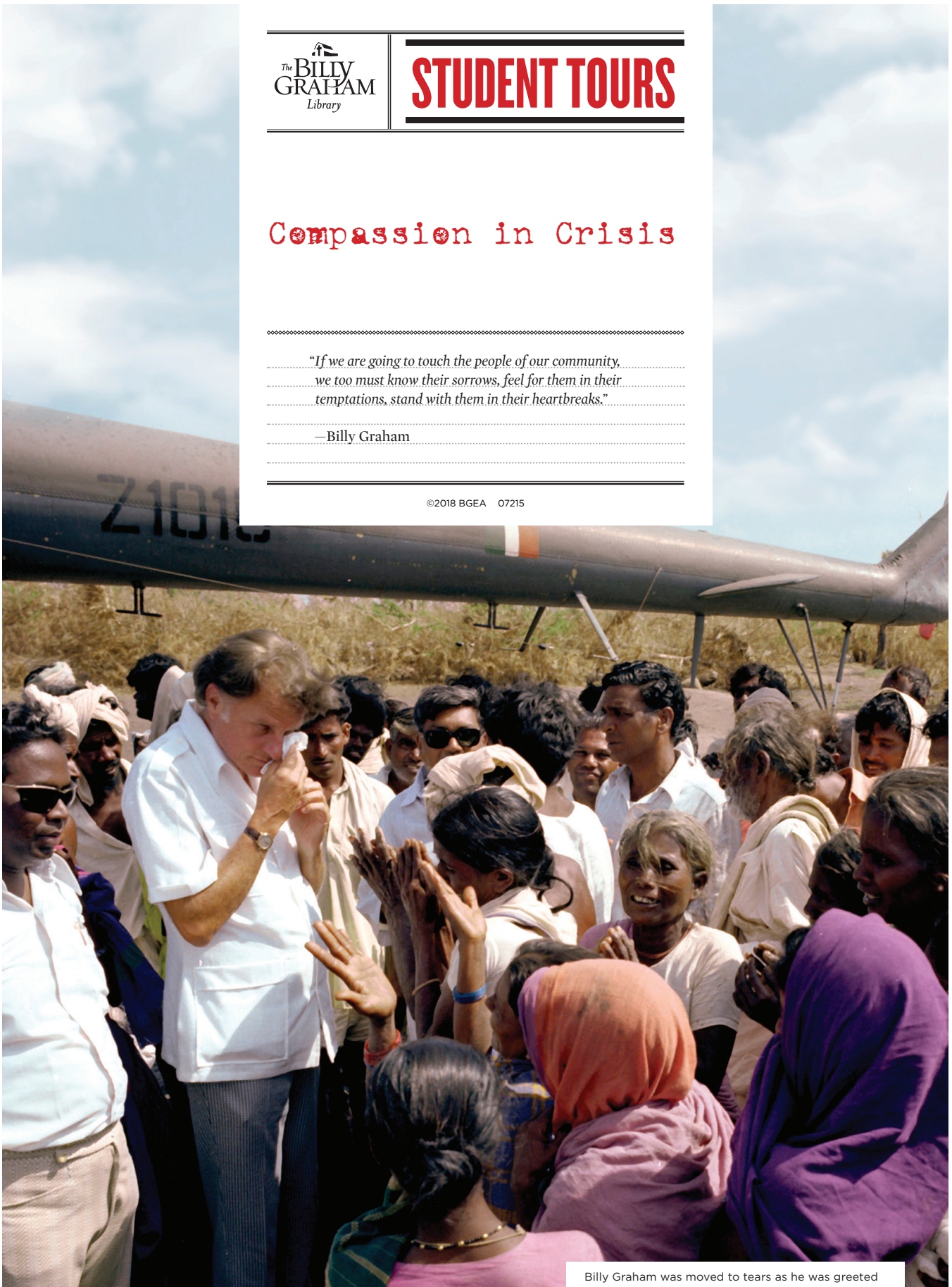


## Compassion in Crisis

*"If we are going to touch the people of our community,  
we too must know their sorrows, feel for them in their  
temptations, stand with them in their heartbreaks."*

—Billy Graham

©2018 BGEA 07215



Billy Graham was moved to tears as he was greeted by survivors of a deadly cyclone and tidal wave in Andhra Pradesh, India, in 1977. More than 14,000 people were killed in the storm.

# Compassion in Crisis

## GRADE LEVEL

6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup>

## OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Understand a basic timeline of Billy Graham's ministry in moments of crisis, both in the United States and abroad.
- Describe what steps Billy Graham and his team took to care for people in the midst of crises.
- Name two or three disasters—both natural and man-made—and describe Billy Graham's role in their aftermath.

