things that should never be done.  
29) Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, fighting, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip. (NLT)*

Is that not the Egypt that we are coming out of? Is that not the world around us?

*30) They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They are forever inventing new ways of sinning, and are disobedient to their parents.  
31) They refuse to understand, break their promises and are heartless, and unforgiving. (NLT)*

There is no compassion there whatsoever. In 2 Timothy 3:2-4 we find the following, once again from the New Living Translation.

***2 Timothy 3:2.*** *For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred.  
3) They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and have no interest in what is good.  
4) They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasures rather than God. (NLT)*

Again we ask the question: Where is the compassion? It's not there. We must come to realize that these attitudes found here in Romans 1 and 2 Timothy 3 can have an effect on each and every one of us. We are to come out of the world. We all realize that and understand that, but still these attitudes can affect each of us. Yet, we need to keep in mind what we learned in part 1 of this message, that of the definition of compassion. Once again it is *suffering with or for another, desire to relieve another's distress*. Compassion means we literally help bear the afflicted person's burden. Compassion is concern to the point of personal involvement. We're going to get into that a little bit later.

We ask at this juncture of this sermon, how can we build active compassion in our lives? To answer this, and as stated earlier, we'll look at four points today that will help each of us become more involved in a Christian, God-based way to show more compassion in our lives.

Point number one in building active compassion in our lives is to avoid self-righteous attitudes. Turn to Romans 12:3-5.

**Romans 12:3.** *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself [herself] more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

*4) For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,*

*5) so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. (NKJV)*

We must come to understand that we can't condemn someone because of his or her circumstance. We can't have the mindset that we are better than others simply because our circumstances may be better than another's. God has called people in nearly every circumstance. There is a purpose in everything that God does. We can learn from those who seem a little weaker or a little slower than the rest of us in some areas. Even if the other person's trial is self-inflicted, we should put ourselves in that person's situation. Sure he or she has brought the problem on themselves, but now he or she is suffering. Think about the pressures and sorrow the person is under, yes, even though they may have brought the circumstance on themselves. How would we feel?

Since we have none in this congregation, I am going to use the example of teenagers. We may all wish we were teenagers. Think of their circumstance. They didn't ask to be teenagers. They just are. It's no fault that they're teenagers. They just are. How would any of us like to be teenagers today? I would not like to be a teenager today. Can you imagine what goes on in the public school systems at the teenage level? The peer pressure alone is something that none of us can understand. I would not want to face what some teens face today and they face it on a daily basis. How many of us, parents with teens, congregations with teens, show the slightest bit of compassion

towards our teens? How many of us show any interest at all to teenagers? How many of us, when given the opportunity, even say hi or start a conversation with a teenager?

That's just one example. We must assure that we show interest and compassion to all in the body of Christ and, if warranted, we need to show compassion to those outside the body of Christ. The attitudes of society around us today can influence our behavior, so we need to make an effort to avoid self-righteous attitudes, to avoid pre-conceived ideas or negative attitudes towards any of God's people.

Point number two in building active compassion is to build on the compassion God gives through His holy spirit. The holy spirit softens the heart, so the heart is not hard.

The book of Jude is an epistle of not many words. It's a book of only twenty-five verses, but it's a book full of the command for each of us to watch over each of us. The purpose of the book is to address false teachings and to illustrate a contrast between the error of heresy and the truth of Jesus Christ, as well as the command to watch out for one another. In verses 1-16 Jude identifies himself and quickly delves into the dilemma of false teachings (verse 4). Heresy was obviously seeping into the region, disturbing the churches and deceiving believers. He begins by illustrating similarities between false teachers and condemned individuals from the Old Testament, citing Cain, Balaam and Korah. In verses 17 through 25 Jude urges Christians to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am going to go through Jude in its entirety. As you will see this book touches on the command that we are to show mercy. We are to have compassion. We are to watch out for one another. Turn to Jude, beginning in verse 1 from the New Living Translation.

***Jude 1.*** *This letter is from Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. I am writing to all who are called to live in the love of God the Father and the care of Jesus Christ. (NLT)*

So, we find here Jude is writing to those within the body of Christ. He's writing to the church today.

*2) May you receive more and more of God's mercy [compassion], peace, and love.*

*3) Dearly loved friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the truth of the good news. God gave this unchanging truth once for all time to his holy people.*

*4) I say this because some godless people have wormed their way in among you, saying that God's forgiveness allows us to live immoral lives. The fate of such people was determined long ago, for they have turned against our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

*5) I must remind you, and you know it well, that even though the Lord rescued the whole nation of Israel from Egypt ... (NLT)*

That's been touched on already during these Days of Unleavened Bread.

*5b) ... that he [the Lord] later destroyed every one of those who did not remain faithful.*

*6) And I remind you of the angels who did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged. God has kept them chained up in prisons in darkness, waiting for the great Day of Judgment.*

*7) And don't forget the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, which were filled with sexual immorality and every kind of sexual perversion. ... (NLT)*

Again, that's the world around us.

