Compassion®

Releasing children from poverty
in Jesus’ name

CORE VALUES

EXCELLENCE
INTEGRITY
DIGNITY
STEWARDSHIP
CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH
The document contains an introduction by Wess Stafford, a preface by David Dahlin, and sections on core values, compassion, biblical reflections on compassion's commitment to Christ, the church, integrity, excellence, and stewardship. It also includes commitments by stakeholder to children and their families, implementing church partners, sponsors, donors, and supporting church partners, and staff. All scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version.
As Compassion’s president, it is my privilege to share this booklet on Compassion’s Core Values with you. But don’t let its size fool you; this little booklet carries a very powerful message...it reflects the heart of Compassion’s culture around the world!

I am amazed by how God has blessed Compassion’s work and am sure our founder, Rev. Everett Swanson, would be overjoyed to see the size and scope of the ministry today. We sponsor well over a million children and we have Implementing Church Partners and staff in nearly 30 countries around the world! We have a Global Partner Alliance, sponsors and donors, and supporting church partners that span North America, Europe and Asia! A lot has changed around here in the last half-century. However, there are some things about Compassion that I hope never change. Most importantly, I hope that what we do at Compassion will always ultimately be about Jesus. I hope people will look at this organization on its 100 year anniversary and say, “Everything that Compassion does is centered around Christ and His Church.”

But how do we do that? How do we continue to speak with one voice and act in unison when we have grown into such a large worldwide ministry? I believe that, although we’ve grown too large to share the same work environment or to have personal relationships with every member of the Compassion family, we can continue to preserve the culture that has been entrusted to us. In order to do this we must hold tight to our common mission of releasing children from poverty in Jesus’ name and to our shared values...the Core Values that are discussed in this little booklet.

When we were a smaller organization, it was possible to pass our values and culture along to staff and partners by word of mouth and by mirroring the attitudes and actions of our predecessors. But we’ve grown too big for that now. That is why we’ve compiled this booklet and written out in detail the values that today’s worldwide leadership hold most dear. It is my hope and prayer that, as we continue to grow and adapt to the needs of a hurting world, we will look to this set of Core Values as the foundation for the decisions we make and for the actions we take toward one another.

By individually embracing these Core Values, I believe we will each maintain a strong connection to one another and to our original calling as a ministry, despite additional growth or change that may await us in the years to come. These values will help us speak with one voice and act with unity around the world. I hope you’ll take these Core Values to heart and strive, along with every member of the Compassion family, to apply them consistently in your daily work.

May God continue to bless the work of our hands, as we labor together to serve children in need around the world in Jesus’ name.

Wess Stafford
President and CEO
Compassion is a Christ-centered organization committed to the Church. As such, we value:

- Integrity
- Excellence
- Stewardship
- Dignity

**Compassion is a Christ-Centered Organization:**
We confess that Jesus is the Christ and He is Lord of our lives and of this ministry. Our love of Jesus compels us to love others as He commands and to honor Him in all that we do.

**We are Committed to the Church:**
The Church is the great hope for the world and is God’s instrument to advance the Kingdom of God. We mobilize and connect the global Body of Christ to fulfill her mandate for holistic discipleship of children in poverty.

**Integrity:**
Christian integrity is aligning our thoughts, motivations, attitudes and actions with the ethical principles found in God’s Word. In both our personal lives and our ministry, what we believe, what we say and what we do should be consistent, congruent, reliable and transparent.

**Excellence:**
Excellence is doing things God’s way—consistently doing everything that we are called to do with outstanding quality. We do the right thing…the right way…every time.

**Stewardship:**
The ministry of Compassion belongs to the children, our Implementing Church Partners, our sponsors and donors, our Supporting Church Partners and ultimately to God. Therefore, we protect, develop and deploy all of our resources (people, time, money, knowledge, reputation and materials) with great care and wisdom.

**Dignity:**
Each person is created in God’s image and bears God’s likeness. Jesus treated everyone with respect and willingly gave His life for the redemption of all people. Therefore, all people are worthy of our respect and love.
STATEMENT:
We confess that Jesus is the Christ and He is Lord of our lives and of this ministry. Our love of Jesus compels us to love others as He commands and to honor Him in all that we do.

