**Compassion in Ministry — 45-Minute Lesson Plan**

**Learning Outcomes (3 minutes)**

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand **biblical foundations** of compassion.
- Identify **barriers** that hinder compassion in ministry.
- Practice **practical tools** that cultivate Christ-like compassion.
- Commit to **one personal action** that strengthens compassion in their ministry context.

**1. Opening & Prayer (5 minutes)**

**Opening Thought:** Compassion is not just a feeling—it is a ministry posture that reflects the heart of Jesus. It moves us from awareness to action, from sympathy to service.

**Prayer:** "Father, soften our hearts today. Teach us to see people as You see them, to feel what You feel, and to respond as Jesus responded. Let Your compassion flow through us in every area of ministry. Amen."

**2. Teaching Segment 1 — The Heart of Compassion (8 minutes)**

**Biblical Foundation**

- **Matthew 9:36** — Jesus saw the crowds, felt compassion, and responded.
- **Colossians 3:12** — We are instructed to "clothe ourselves" with compassion.
- **Ephesians 4:32** – "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" highlights the link between compassion and forgiveness
- **Luke 6:36** – "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" calls believers to mirror God's compassion in their actions
- **Psalm 103:13** – " As a father has compassion his children, so the Lord compassion for them that fear him" illustrates God's tender compassion toward His people
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**Key Teaching Points**

- Compassion begins with **seeing** people beyond their behavior or condition.
- Compassion is **costly**—it requires emotional availability.
- Compassion is **active**—it leads to movement, not just sentiment.

**Reflection Question (quick)**

"What helps you notice people's needs instead of rushing past them?"

**3. Teaching Segment 2 — Barriers to Compassion (8 minutes)**

**Common Barriers**

- **Fatigue & burnout**
- **Judgment or bias**
- **Overcommitment**
- **Emotional self-protection**
- **Past hurt or disappointment**

Compassion fades when we operate from empty places. Ministry requires both **spiritual filling** and **emotional boundaries**.

**Reflection Question**

"Which barrier do you personally face most often when it comes to offering compassion?"

**4. Practical Tool — The Compassion Posture (8 minutes)**

Teach this simple ministry tool:

**The 4-Step Compassion Posture**

1. **Pause** — Slow down internally.
2. **See** — Notice the person, not just the problem.
3. **Feel** — Ask, "What might they be experiencing?"
4. **Respond** — Offer presence, prayer, or practical help.

**Practice Example**

- Someone comes to you frustrated or emotional.

- Instead of fixing, lecturing, or rushing, you apply the four steps.

This tool helps leaders respond with **grace, patience, and empathy**.

**5. Interactive Activity — Compassion Scenarios (10 minutes)**

**Instructions**

Break into pairs or small groups.

Give each group one scenario:

- A volunteer shows up late and seems discouraged.
- A church member is angry about a misunderstanding.
- A teen withdraws and stops participating.
- A family member asks for help but feels embarrassed.

**Activity**

1. Identify what compassion looks like in the scenario.
2. Use the **4-step posture** to create a compassionate response.
3. Share insights with the group.

**Purpose**

This builds **muscle memory** for real ministry moments.

**6. Reflection & Personal Commitment (5 minutes)**

**Guided Reflection**

Ask participants to quietly consider:

- "Where is God inviting me to show more compassion?"
- "Who in my ministry needs compassion from me this week?"
- "What one change can I make to become more compassionate?"

**Write a Personal Commitment**

One sentence: **"This week, I will show compassion by _____."**

**7. Declaration & Closing Prayer (3 minutes)**

**Declaration**

“Lord, I choose compassion. I choose to see people through Your eyes. I choose to respond with Your heart. I will walk in compassion as a servant of Christ.”

**Closing Prayer**

“Jesus, fill us with Your compassion. Let our words heal, our presence comfort, and our actions reflect Your love. Strengthen us to serve with tenderness, patience, and wisdom. Make compassion our lifestyle and ministry expression. Amen.”