

# SEVEN RIVERS

— CHURCH —

## **Sermon Discussion Guide**

The Heart of Christ: Compassion

Romans 5:20, 8:33-34; Hosea 11:7-9; Hebrews 7:25

January 16 & 17, 2021

### **Part 1: Pray**

The primary goal for our Life Group meetings is to experience Jesus in our midst in his presence and power. We want him to be at work by His Spirit, ministering to us and through us to one another so that people are cared for and encouraged to lead God pleasing lives. Ask God to reveal his truth in this passage to transform you through your discussion time.

### **Part 2: Read the Text**

Read the passage(s) from the sermon. Keep a focus on key words, repeated phrases or major themes.

### **Part 3: Reflect on the Sermon**

*Introduction*

1. With the COVID pandemic, racial tensions, and political unrest, this past year has been a wake-up call for us all. What are some things you have woken up to this past year?
2. According to author and pastor Jack Miller, there are two things we all need to wake up to: "You're a worse sinner than you ever dared imagine, and you're more loved than you ever dared hope." Why is it necessary for us to wake up to both of these truths? What might happen if we don't realize how sinful we are? How loved we are?

3. What will it take for us to wake up to the heart of Christ? Reflecting on our sermon series so far, what have you learned about Christ's heart? What has most surprised and encouraged you?

*Compassion: Abounding.*

1. In Romans 5:20, Paul writes, "But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." Though God is holy and hates sin, if we are in Christ, our sin does not decrease his grace but actually causes his grace to surge towards us. When you sin, do you picture God reaching out to you with grace, or do you think that he recoils from you? Reflecting on your own story, how do you think your past experiences have shaped the way you believe God sees you?
2. Dane Ortlund writes, "If you are part of Christ's own body, your sins evoke his deepest heart, his compassion, and pity. He sides with you against your sin, not against you because of your sin. He hates sin. But he loves you. When we consider the hatred a father has against a terrible disease afflicting his child, the father hates the disease while loving his child. Indeed, at some level the presence of the disease draws out his heart to his child even more." Take a moment to reflect on this quote. How might truly believing this affect the way we fight against sin in our life?
3. In Hosea 11:9, God says, "For I am God and not a man, the Holy one in your midst, and I will not come in wrath." This is the opposite of what we expect. We expect a Holy God to come in wrath against his sinful people. Yet God seems to always subvert our expectations. If you came to Jesus later in life, what were some expectations you had of Christianity, and how has Jesus subverted these expectations? Thinking about those in your life who do not know Jesus, what expectations do you think they have about Jesus, and how might you go about showing them who Jesus actually is?

4. According to Adam, our shame and our efforts to cover our shame by our performance keep us from believing that God's grace abounds to us in our weakness. Thinking about your own life, what are some of the things you rely on to cover your shame? What do you rely on to try to make yourself worthy of God's grace? What is it that actually makes us dear to God?

*Compassion: To the Uttermost.*

1. If we have already been justified (the price for our sin paid), why do we need Jesus to intercede for us with the father? Why is Jesus' current intercession good news for us? How does it show us Jesus' heart?
2. How does the truth that right now Christ is *praying for us* liberate our prayer life?

**Part 4: Summarize the Message**

How would you summarize the sermon to someone who has never heard it? What are your two or three key takeaways from the message and your discussion?

How does this sermon change your perspective on God? Your own heart? And/or, how to follow Jesus?