COMMITMENTS RELATED TO BEING A CHRIST-CENTERED ORGANIZATION BY STAKEHOLDER:

1. Children and their Families
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners love children and their families holistically, as Jesus did.
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners commit to teach and live out the Way of Christ, developing children into lifelong disciples of Jesus.

2. Implementing Church Partners
   - We love our Implementing Church Partners as brothers and sisters in Christ.
   - As servant leaders, we come alongside the church and share Christ’s passionate concern for children.

3. Sponsors, Donors and Supporting Church Partners
   - We love our sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as brothers and sisters in Christ.
   - We will not compromise the centrality of Christ in our messages or programs in order to appeal to broader audiences.

4. Staff
   - We love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.
   - We commit to live and model Christ-centered lives, including being personal advocates for children.

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON COMPASSION’S COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

Compassion believes that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Messiah and the Son of the living God. He is the way, the truth and the life. We believe that Christ has supremacy over all things, that the true nature of God is expressed in Jesus and that through Him all things will be reconciled. We are individually disciples—followers of Jesus—and collectively we form a movement of Jesus followers dedicated to living our lives in faithful response to God’s love. Our ministry is all about discipleship— with the children, with the Church, with sponsors and with staff. As followers of Jesus, we care about what Jesus cares about and we seek to minister in the ways that Jesus ministered. More than just our human efforts at good works, God offers to transform our hearts so that we don’t just do what Jesus would do, but we come to have hearts like His and become like Him. In Him we live and move and have our being.

Jesus proclaimed His mission on earth when He quoted this prophecy from Isaiah:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Jesus began His mission by focusing on ministry to the poor and dispossessed. As followers of Jesus, this becomes our mission as well. Poverty is one of the ugliest strategies of the Kingdom of Darkness. It destroys the abundant life that God desires for the crown of His creation. Poverty binds and oppresses. It breeds hopelessness and fatalism. When poverty takes root in the heart it destroys the individual’s ability to partner with God in creating a better world—in bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. However, when a person comes to know that they are precious to God—so precious in fact that He died for them—they begin to see that they are of great worth, and despair is replaced with hope. A person who understands and has faith in God’s love stands upon a new foundation. From this new position of strength they are able, by God’s continued work, to build a better future for themselves and for others. Hope translates into action.

At Compassion, we refuse to be forced to make a false choice between spiritual ministry and social ministry. As a Great Commandment ministry, we are equally motivated by the Great Commission. In the Great Commandment we are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as...
ourselves.\(^7\) The parable of the Good Samaritan\(^8\) makes it clear that our neighbors are not only those who are similar to us and live on our street, but also those who are different from us and those who are in need. Since none are in greater need than children born into poverty, Jesus’ command is to love children born into poverty. So how do we do that? We love them as Jesus showed us to love—meeting them where they are at and at their greatest need.\(^9\) If they are hungry, we provide food. If they are in need of care and comfort, we nurture. If they are ignorant, we educate. And if they are lost spiritually, we show them the Way. Jesus demonstrated a special love for children and was passionate about their need for protection.\(^10\) So we, likewise, commit to child protection and advocating for them.

As strongly as we are motivated by the Great Commandment, we are equally motivated by the Great Commission. Jesus commissions us, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”\(^11\) We see all of what we do at Compassion as discipleship—teaching and demonstrating the way to live as God intended in all aspects of life [i.e. holistic]. We have a heart for evangelism, for sharing the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his soul?\(^12\) Likewise, what good is it for a child to gain access to a world of opportunities but lose his soul?

We are ultimately a people of faith in God, through Christ, who believe that our faith must be lived out through acts of service. We believe not only that faith without works is dead,\(^13\) but also that works without faith is dead. We live out the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. We commit to raise Jesus as Lord of our lives and our ministry with Compassion, and our commitment to Jesus as the Christ shapes all of our other values and commitments. This is the most foundational of all commitments for the people who are Compassion.

