

Becoming

Becoming Compassionate (March 8th, 2020)

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures as a group, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-5 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank Jesus for coming to this world and showing us the ways in which we were called to live a life of compassion! Pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal to us the harvest of hurting and broken people in this world. As we go out into this world of pain and suffering, pray that Jesus would remain close to us so that we would always remember that our king heals and is near to the brokenhearted! Finally, pray that the kingdom of Jesus would transform this world of immense brokenness and hurt by ushering in a new reign of God's perfect love!

Discussion: (30 minutes)

What's Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Buz led us into the fourth week of our Community Group series titled *Becoming*. Pastor Buz encouraged us to become more like Jesus by growing in compassion. We were specifically directed to Jesus' words in Matthew 9:35-38 to illustrate how in our broken world full of hurt and pain, we can continue to remind others that God is near! This is done by sharing the gospel of God's kingdom in which Jesus models compassion and brings healing to diseases and afflictions. Since compassion is still a key element part in reaching our community today, Pastor Buz challenges us to grow in compassion by developing intimacy with God, courageously and patiently stepping into "long-suffering", doing something rather than nothing, and being present without necessarily diving into the question of "why" their suffering occurs.

"Pain asks do I still belong to God's family. The compassion of Jesus Christ says, 'Yes, absolutely!'" – Pastor Buz Hannon

Suggested Questions

Check-In: *Romans 8:29* – We are halfway through our *Becoming* series and have gone over the traits of gentleness, humility, boldness, and compassion. This week, start the group by going around the room and sharing with each person which of these character traits you see growing in them as they grow closer with Jesus. In addition, share one thing that they have brought up in the group meetings that has encouraged you to grow in your own relationship with Jesus!

Study Tip: Do you ever feel that God speaks to you through “gut feelings”? It turns out, the writers of the New Testament recognized had language to express those inner feelings found inside their *splanchnon* (σπλάγχχνον). As a noun, this Greek word can be translated as the physical entrails such as the heart, lungs, liver, or kidney. Additionally, the NT writers used this word to describe the place where one feels emotions like love. Strangely enough, the word compassion in the Greek is derived from the root *splanchnon*! In fact, this gut-wrenching emotion that we call compassion sparked by empathy and love is consistently recognized as a crucial turning point in Jesus’ parables and in his ministry that lead to radical actions of love, just like in our main passage of *Matthew 9:35-38*. As you walk through this study guide this week, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you how to take your compassion and transform that into action for His kingdom!

- **Objective #1: Explore past or present situations that caused doubt. Remember the Kingdom!**

Primary Texts: Matthew 9:35-38; John 16:33 – Pastor Buz begins his sermon on compassion by explaining how the kingdom of God has begun in the person of Jesus Christ and is also not yet fully realized until Jesus’ return. He states that the compassion we have for people now can be the bridge on which we bring the gospel into a hurting world that continually asks, “where is God,” in horribly tough situations. What are some of the painful situations in your life that have caused you to question God’s presence? How did/does the message of Jesus’ compassion and God’s kingdom give you comfort?

Supporting Texts: (Kingdom) 2 Sam. 7:1-16; Matt. 3:1-3, 4:17; Mk. 1:15; (OT Suffering Examples) Ex. 2:23-25, 3:7-10; 16; Deut. 30:1-10; Is. 63:7-14; Neh. 9:6-38; Ps. 103; 145:8-9; Job 1—2, 38:1-42:6.

- **Objective #2: Survey some scriptural examples of compassion in Jesus’ life and teachings.**

Primary Texts: Philippians. 2:1-11; Romans 5:6-8 – Next, Pastor Buz challenges us to reflect on how Jesus modeled compassion in his life and in his teachings. What are some of the stories of Jesus’ life and teachings that you can think of that reveal his compassion? What are the reasons that this specific story stands out to you?

Supporting Texts: (Crowds fed) Matt. 14:13-21, 15:32-39, Mk. 6:34; (Healing) Mk. 9:14-28; (Raising of Dead) Lk. 11:17; (Good Samaritan) Lk. 10:25-37; (Prodigal Son) Lk. 15:20;

- **Objective #3: Pray to be sent into the harvest and seek to grow in compassion!**

Primary Texts: Matthew 6:9-13; Hebrews 4:14-5:10 – Finally, Pastor Buz offers 4 ways to grow in compassion as we remember the hope of God’s kingdom and as we pray to be sent into the harvest. **1) Intimacy with God 2) Courage and patience 3) Do something 4) Avoid the “why”.** Where do you feel your harvest is at this point in your life? As you await the harvest, which of these areas requires more attention in your life and how would you like your group to help you grow in that specific area?

Closing Prayer: (5-15 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank Jesus for being the way, the truth, and the life in our world today! Ask that the Holy Spirit would reveal to us the depth of what it means to live compassionately in His power! Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to transform our minds so that we would continue to recognize our own faulty beliefs and worldviews that drive our progress toward becoming more like Jesus!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Follow Along with our Pray Podcast: For the next 30 days, our challenge for you is to step into the prayer movement around 3Crosses by listening to our [Pray Podcast](#).

-Further Reading and Exploration! *Read Psalm 78:* One great way to explore God's compassion is to take a bird's eye view of Israel's history and see the pattern of situations that caused them to doubt God's covenant promises with them. Psalm 78 delivers a heartfelt recounting of Israel's history and reminds the reader of all the times Israel has been forgiven. As you read this selection, remember that God has compassion for you and others around you as you experience all kinds of suffering that seem outside of God's control.

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that the members of your group would be compassionate as they share the message of God's kingdom to those who are hurting!

- Join us for our Community Group Meet-Up on April 19th, 2020! If you have any questions about Community Groups, feel free to email AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org