

From Kindness to Compassion

1. What is the difference between Kindness and Compassion?

2. Read Philippians 2:5-8.

What do these verses teach us about the character of Jesus?

What does it mean that, according to the author, we are supposed to “have that same attitude in ourselves?”

3. Read the following quote from Henri Nouwen, from his book, *Compassion*:

“Jesus' whole life and mission involve accepting powerlessness and revealing in this powerlessness the limitlessness of God's love. Here we see what compassion means. It is not a bending toward the underprivileged from a privileged position; it is not a reaching out from on high to those who are less fortunate below; it is not a gesture of sympathy or pity for those who fail to make it in the upward pull. On the contrary, compassion means going directly to those people and places where suffering is most acute and building a home there.”

Does this change, at all, how you think of the word “compassion?” Why or why not?

4. Think about a time in your life where you were experiencing some sort of pain or grieving or loss. Which would you rather have had:

- Someone who offered you advice on why you were feeling this way and how to avoid this situation in the future
- Someone who offered you words of comfort or scripture
- Someone who “stayed with you

Why?

5. Is there something in your area of influence, your city, or your world that causes you to be “moved in the guts?” Have you responded? Should you? Why or why not?