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**BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON COMPASSION’S COMMITMENT TO THE CHURCH**

After Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ, Jesus promised that He would build His Church on the solid rock of that confession. The Church is the only institution established by Jesus, and no other institution has been given the mandate to accomplish the mission of God. The very keys of the Kingdom of heaven are given to the Church. The Church is an unstoppable force that Jesus promised would prevail, even against the very gates of Hades.14

We believe that the Church is the beloved Bride of Christ.15 Out of our love and devotion to Christ, we love and are devoted to His Bride, the Church. We don’t see the Church as a weak and fragile institution, even when its local expression may seem weak and fragile. Instead, we picture the Church Triumphant—God’s agency carrying the mandate to bring the Good News to the ends of the earth confidently with the promise that it will succeed.16 It is the local church that must be salt and light in communities all around the world.17 We believe the Church has unlimited potential in bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. Jesus taught us to pray, “Thy Kingdom come.” Our prayer should not be that we could leave this earth and escape it, but that we would bring God’s Kingdom to this earth and transform it.18 The Church is the hope of the world as it carries Christ to the world. Our commitment is to strengthen the Church to do her calling among the poor.

The global body of Christ-followers organizes in many forms to advance the Kingdom of God. Compassion, like other para-church ministries, is a part of the Body of Christ organized to help the Church fulfill her mission to children in poverty. It is the local church that bears the reputation of Jesus and the responsibility to carry His light into the world. We are committed to the local church, that local outpost of the body of Christ. Compassion defines the local church as “the local body of believers that would be recognized by the community as an organized center of worship and outreach.”19

Compassion serves as a bridge between the different parts of the Body of Christ to enable her to fulfill her destiny. Compassion is a facilitator of blessing, flowing between the Church in different parts of the world. The Church is spiritually one organism, one body. It is only natural and right that resources and love should flow freely through that body. Like the early Church who felt it only right to help their poor brothers and sisters in Jerusalem during their time of hardship,20 it is only right today for the resource-rich parts of the Church to partner with the resource-poor parts of the Church, so that the mission may advance and Jesus may be glorified.

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14 Matthew 16:13-19  
15 Matthew 9:14-15  
16 Mark 16:15-18  
17 Matthew 5:13-16  
18 Matthew 6:9-15  
19 Compassion International Corporate Policy I-5-1  
20 2 Corinthians 8:1-16
**Biblical Reflections on Compassion’s Commitment to Integrity**

Christian integrity is the wholeness of character demonstrated by alignment of actions, words and internal principles based on the Word of God. The integrity of an organization is rooted in the personal integrity of its people. Compassion promotes a culture of integrity and ethical purity, not only for the reputation of excellence and trustworthiness it brings, but because it is God’s desire for us as His people and it is a way in which we honor Him.

It is clear from Scripture that God desires and honors integrity and pureness of heart. God instructed Solomon, who was renowned for great wisdom, to “walk with integrity of heart and uprightness.”21 King David said “I know, my God that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.”22 The Proverbs talk repeatedly about integrity being a guide for the righteous, the source of a good reputation and a legacy to future generations.23 Integrity is a condition of the heart that can be tested and seen in a person’s walk.

Scripture challenges us to live holy and pure lives—“Be holy in all you do, for it is written, ‘be holy, because I am holy.’”24 Paul challenges us to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”25 This is indeed a high standard for us as Christians called to a ministry so close to God’s heart. We strive to live that out through obedience to God’s Word and lives that reflect His love and goodness.

Immorality and unethical behavior come in many forms, but none receive stronger condemnation from Jesus than hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is the opposite of integrity. Hypocrisy is that two-faced life which masks a corrupt heart with the appearance of righteousness. Those who were most religious in Jesus’ day actually received His greatest condemnation and harshest words. He called them “snakes,” a “brood of vipers,” “blind guides,” “white-washed tombs” and “hypocrites.”26 So, integrity is not a false piety, not an outward show of religiosity and purity, but an honest reflection of who we are and our walk with the Lord. As Christians, we know that we are all far from perfect and as people of integrity we need to readily admit our weaknesses, our failings, and, yes, even our sins. We know that as individuals and as an organization we will not always do everything right and in a way that is God-pleasing. But when we realize this, the act of integrity is to admit that [confession] and then correct it [repentance].