## NORTH CAROLINA STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY OBJECTIVES

- **6.C.1** Explain how the behaviors and practices of individuals and groups influenced societies, civilizations, and regions.
- **7.H.2** Understand the implications of global interactions.
- **7.G.1** Understand how geography, demographic trends, and environmental conditions shape modern societies and regions.
- **7.C.1** Understand how cultural values influence relationships between individuals, groups, and political entities in modern societies and regions.

*"I call upon the leaders of all nations to work for peace, even when the risks seem high. I call upon Christians to pray and work for peace in whatever constructive ways are open to them."*  
—Billy Graham

## Pre-Visit Activities

Read and review the attached overview and one original source document with your students. Select one of the crises profiled in the overview and discuss the following questions, conducting additional research when necessary:

- What do you think the victims of this tragedy/disaster needed or wanted in the aftermath of the event? How does this particular crisis contrast with others? Was it man-made or natural?
- How do you think Billy Graham provided assistance or relief in the midst of the crisis?
- What reason do you think he had for helping those who were suffering?

## Visit to the Library

Students will walk through *The Journey of Faith* tour with an assigned guide. Questions and themes to consider include:

- Do you notice any items specifically related to Billy Graham's ministry in times of crisis? If so, what are they?
- Are there any photos that show Billy Graham and his team in disaster areas? If so, in what country was each photo taken? In what year?

## Post-Visit Activities

- Ask students to conduct further research into one of the events highlighted in these pages and write a brief paper outlining the crisis itself and Billy Graham's relief efforts.
- Students may conduct research to understand how the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association ministers to those in crisis, describing at least one of those recent efforts.

## NATIONAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

- **Theme 5:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.
- **Theme 9:** Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.

*"As a Christian, I believe that we are all created in the image of God. ... The life of no human being is cheap in the eyes of God, nor can it be in our own eyes."*  
—Billy Graham

## Pre-Visit Reading: Overview

Billy Graham's work to encourage people during moments of crisis was an important part of his ministry. Beginning in the 1950s, Graham made it a point to minister to people experiencing tragedy, disaster, and war. He once pointed out that "the Bible has more than a thousand verses related to helping our neighbor in their time of need."

Graham's legacy of compassion continues today through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. When his son Franklin Graham arrived in New York in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, he discovered that rescue workers and victims' families had almost no one caring for their emotional and spiritual needs at the disaster site. In the weeks that followed, the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team was formed to bring God's compassion and comfort to survivors of major tragedies.

Below, you can review some of the steps Billy Graham and the team took during particular crises.

- **Korean War, 1952:** In the third year of the Korean War, Billy Graham spent Christmas with U.S. troops there. With the cooperation of the military, he preached to soldiers at the battlefield and visited wounded troops in the hospital, talking and praying with them. He later said of the visit, "I wept more in Korea than in all the past years put together." For more information, read this excerpt which talks about his visit:  
<https://billygrahamlibrary.org/excerpt-from-i-saw-your-sons-at-war/>
- **Andhra Pradesh, India, 1977:** In November, a powerful cyclone slammed into the southeastern coast of India, killing more than 14,000 people and destroying over 200,000 homes. At the time, Billy Graham was already in India preaching, so he flew into the devastated area to provide what comfort he could. He arranged as much financing as possible from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association World Emergency Relief Fund, which helped rebuild 285 homes. Against Graham's wishes, the village's residents insisted on naming the rebuilt community Billy Graham Nagar (Village).



## Compassion in Crisis

### NOTES



In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Billy Graham and his son Franklin visited the New Orleans area to bring the hope of Jesus Christ to its community. Katrina was one of America's five deadliest hurricanes and the nation's costliest natural disaster. More than 1,450 people perished in the violent winds and floods it caused.

- **New Orleans, Louisiana, 2005:** In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, one of the five deadliest hurricanes ever to hit the United States, Billy and his son Franklin visited New Orleans. The men ministered to, and prayed with, those hurt by the storm. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse—both led by Franklin—responded immediately, providing aid in the form of clothing, shelter, food, and water. For more information, read Billy Graham's statement following Hurricane Katrina: <https://billygrahamlibrary.org/blog-billy-graham-a-voice-of-hope-in-crisis-hurricane-katrina-2005/>
- **Washington, D.C., 2001:** On Friday, September 14, three days after the worst terror attacks on U.S. soil, Billy Graham preached a comforting sermon at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Read the transcript beginning on the next page.



Billy Graham comforted the nation at a memorial prayer service at the Washington National Cathedral, following the 9/11 terrorist bombings.

## **Pre-Visit Reading: Billy Graham's National Day of Prayer and Remembrance Message**

Washington National Cathedral  
Washington, D.C.  
September 14, 2001

We come together today to affirm our conviction that God cares for us, whatever our ethnic, religious, or political background may be. The Bible says that He is *"the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles"* (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).

