



Hello, My Name Is Compassion

August 30th, 2026

1. LEAN IN

When life gets difficult, it can be easy to let our circumstances shape what we believe about God. We may begin to wonder, “Does God care? Is He really good? Why isn't He helping?”

- When life is difficult, what is your natural response toward God?
- Is it easier for you to be honest with God or do you find yourself hiding what you're feeling?
- What is one circumstance that has challenged the way you see God?

David shows us another way. Instead of allowing his crisis to determine his view of God, he anchors his prayers in God's character. When everything around him is changing, David remembers who God is.

2. LOOK UP — OIA

Read Psalm 86:1-17

OBSERVATION — What does the text say?

- What words or phrases stand out to you?
- What does David tell God about his circumstances?
- What does David ask God to do?
- What does David say about God's character in verses 5 and 15?
- What changes in David's prayer when he says, “But you, Lord...”?

- What do you notice about the connection between David's circumstances and his confidence in God?

INTERPRETATION — What does the passage mean?

What do we learn about God?

Psalm 86 describes God as **compassionate, gracious, forgiving, good, slow to anger, and abounding in love and faithfulness.**

- What does God's compassion tell us about how He sees us when we are hurting?
- What does God's grace tell us about whether His love must be earned?
- Why is it significant that David remembers God's character while he is still surrounded by enemies?
- How does knowing God's character change the way we pray?
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What do we learn about ourselves?

David does not pretend everything is okay. He admits that he is poor, needy, afraid, and under attack. Yet he brings all of it honestly into God's presence.

- What fears or struggles do you need to bring honestly to God?
- Where are you tempted to measure God's love by your circumstances?
- What good gifts from God have you overlooked because of the things you don't have?
- What would it look like to trust God's character even when you don't understand your circumstances?

APPLICATION — What's my response?

- What is one situation where you need to stop letting your circumstances determine how you see God?
- Where do you need to become more honest and vulnerable with God?
- What is one way you can begin noticing God's goodness this week?
- Is there something you need to repent of and bring honestly before God?
- Do you fear God more than you fear people?

What would change this week if, in the middle of your circumstances, you could genuinely pray: “But You, Lord, are compassionate and gracious”?

SCRIPTURE

- **Exodus 34:6–7** — God reveals Himself as compassionate and gracious.
- **Psalms 86:1–17** — David anchors his prayer in God's character.
- **Psalms 103:13–19** — God has compassion on His children.
- **Psalms 145:3–16** — God is good, trustworthy, compassionate, and faithful.
- **James 1:17** — Every good and perfect gift comes from God.
- **Matthew 9:36** — Jesus has compassion on people who are harassed and helpless.

PRAYER

Pray through these movements together:

HONESTY:

“God, here is where I am hurting, afraid, confused, or needy. Help me bring my whole self into Your presence instead of hiding from You.”

REMEMBER:

“Lord, You are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. Help me remember who You are when my circumstances make me doubt.”

GRATITUDE:

“Thank You for the good gifts You have given me. Open my eyes to recognize Your goodness, even in the things I often take for granted.”

REPENTANCE:

“God, forgive me for the ways I have relied on myself, made excuses, or allowed fear to keep me from trusting You. Give me an undivided heart.”

TRUST:

“Teach me to trust Your character more than my circumstances. Help me fear You more than I fear people.”

RESPONSE:

“Jesus, You see us with compassion. Be our Shepherd. Help us become people after Your own heart who respond to Your compassion and grace by extending them to others. Amen.”

PRACTICE — STEP OUT

1. ANCHOR YOUR PRAYER

When something difficult happens this week, pause before reacting and pray:

“But You, Lord, are _____.”

Fill in the blank with a characteristic of God from Psalm 86:15.

2. NOTICE THE GOOD

Each day, write down **three good gifts** you received from God.

They can be simple: a conversation, a meal, a friend, an opportunity, beauty, provision, forgiveness, or another reminder of God's goodness.

3. BE HONEST WITH GOD

Set aside 10 minutes to pray honestly about something you are carrying.

Don't edit it. Don't pretend. Bring your fear, disappointment, anger, confusion, or need directly to God.

Then finish by remembering:

“He is compassionate. He is gracious. He is with me.”

4. EXTEND COMPASSION

Because Jesus has compassion on us, look for one person this week who feels **harassed, helpless, overlooked, or in need.**

Ask:

“How can I reflect God's compassion to this person today?”