

Catching and Implementing Creative Compassion

By Kit Coons



What do faith and compassion have in common? Both are biblical, of course. Also, both can be caught. God gave Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Cru, contagious faith. His faith inspired millions, including myself, to trust God for ministry far beyond natural capabilities. Likewise, the godly characteristic of compassion can also be caught.

I've had the privilege of receiving creative compassion. Those who have experienced any tragedy know how negative thoughts can take over each day. Battling breast cancer made my days dreary and fearful. My friends expressed their love and concern.

But one friend did so in a way that gave me many joyful moments amid the crisis.

Creative compassion

One morning I found a basket at our back door. The basket had a lovely card with no indication of the giver. The basket held fourteen individually wrapped small inexpensive gifts. Instructions told me to open one gift each day. On the first day, I opened a package and wondered about my anonymous benefactor. The second day I was delighted to discover what the package held. As the days continued, I went to bed each night excitedly looking forward to opening my package in the morning.



For a moment each day, I had a reason to be happy. My anonymous friend gave me a daily way to disconnect from my pain.

Later I had the opportunity to use the same idea to express compassion. My sister and her two young daughters had lost their husband and father to cancer. I bought small gifts for each of my nieces, wrapped them, and mailed them with instructions to open one gift each day. None of the gifts cost a lot of money and some were just plain silly. But I knew each gift would provide a reason to look forward to something during their grief. I had caught the desire and a creative method to express compassion.

Scripture records hundreds of references to the compassion of God the Father and of Jesus His Son. Both give compassion freely without thought of merit. Only the need and hurt matter. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 says, *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in*

all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”

We can feel compassion and then learn how to express it from God Himself. Everyone we know has problems. People need our compassion.

Actively demonstrating compassion

Faith and compassion have something else in common. Both can be passive or active. The Oxford Dictionary defines compassion passively as “sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.”



However, Colossians 3:2 says, *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion . . .”* “Clothe yourselves” implies **actively demonstrating compassion** to others.

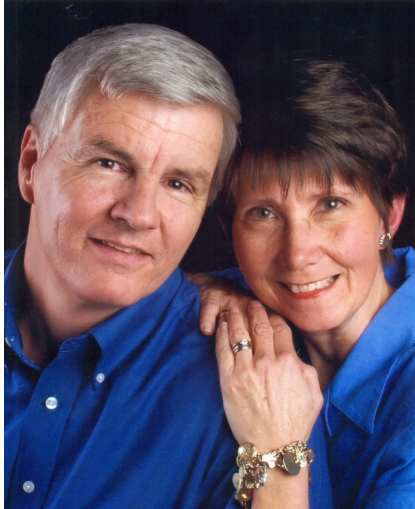
The Apostle Paul expressed the greatest human compassion when he said, *“For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race.”* (Romans 9:3) Paul was willing to sacrifice his eternal destiny if the Jewish people could be saved. God doesn’t call us to do that. But surely, we as Christ’s followers can do more than feel pity and concern for those suffering. We can sacrifice a little portion of our lives to be creatively compassionate.

My husband, Drew, and I feel great compassion for families torn apart by marital discord. Children’s suffering through no fault of their own especially breaks our hearts. We actively pursue creative ways to help couples in their challenges. The Father of compassion has given us this gift. Our hope is to give families the tools necessary to enrich their marriages and protect their children from suffering. In extending that compassion our lives have also been enriched.

Compassion is a gift that benefits everyone involved, sometimes the giver even more than the receiver.

What is a creative act of compassion you have experienced or seen?

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Kit and Drew are authors of [The Challenge Series](#) - five wholesome seeker-friendly novels; [The Ambassadors](#) - A scientific tale seemingly taken from today's headlines; and six [biblical life-skills books](#) on difficult topics.

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