No matter how hard we try, words simply cannot express the horror, the shock, and the revulsion we all feel over what took place in this nation on Tuesday morning. September 11 will go down in our history as a day to remember.

Today we say to those who masterminded this cruel plot, and to those who carried it out, that the spirit of this nation will not be defeated by their twisted and diabolical schemes. Someday those responsible will be brought to justice.

But today we come together in this service to confess our need of God. We've always needed God, from the very beginning of this nation. But today we need Him especially. We're involved in a new kind of warfare. And we need the help of the Spirit of God.

The Bible says, *"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea"* (Psalm 46:1–2).

But how do we understand something like this? Why does God allow evil like this to take place? Perhaps that is what you are asking. You may even be angry at God. I want to assure you that God understands these feelings that you may have.

We've seen so much that brings tears to our eyes and makes us all feel a sense of anger. But God can be trusted, even when life seems at its darkest.

What are some of the lessons we can learn?

First, we are reminded of the mystery and reality of evil. I have been asked hundreds of times why God allows tragedy and suffering. I have to confess that I do not know the answer. I have to accept, by faith, that God is sovereign, and that He is a God of love and mercy and compassion in the midst of suffering.

The Bible says God is not the author of evil. In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, the Bible talks about the mystery of iniquity. The Old Testament Prophet Jeremiah said, "*The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure*" (Jeremiah 17:9).

The lesson of this event is not only about the mystery of iniquity and evil, but, second, it's a lesson about our need for each other.

What an example New York and Washington have been to the world these past few days! None of us will forget the pictures of our courageous firefighters and police, or the hundreds of people standing patiently in line to donate blood.

A tragedy like this could have torn our country apart, but instead it has united us. So those perpetrators who took this on to tear us apart, it has worked the other way—it has backlashed. We are more united than ever before. I think this was exemplified in a very moving way when the members of our Congress stood shoulder to shoulder and sang "God Bless America."

Finally, difficult as it may be for us to see right now, this event can give a message of hope—hope for the present and hope for the future.

Yes, there is hope. There is hope for the present because the stage, I believe, has already been set for a new spirit in our nation.

We desperately need a spiritual renewal in this country, and God has told us in His Word time after time that we need to repent of our sins and return to Him, and He will bless us in a new way.

There also is hope for the future because of God's promises. As a Christian, I have hope, not just for this life, but for Heaven and the life to come. And many of those people who died this past week are in Heaven now. And they wouldn't want to come back. It's so glorious and so wonderful. That is the hope for all of us who put our faith in God. I pray that you will have this hope in your heart.

This event reminds us of the brevity and the uncertainty of life. We never know when we, too, will be called into eternity. I doubt if those people who got on those planes or who walked into the World Trade Center or the Pentagon on Tuesday thought that it would be the last day of their lives. And that's why we each must face our own spiritual need and commit ourselves to God and His will.

Here in this majestic National Cathedral, we see all around us the symbol of the cross. For the Christian, the cross tells us that God understands our sin and our suffering, for He took them upon Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. From the cross God declares, "I love you. I know the heartaches and the sorrows and the pain that you feel. But I love you."

The story does not end with the cross, for Easter points us beyond the tragedy of the cross to the empty tomb. It tells us that there is hope for eternal life, for Christ has conquered evil and death and Hell. Yes, there is hope.

I've become an old man now, and I've preached all over the world. And the older I get, the more I cling to that hope that I started with many years ago.

Several years ago at the National Prayer Breakfast here in Washington, Ambassador Andrew Young closed his talk with a quotation from the old hymn "How Firm a Foundation."

This week we watched in horror as planes crashed into the steel and glass of the World Trade Center. Those majestic towers, built on solid foundations, were examples of prosperity and creativity. When damaged, those buildings plummeted to the ground, imploding in upon themselves. Yet underneath the debris is a foundation that was not destroyed. Therein lies the truth of that hymn, "How Firm a Foundation."

Yes, our nation has been attacked, buildings destroyed, lives lost. But now we have a choice: whether to implode and disintegrate emotionally and spiritually as a people and a nation; or to choose to become stronger through all of this struggle, to rebuild on a solid foundation.

And I believe that we are starting to rebuild on that foundation. That foundation is our trust in God. And in that faith, we have the strength to endure something as difficult and as horrendous as what we have experienced this week. This has been a terrible week with many tears.

But it also has been a week of great faith. In that hymn, "How Firm a Foundation," the words say, "Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed, / For I am thy God, and will [still] give thee aid; / I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, / Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand."

My prayer today is that we will feel the loving arms of God wrapped around us and that as we trust in Him we will know in our hearts that He will never forsake us.

We know also that God will give wisdom and courage and strength to the president and those around him. And this will be a day that we will remember as a day of victory.

*Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. ©1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. Hymn quotation from "How Firm a Foundation" in Rippon's Selection, 1787. Public domain.*