*7b) ... Those cities were destroyed by fire and are a warning of the eternal fire that will punish all who are evil. (NLT)*

These Days of Unleavened Bread remind us of the world around us, the sin that's out there and that we are striving to remove sin from our lives. We have to live in the world around us. We don't partake in the world around us.

*8) Yet these false teachers—who claim authority from their dreams—live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at the power of the glorious ones.*

*9) But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels, did not dare accuse Satan of blasphemy, but simply said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (This took place when Michael was arguing with Satan about Moses' body.)*

*10) But these people mock and curse the things they do not understand. Like animals, they do whatever their instincts tell them, and they bring about their own destruction. (NLT)*

Again, that's the world about us.

*11) How terrible it will be for them! For they follow the evil example of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they will do anything for money. And like Korah, they will perish among the rebellion.*

*12) When these people join you in your fellowship meals celebrating the love of the Lord, they are like dangerous reefs that can shipwreck you. They are shameless in the way they care only about themselves. ... (NLT)*

We ask the question: Where's the compassion in that?

*12b) ... They are like clouds blowing over dry land without giving rain, promising much but producing nothing. They are like trees without fruit at harvest time. They are not only dead, but doubly dead, for they have been pulled up by their roots. (NLT)*



What we have read thus far should remind us of Matthew 13:24-30 from the New International Version. Please turn there.

**Matthew 13:24.** *Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.  
25) But while everyone was sleeping ... (NIV)*

These are interesting words here. It is like the parable of the ten virgins. They all slept.

*25b) ... his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.  
26) When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.  
27) "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'  
28) "'An enemy did this,' he replied. "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'  
29) "'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them.  
30) Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'" (NIV)*

We will have false teachers. We will have tares with us right up until the very end. Go back to Jude 1:13-25 from the New Living Translation.

**Jude 1:13.** *They are like wild waves of the sea, churning up the foam of their shameful deeds. They are like wandering stars, heading for everlasting gloom and darkness.  
14) Now Enoch, who lived seven generations after Adam, prophesied about these people. He said, "Look! The Lord is coming with thousands of his holy ones.  
15) He will bring the people of the world to judgment. He will convict the ungodly of all their evil things that they have done in rebellion and of all the insults that godless sinners have spoken against him."  
16) These people are grumblers and complainers, doing whatever evil thing they feel like. They are loudmouthed braggars, and they flatter others to get favors in return.  
17) But you, my dear friends, must remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ told you.  
18) That in the last times there would be scoffers whose purpose in life is to enjoy themselves in every evil imaginable way. (NLT)*

That's the world about us, brethren. It's all about self, no thought of others. You know, there's a term out there today, selfies aren't they called? You have your cell phone and you can take a photo of yourself. A number of years ago, when we lived in Wenatchee, directly across the street from us there was a family of three, a mother raising two daughters. The teenage daughter at that time had a camera, not a phone that will give

you selfies, and she would walk up and down the street; no matter where you saw her in Wenatchee she had this camera and she would take photos of herself. No thought of others. She was thinking of herself and only herself.

19) *Now they are here and they are the ones who are creating divisions among you. They live by natural instinct because they do not have God's Spirit living in them.*

20) *But you, dear friends, must continue to build your lives on the foundation of your most holy faith, and continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit,*

21) *Live in such a way that God's love can bless you as you wait for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in his mercy is going to give you*

22) *Show mercy ... (NLT)*

Now both the King James Version and the New King James Version use the word compassion.

22b) *... to those whose faith is wavering.*

23) *Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. ... (NLT)*

Aha! Here we find in different words our definition of compassion, *suffering with or for another, desiring to relieve another's distress.*

23b) *... There are still others to whom you need to show compassion, but be careful that you aren't contaminated by their sins.*

24) *And now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from stumbling and Who will bring you into his glorious presence innocent of sin and with great joy.*

25) *All the glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, glory, majesty, power, and authority belong to Him in the beginning, now and forever! Amen. (NLT)*

The key for us to take to heart is found in verses 17, 22 and 23. We have an obligation towards our brothers and sisters in Christ. Turn please to Colossians 3:12-17. We referred to these scriptures in part 1.

**Colossians 3:12.** *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*

13) *bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

14) *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

15) *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

16) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

17) *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (NKJV)*

Once again we find that we are obligated to be compassionate, to be kind, to be humble, to be meek, to be patient, bearing with one another as a bearing wall. Do you know what a bearing wall does? It supports. It holds up. Also, be forgiving toward one another even as Christ forgave us, and be loving. All of these attributes, if you will, were covered in verses 12-14.

One last scripture under this point of building on the compassion that God gives us through the holy spirit. Turn to Zechariah 7:8-10.

**Zechariah 7:8.** *Then the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying, 9) "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother [sister]. 10) Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother [sister].' (NKJV)*

God's spirit prompts us with feelings of concern and the desire to help. Don't ignore or squelch these feelings. Use them to build compassion. You see, God loves to see unity, love, compassion and concern applied within His church, within the body of Christ.

