

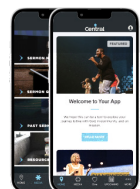
COMPASSION IS NOT A HANDOUT

August 24, 2025 // Craig Rees + Wibke Rees

BIG IDEA: True compassion requires discernment, and true justice demands presence. Both are rooted in God's character and call us to Spirit-shaped generosity.

KEY SCRIPTURES: Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 19:17; Mark 7:10–12; Matthew 6:1–4; Luke 10:25–37; Acts 4:34–35; Acts 6:1–6; Acts 16:14–15; Acts 20:35; Romans 13:6–7; 1 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 8–9; Galatians 6:10; James 1:27; 2:14–17; 1 Timothy 5:3–16

1. Paul's instruction in 1 Timothy 5 calls families to care for their own before the church steps in. How does this challenge the way you think about your family responsibilities? What are the challenges with this directive?
2. The early church cared for "those truly widows" (1 Timothy 5:16). How does this principle guide us in balancing compassion with discernment?
3. When have you seen government, family, and church all fall short in providing care? What does it look like for the church to step into that gap with covenantal care?
4. Acts 6 shows the church prioritizing vulnerable widows within their community. How do you see this principle of "covenantal care" applying today?
5. The Good Samaritan crossed social and cultural barriers to show mercy (Luke 10:25–37). What barriers do you most often hesitate to cross when compassion requires action?
6. What's the difference between giving in a way that restores dignity versus giving that unintentionally deepens dependency?
7. Proverbs 19:17 says, "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord." How does this verse reshape the way you view generosity?
8. How do you discern the difference between a Spirit-led invitation to sacrifice and the temptation toward burnout or savior-complex generosity?
9. What would it look like for you to move closer to the "Spirit Spot"—the center where compassion and justice meet under the Spirit's guidance—in how you respond to poverty this week?



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