

LEADING PASTORS AND LOCAL CHURCHES IN COMPASSION MINISTRIES

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This project is an attempt to help pastors and church leaders in effective compassion outreaches in their communities. The model developed was tested on twenty-six church leaders in West Central Florida.

I assume there is some confusion on the part of church leaders on the topic of how evangelism and social work blend together. The tendency for Christians has been to emphasize one aspect of “word and deed” to the exclusion of the other. In order to establish a rationale for this topic, a biblical basis for a holistic approach to compassion ministries was researched from the Old Testament prophetic literature and the life of Jesus. In addition to this foundation, the importance of the theme of the kingdom of God as it relates to compassion ministries was also developed.

In order to help church leaders build a bridge from their congregations to their local communities, the biblical description of the concept of *shalom* was identified as one of the best methods. Churches and leaders who have successfully traversed the gulf between the Church and the secular world were used as models to guide others in these ministries.

Throughout this paper, both evangelism and compassion ministries have been cited as not only complementary, but also necessary for the Church to fulfill its role in the world.

Qualitative and quantitative approaches were given in the model seminar to test the validity of the assumption and the rationale of the material taught. A survey was given at both the opening and the closing of the sessions. As a group the participants increased their knowledge of the material reviewed by approximately 25 percent.