We desire to leave a strong legacy for future generations of those ministering to children in poverty through Compassion, in partnership with the Church. We want to build something that will last. In the realm of engineering, there is the concept of structural

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21 1 Kings 9:4
22 1 Chronicles 29:17
23 Proverbs 11:3, 10:9 and 20:7
24 1 Peter 1:15-16
25 Ephesians 4:1b
26 Matthew 23:23-36
INTEGRITY

Excellence is doing things God's way—consistently doing everything that we are called to do with outstanding quality. We do the right thing...the right way...every time.

STATEMENT:

Excellence is doing things God's way—consistently doing everything that we are called to do with outstanding quality. We do the right thing...the right way...every time.

COMMITMENTS RELATED TO EXCELLENCE BY STAKEHOLDER:

1. Children and their Families
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners serve children and their families with developmentally-sound holistic programs that result in transformational impact.
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners commit to continuous improvement in our program design and delivery.

2. Implementing Church Partners
   - We work for excellence in partnership, being committed to the success of our Implementing Church Partners.
   - We seek genuine feedback from our partners, learn from them and commit to continuous improvement.

3. Sponsors, Donors and Supporting Church Partners
   - We consistently exceed our sponsors', donors' and Supporting Church Partners' expectations through the delivery of programs of outstanding quality.
   - We consistently exceed our sponsors', donors' and Supporting Church Partners' expectations with communications and services of outstanding quality.

4. Staff
   - We offer our best efforts and energy to our work so that we can achieve the outcomes and results that we envision.
   - We commit to consistently develop and improve our competencies so that we may do our work with outstanding quality.

integrity. As a Christian organization this applies to how we build the organization— what is our foundation and what are the building blocks? As a Christian ministry we are built upon the “Rock” of the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.27 Jesus is the Word of God, upon which we build our ethical framework. For integrity to be strong, the principles upon which it is based must be strong. And we stand on the Word of God.

An organization of integrity is made up of people of integrity. Wess Stafford has said many times, “God has not promised to bless organizations but to bless people who are faithful to Him.”28 We are faithful to God by living lives of Christian integrity. Integrity is about character; who we are and what we do when no one is looking. We are the same at home as we are at work; our actions always reflect our values. Integrity does not change with circumstances. Consider Satan’s assertion that, under pressure, Job would curse God.

Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.” Job 2:3

Job proved his integrity in that, even when no one was looking, he refused to curse God. Image and reputation are what others say about us. It is easy for individuals, corporations and ministries to look good through clever branding, good marketing and slick public relations. But we don’t want to merely look good—we want to be good. How do things matter as much or more to God than what we do. The ends never justify ungodly means. “Every day we choose between courage and cowardice, when we choose to either live out of our values, or cave-in for the sake of comfort, convenience or greed.”29

In an ultimate sense, integrity for Compassion is fulfilling our mission, living up to our promise that we are releasing children from poverty in Jesus’ name. That is why defining and measuring programmatic outcomes is so important for Compassion. We need to know that we are living up to our word—that children’s lives are being transformed, that they are truly being released.

27 Matthew 16:15-18
28 Psalm 115:13
29 Bill Hybels
BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON COMPASSION’S COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Excellence is foundational to a biblical view of work. God does His work with excellence. The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. When He created the world, the end result of all of creation was that it was “very good.” We are instructed that “whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” As Christians, we are to do our work as if it were for Christ Himself—because it is. We do our best, even if it feels unrecognized or unrewarded, because we are working for the Lord and we know that He recognizes and rewards the heart of a humble servant.

Excellence is an inherent quality, not an appearance or image. It is not about looking good to others for the purpose of gaining recognition and admiration from the world. We do our work with excellence to honor God. Excellence is about quality and continuous improvement—it is being better today than yesterday. Excellence is not some perfect ideal to be achieved in the future. Instead, it is interwoven throughout the small things that we do each day. Excellence is a process of becoming better. In order to live out the value of excellence, we must commit to continuous improvement. Paul talks about this in Ephesians: “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Joseph is an encouragement to anyone who lives and labor in a less than perfect world. Unjustly jailed because he spurned the advances of his boss’s wife, he soon became a warden’s assistant in the prison to which he was sent. His proven ability was so strong that his keepers did not even bother to check his work. They trusted him implicitly. Joseph maintained such a standard of excellence by applying himself to the task at hand rather than focusing on how he had been unfairly treated. He turned the hardships of his life into opportunities for excellence. God honored this attitude with achievements that would be considered amazing under any circumstances. Ultimately, Joseph, the minority slave, rose to power and status as the nation’s second-in-command.

