Grace: Getting what we do not deserve. Unmerited, undeserved favor of God.

Mercy: Not getting what we deserve. Forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish.

Compassion: to feel the feelings of another and then act in accord with that feeling.

See Mark 6:34. Notice the progression: Jesus saw people, he discerned their need, had compassion, and so he took action.

Read: Luke 10:30-37

Compassion may not be an automatic response (vss. 31-32). In this interaction with the expert in the law, Jesus wanted to bring clarity - simplicity - to something that had become so clouded and confusing over the years. Where there is clarity of vision there should also be an urgency to act upon what you see.

Compassion is not based upon the perceived worth of a person (vs. 33). Compassion transcends cultural, social, racial, and spiritual boundaries. God is interested in mercy, not maintaining prejudice.

Compassion usually has a cost (vss. 34-35). His act of compassion cost him time, convenience, and resources. What price are you willing to pay to be a compassionate neighbor? Jesus’ greatest act of compassion, His death on the cross for our sins, cost him everything.

Compassion does not look for personal gain. Too often we are kind to others because we expect recognition and praise for it. Jesus has nothing to gain from his acts of compassion. What did He have to gain through the incarnation? Through the cross?

Compassion is not an option (vss. 36-37). What matters, Jesus implied, is not identifying needs, but meeting them. Jesus led by example through his life and ministry. Now he gives a command: Go and do likewise! See also Micah 6:8.

God’s conduct toward people reveals His compassion for people. Those who bear His nature will also reflect His character in their actions. Like Jesus, we need to become Irresistible to our community through compassion.
Life Application Questions

1. Think of a time that someone showed true compassion for you. If you can’t think of one, think of a time when you showed compassion to someone. What was the response to that act of compassion?

2. How is compassion different than pity? How would you define compassion?

3. What acts of compassion do you recall from Jesus’ life and ministry?

4. Read: Luke 10:30-37. What about this passage really stands out to you? What did you find interesting or surprising?

5. Why is compassion not generally an automatic response? What common excuses do people use to avoid an act of compassion?

6. Why should compassion not be based upon the perceived worth of the person in need?

7. Read Luke 10:36-37; Micah 6:8. Why is compassion not really an option for followers of Christ?

8. What makes compassion an irresistible factor of Christ’s followers?

9. What is one thing you plan to do to apply this message to your life this week?