

accompanied by an urge to help in some way. Compassion is deep emotion flowing out and reaching out to another who is experiencing pain or grief or loss or need.

Sixth, becoming a neighbor involves assistance. Assistance is the giving of some kind of help or provision to another in need. It can range across various forms, from a brief word of encouragement to material aid. Assistance is compassion expressing itself in definite form, sympathy taking substance in practical aid to those who suffer.

In the parable, which of the three men traveling the Jericho Road – the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan – became a neighbor to the man who had been wounded and left half-dead?

The priest became the wounded man's neighbor in four of the six steps: contact, perception, involvement, and responsibility. But he passed by the other side.

The Levite became the wounded man's neighbor in four of the six steps: contact, perception, involvement, and responsibility. He may even have experienced a pang of compassion. But he too passed by on the other side.

The Samaritan became the wounded man's neighbor in contact, perception, involvement, and responsibility also. But he felt deep compassion and came to the aid of the wounded man. By thus doing, he became a neighbor to the wounded man in the sense Jesus intended.

And the lawyer recognized the distinction between being a neighbor in the passive sense and becoming a neighbor in the active sense! For when Jesus asked him, "Which of these three proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" he answered, "The one who showed mercy toward him."

Note that Jesus did not reply, "You go and recognize it when people are kind and helpful to you, and love them." No. He said, "Go and do the same." "The Samaritan became a neighbor to a man who was in great need; you go and do the same; i.e., become a neighbor to those who are your neighbors."

**DRAW NEAR IN LOVE TO THOSE WHO ARE NEAR IN SPACE!**

It thus appears that Jesus extends the meaning of "neighbor" to include and even emphasize the active sense of the word; from the idea of having a neighbor to becoming a neighbor.