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So if you honor God in your work and pursue an attitude of excellence, will God reward you with power and prestige? There is no guarantee of that. However, Scripture adds a promise to the admonition to do our work as unto the Lord: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Excellence is doing things God’s way—doing the right thing, the right way. What does it mean to do things the “right way”? Excellence is consistent and outstanding quality, reliability, precision, thoroughness and continuous improvement... but the way of Christian excellence requires something more. “And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.” The way of excellence requires that our work be done in love.

Moses set an excellent example for his workforce by doing his own job “just as the Lord had commanded him.” That kind of precision set the pace for everyone else. For example, the management team for the construction of the tabernacle emulated Moses’ example by performing their tasks with “wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship,” so that they completed the project “according to all that the Lord had commanded.” Likewise, all of the workers under them carried out their tasks “as the Lord had commanded.”

Excellence in Israel began with Moses. It spread to the group of managers helping to supervise and coordinate the project. Then the workers followed suit. Our commitment to excellence influences those around us to also perform with excellence.

Excellence matters in the small things, not just the big ones. In the Kingdom of God it is often the small things that matter the most. Doing things with excellence for major donors may be expected in this world, but doing things with excellence for the poor and the powerless demonstrates the Kingdom of God. We serve all people with excellence because of our value of the dignity of each person, regardless of their status.

Excellence should not be confused with perfection. The perfect can stand in the way of the good. Sometimes “good enough” is good enough. We should not become obsessed with reaching perfection in our earthly work because excellence is interwoven with our values of stewardship and integrity. We can never reach perfection on this earth anyway; Christ reaches perfection for us. The incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ mean that even though we are flawed and the work of our hands is flawed, through God’s grace He makes it perfect. This means we can seek the face of God and find Him! We can work hard as unto the Lord and achieve results! We can fight poverty and win!

30 Psalm 19:1
31 Genesis 1:31
32 Colossians 3:23
33 Ephesians 6:5-8
34 Ephesians 4:16
35 Genesis 39:6-41:45
36 Colossians 3:23-24, emphasis added
37 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:3
38 Exodus 40:16
39 Exodus 35:30–36:1
40 1 Corinthians 12:27
STATEMENT:

The ministry of compassion belongs to the children, our implementing church partners, our sponsors and donors, our supporting church partners and ultimately to God. Therefore, we protect, develop and deploy all of our resources (people, time, money, knowledge, reputation and materials) with great care and wisdom.

COMMITMENTS RELATED TO STEWARDSHIP BY STAKEHOLDER:

1. Children and their Families
   • Of all the things entrusted to us by God, the children in our programs are our greatest assets. Compassion and our implementing church partners treat children and their families as part of the solution, not the problem.
   • Compassion and our implementing church partners apply our resources in order to have the greatest positive impact upon children and their families.

2. Implementing Church Partners
   • We recognize our total dependence on our implementing church partners and cultivate these relationships with great care.
   • We apply our resources to develop and equip our implementing church partners for effective ministry to children in poverty.

3. Sponsors, Donors and Supporting Church Partners
   • We commit to the highest industry standards for the use of funds. At least 80% of our expenses will be spent on program, limiting our administrative and fundraising costs while ensuring quality and integrity throughout the ministry.
   • We use donations only for the purposes for which they were raised.

4. Staff
   • We protect, develop and deploy all of compassion’s resources (people, time, money, knowledge, reputation and materials) as if they were “the widow’s mite.”
   • Each one of us is a unique resource that only we can steward. We commit to our personal spiritual, mental, socio-emotional and physical health so that we can be fully engaged and effective in fulfilling our part of the mission.

BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON COMPASSION’S COMMITMENT TO STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the responsibility for taking care of another person’s property or financial affairs. “Oikonomos” is the biblical [Greek] term for “steward” meaning “one whose care is committed to the management of the household or estate.” It can also be used in a more general way to refer to a responsibility to take care of something one does not own.

As Christians, we see all of life as a stewardship responsibility. The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. 42 God owns everything! Christianity attributes the concepts of “sovereign, creator and owner” to God and the concepts of “servant, child and steward” to mankind. Stewardship is the natural outworking of understanding who God is and who we are. “So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and those entrusted with the secret things of God.” 43 Stewardship is utilizing God-given abilities to manage God-given resources to accomplish God-given results.

Interwoven with the concept of stewardship are the concepts of responsibility and accountability. As stewards we are responsible and accountable to God for our work. “So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.” 44 Stewards have no inherent authority of their own. Their authority is entrusted to them by their master. Scripture instructs us that “from everyone who has been given much, much will be asked; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.” 45 The Bible teaches us to be faithful in small things if we expect to be entrusted with greater resources and responsibilities. 46

Ultimately all resources belong to God, but God entrusts resources to compassion through the choices of our sponsors and donors. Just as the innkeeper was entrusted with a stewardship responsibility by the Good Samaritan, we have a stewardship responsibility to our sponsors and donors. This responsibility demands that we have strong accountability systems as well as adequate structures in place to administer their gifts. We often talk about being a ministry that operates off of “the widow’s mite,” 47 since many of our sponsors give sacrificially to support their sponsored children. We should regularly evaluate individual decisions on organizational expenditures in terms of a monthly sponsorship donation and wrestle with the question, “Could we look ‘the widow’ in the eye and tell her that this was a good use of her donation?” However, we need to be careful not to fall into the trap of false stewardship—thinking that

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42 Psalm 24:1
43 1 Corinthians 4:1
44 Romans 14:12
45 Luke 12:48
46 1 Corinthians 4:2
47 Mark 12:41-44
by not spending we are being better stewards. If we invest too little in our staff, our infrastructure, our church partners and our donor communications, we will inevitably harm the ministry over which we are stewards.

The key here for Compassion is knowing the Master’s intentions of how He wants us to take care of His property. Stewardship is not simply “spending less money.” It is using resources well and appropriately. As steward of an estate, the master would not be happy if you let the buildings decay in order to save money on maintenance. He would not be pleased if the staff grew weary and frustrated because they were constantly driven and not given opportunity for refreshment and growth. He would not be happy if the harvest was poor and full of weeds because you saved money on low quality seed. As steward, you would be expected to invest to strengthen the master’s holdings. In the parable of the talents we are instructed to maximize the use of the resources entrusted to us as stewards on behalf of the master. It is not enough to simply protect what is given to us [i.e. burying it in the sand], but we are to maximize the potential that God has given us for the greatest impact in the Kingdom of God, even though those decisions may put those resources at risk.

One of our greatest responsibilities as stewards of the ministry of Compassion is building and protecting the reputation of the ministry. Stewarding the brand, the reputation and the integrity of our name builds equity into the organization for greater ministry impact in the future. Compassion does not belong to us. We are stewards of this ministry that God has raised up and, during the time that we have the privilege of being a part of Compassion’s ministry, we should hold it as a precious gift from God.

God has also entrusted us with great knowledge and experience. We must steward that knowledge and experience for the greatest impact in His Kingdom. We must protect, develop and ensure the transmission of that knowledge and experience within the organization. We must communicate that knowledge and share that experience for the strengthening of others who have been called by God to similar work.

Stewardship of people [those made in God’s image] is our most important stewardship responsibility. How we treat and develop the beneficiaries of our program, our church partners, our donors and our staff impacts everything else. Investments must be made in relationships for them to be nurtured and to grow healthy and strong. People need to be developed and encouraged to grow to fulfill the potential that God has given them. The key to success in our ministry [as is true in all of life] is how we value people.

48 Matthew 25:14 -30

STATEMENT:

Each person is created in God’s image and bears God’s likeness. Jesus treated everyone with respect and willingly gave His life for the redemption of all people. Therefore, all people are worthy of our respect and love.