Point number three is to do what you can to help physically. I want you to really pay attention to what I say here. It's probably an understatement to say that we do pray for one another, and I'm sure we do. If not, we certainly should be praying for one another, but prayers for a person are not enough if, the emphasis right here is on the word if, it's in our power to do more. The key here is to understand what it means by within our power to do more. By this I mean if we have the means and what do I mean by the means? If we have the finances, the time, the health, the strength, the expertise to help others, then we need to exercise those gifts, those blessings that God has given us. Turn to James 2:14-17.

**James 2:14.** *What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15) If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16) and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? (NKJV)*

These are questions.

*17) Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (NKJV)*

Don't get me wrong. Effective, fervent prayer avails much as we see in James 5:16. But consider the following. If we are able, if we have the means, then uplifting conversation is always in order. That's one example. We might want to clean a house for someone who is ill or send cards of encouragement.

The most important point is that we get involved in a person's life. Their burden will become our burden, too, which will lighten their load. We're going to delve even deeper into this so you get a full understanding of what I mean by getting involved in another person's life. Turn to Galatians 6:1-5. I don't usually read from The Living Bible, but the way it is written here is appropriate.

**Galatians 6:1.** *Dear brothers, if a Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help him back onto the right path, remembering that next time it might be one of you who is in the wrong.*  
2) *Share each other's troubles and problems, and so obey our Lord's command.*  
3) *If anyone thinks he is too great to stoop to this, he is fooling himself. He is really a nobody.*  
4) *Let everyone be sure that he is doing his very best, for then he will have the personal satisfaction of work well done and won't need to compare himself with someone else.*  
5) *Each of us must bear some faults and burdens of his own. For none of us is perfect! (TLB)*

Involvement takes time. Involvement takes effort. It requires selfless awareness of other people. It presupposes wisdom, since we need to know how to involve ourselves in another's problems. Possibly the most important ingredient is patience, patience and more patience; patience with others in their faults and in their trials as we do our best to show active compassion. This leads us to our final point.

Point number four is that in our effort to be actively compassionate, a Christian must be patient. Active compassion simply means being patient. It is so much easier to see a situation clearly when we're not the ones suffering from it. Sometimes it seems obvious to us what the solution is. Come on! We can become impatient because the one going through the trial may not see what's going on, may not understand what's going on, but oh, it's so visual to us. We can become impatient.

How many of us have said, or have thought the following. "Well, if he won't help himself, there's nothing I can do." Or, "Until I see an effort on her part I'm not getting involved." Or, "The problem this time is the same problem as last time. He'll never change." We know and we all know that we know that God requires us to suffer and to suffer long with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Turn to Job 6:14.

**Job 6:14.** *"To him who is afflicted, kindness should be shown by his friend, even though he forsakes the fear of the Almighty." (NKJV)*

Kindness here is compassion, love, mercy, sympathy, empathy. Kindness should be shown by his friend, by his brother or his sister in Christ, even though the individual going through the affliction forsakes the fear of the Almighty.

What Job is stating here is that we shouldn't give up on a friend during a low period. Turn to James 5:7-11.

**James 5:7.** *Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. (NKJV)*

I cannot speak on behalf of farmers, but I'm sure once an alfalfa seed is planted, it probably takes a lot of patience until that alfalfa seed matures for the first cutting and, hopefully, for the second, third and fourth cutting as well.

8) *You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

9) *Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*

10) *My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.*

11) *Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord — that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. (NKJV)*

If you don't remember the outcome of Job's trials, go back and read it. The Almighty God of the Old Testament was extremely merciful, extremely compassionate. Help the afflicted person endure his or her trial until the end, when God's purpose for the trial comes to fruition. It may take longer than we had hoped, but then how many times has God had to wait patiently on us? Think about it.

In conclusion remember the four points covered here today regarding the way that each and every one of us can become more active and compassionate. Avoid self-righteous attitudes. Build on the compassion that God gives through His holy spirit. If able and qualified physically, mentally, emotionally and above all spiritually, do what we can to help our brothers and sisters in Christ. If you don't have expertise in counselling, don't become a counselor. There are other ways to help. Be patient.

For our last set of scriptures please turn to Romans 12:1-21. This shows us what is in God's mind on the subject of mercy and compassion. It gives us an outline and how to have compassion for our brothers and sisters.

**Romans 12:1.** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

2) *And do not be conformed to this world ... (NKJV)*

That's what these Days of Unleavened Bread are all about. Come out of sin. Come out of this world. Bring righteousness in.

- 2b) ... but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
- 3) For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.
- 4) For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,
- 5) so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
- 6) Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;
- 7) or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;
- 8) he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
- 9) Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.
- 10) Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;
- 11) not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;
- 12) rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
- 13) distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.
- 14) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
- 15) Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.
- 16) Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.
- 17) Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.
- 18) If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.
- 19) Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.
- 20) Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."
- 21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (NKJV)

As stated earlier, Romans here shows what is God's mind on the subject of mercy and what God's mind is on the subject of compassion and gives us an outline of how we can have compassion for one another. Each of us needs to take the time to not just read it, but we need to take the time to live this chapter. By doing so we will be able to have a part in our brother's and sister's growth by exercising compassion in our lives and more, we will begin to learn the trait, the attribute if you will, that God will have us extend to every human being in the not-too-distant future, the attribute of compassion.