COMMITMENTS RELATED TO DIGNITY BY STAKEHOLDER:

1. Children and their Families
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners treat each child as a unique creation of God. We listen to children to understand their valuable perspectives and engage with them as active participants in their own development.
   - Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners respect the family’s central role in the raising of children and design our programs to support the role of the family. We portray children and their families with dignity in all of our communications.

2. Implementing Church Partners
   - We acknowledge that our joint program is first and foremost a ministry of the local church and we encourage their sense of ownership, initiative and decision making.
   - We acknowledge that the Compassion program is but one of the ministries of the Implementing Church Partner, and we encourage the overall institutional development of the church.

3. Sponsors, Donors and Supporting Church Partners
   - We view sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as co-laborers in ministry to the children we serve, not merely as financial contributors.
   - We treat sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as a growing movement of advocates for children in poverty.

4. Staff
   - We treat each other with love and respect at all times, extending trust and assuming good motives.
   - We celebrate that we have diverse gifts, abilities and perspectives. We humbly listen to one another and value input from all members of the Compassion community.
BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON COMPASSION’S COMMITMENT TO DIGNITY

The dignity of each individual is grounded in the biblical truths of creation and redemption. People bear the image and likeness of God and have inherent value based on this created state. “God created man in His image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”49 Of all that God has created, human life is placed in a unique category and proclaimed to be good.50 Being made in God’s image means that we share, though imperfectly and finitely, in God’s nature. God sets high standards for how we should treat people because they bear God’s Image. We should protect human life51 and we should protect human dignity52 because people are made in God’s image. Everyone we encounter has the “spark of God” in their being. We need to see them that way and treat them that way.

Although mankind was created in the image of God, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.53 In spite of our sin, God still values us. At our created, redeemed and sanctified best, we share in God’s holiness, righteousness, justice, wisdom and love. God values people so much that He sacrificed His Son to redeem us from sin and condemnation.

Jesus’ life on earth is our model of how we should conduct ourselves. Jesus treated everyone with dignity and respect. He consistently demonstrated respect for all people regardless of ethnicity, religion, age or social status. Contrary to the prevailing customs of the day and the prevailing standards of modern society, Jesus identified with and demonstrated great respect for the poor and the weak, not the rich and the strong. Jesus gave honor to the widow who, out of her poverty, gave all she had to the temple treasury.54 He ate with tax collectors and sinners,55 He touched and healed the lepers,56 and He ministered to Samaritans.57 He loved those who were weak: the children,58 the sick59 and the hungry.60 And always, He was about the ministry of reconciliation and restoration.

Acknowledging the dignity of each individual includes valuing each others’ uniqueness and treating all people equally. We must value the distinct talents and differences among us. “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”61 Respecting the dignity of others also means that we do not show favoritism based on social status. “My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favoritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, ‘Here’s a good seat for you,’ but say to the poor man, ‘You stand there’ or ‘Sit on the floor by my feet,’ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?”62

People’s intrinsic value is confirmed by God’s expression of love in the sacrifice of His Son, who paid the price for human sin and transgression. God’s image in people has been marred by sin; however, sin does not erase God’s image in man, nor does it destroy man’s God-established value. Though we are sinners, we still share in God’s nature and God desires to redeem that nature and restore us to full relationship with Him. God demonstrated His value of people by sending Jesus to the cross, to willingly sacrifice His life to bring restoration and redemption to people forever. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”63

If God was willing to not only create mankind in His image but also to send His Son to die for us—for every Compassion child, for every Compassion sponsor or donor, for every project partner and for each of our colleagues—certainly we should treat one another with dignity, respect and love.

COMMITTED TO CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES:

- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners love children and their families holistically, as Jesus did.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners commit to teach and live out the Way of Christ, developing children into lifelong disciples of Jesus.
- We advocate with Church leadership to help them to see and value children as Jesus does.
- We mobilize and equip the Church to be effective in ministry to children.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners represent our Christian child development programs with honesty and transparency to children and their families during registration and throughout their participation in the program.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners do everything within our capacities to help each child achieve the Desired Outcomes.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners serve children and their families with developmentally-sound holistic programs that result in transformational impact.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners commit to continuous improvement in our program design and delivery.
- Of all the things entrusted to us by God, the children in our programs are our greatest assets. Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners treat children and their families as part of the solution, not the problem.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners apply our resources in order to have the greatest positive impact upon children and their families.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners treat each child as a unique creation of God. We listen to children to understand their valuable perspectives and engage with them as active participants in their own development.
- Compassion and our Implementing Church Partners respect the family’s central role in the raising of children and design our programs to support the role of the family. We portray children and their families with dignity in all of our communications.

COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING CHURCH PARTNERS:

- We love our Implementing Church Partners as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- As servant leaders, we come alongside the church and share Christ’s passionate concern for children.
- We view our Implementing Church Partners with spiritual eyes—seeing them as the triumphant Bride of Christ that will prevail against the gates of Hell.
- We mobilize the global Body of Christ to support our Implementing Church Partners in their ministry to children in poverty.
- We submit to the Word of God, honor our Partnership Principles and respect the specific Partnership Agreement in our relationship with each Implementing Church Partner.
- We do everything within our capacities to help our Implementing Church Partners achieve the Desired Outcomes.
- We work for excellence in partnership, being committed to the success of our Implementing Church Partners.
- We seek genuine feedback from our partners and commit to learning and continuous improvement.
- We recognize our total dependence on our Implementing Church Partners and cultivate these relationships with great care.
- We apply our resources to develop and equip our Implementing Church Partners for effective ministry to children in poverty.
- We acknowledge that our joint program is first and foremost a ministry of the local church and we encourage their sense of ownership, initiative and decision making.
- We acknowledge that the Compassion program is but one of the ministries of the Implementing Church Partner, and we encourage the overall institutional development of the church.
COMMITMENTS TO SPONSORS, DONORS AND SUPPORTING CHURCH PARTNERS:

• We love our sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as brothers and sisters in Christ.
• We will not compromise the centrality of Christ in our messages or programs in order to appeal to broader audiences.
• We provide sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners with opportunities to fulfill their biblical mandate and to live out their faith by ministering to children in poverty.
• We commit to use sponsors’, donors’ and Supporting Church Partners’ contributions to equip and support local churches to implement programs for children.
• We communicate accurately the opportunities and benefits provided to children.
• We regularly perform internal audits to ensure that our programs are being well-managed and that funds are properly disbursed and applied. We are audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm.
• We consistently exceed our sponsors’, donors’ and Supporting Church Partners’ expectations through the delivery of programs of outstanding quality.
• We consistently exceed our sponsors’, donors’ and Supporting Church Partners’ expectations with communications and services of outstanding quality.
• We commit to the highest industry standards for the use of funds. At least 80% of our expenses will be spent on program, limiting our administrative and fundraising costs while ensuring quality and integrity throughout the ministry.
• We use donations only for the purposes for which they were raised.
• We view sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as co-laborers in ministry to the children we serve, not merely as financial contributors.
• We treat sponsors, donors and Supporting Church Partners as a growing movement of advocates for children in poverty.

COMMITMENTS TO STAFF:

• We love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.
• We commit to live and model Christ-centered lives, including being personal advocates for children.
• We encourage one another to serve and be discipled within a local church.
• We set reasonable work expectations with each other, to enable each other to actively engage in fellowship and Sabbath rest.
• We align our thoughts, motivations, attitudes and actions with the ethical principles found in God’s word.
• We tell the truth and communicate honestly and openly, with no intent to deceive or mislead, and we honor our commitments. We deal with conflict openly, respectfully and honestly.
• We offer our best efforts and energy to our work so that we can achieve the outcomes and results that we envision.
• We commit to consistently develop and improve our competencies so that we may do our work with outstanding quality.
• We protect, develop and deploy all of Compassion’s resources (people, time, money, knowledge, reputation and materials) as if they were “the widow’s mite.”
• Each one of us is a unique resource that only we can steward. We commit to our personal spiritual, mental, socio-emotional and physical health so that we can be fully engaged and effective in fulfilling our part of the mission.
• We treat each other with love and respect at all times, extending trust and assuming good motives.
• We celebrate that we have diverse gifts, abilities and perspectives. We humbly listen to one another and value input from all members of the Compassion community.