



The GOD who is|

by Pastor Rollan Fisher

The GOD who is **alpha**
The GOD who is **omega**
The GOD who is **love**



The God Who Is: The God Of All Compassion

WARM UP: What does “compassion” mean to you?

READ: Matthew 9:35-38, 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

FOCUS: We will more fully understand God’s motives when we discover his heart of compassion.

OBSERVE (10 minutes)

A Motive Of Compassion

- The word used for compassion in the New Testament can be translated “to feel sympathy.” This means that God is driven by his sympathy towards his creation and the people in the world whom he loves.
- God’s compassion
 - is inclusive
 - is instructive
 - is healing
 - is indiscriminately involved
 - finds redemptive solutions
- When Jesus looked at the crowds he saw their spiritual condition as harassed and helpless sheep without a shepherd. He saw their pain and unique stories and reasons for pain. He did not qualify why they were or were not worthy of his compassion. He simply gave it.
- For he knew that all in the crowd were guilty of some sort of sin for which he had come to die.

The Language Of Compassion

- Whether you’ve been exposed to another person’s reality before or not, you need to understand that what people have experienced is what is true.
- To be faithful ministers of the gospel, we must enter compassionately into people’s experience with humility to learn how they’ve been harassed and helpless. It is after this that we have a bridge to bring the truth of God’s love and Word to lift them to Christ.
- When speaking to people in turmoil, say things like this:
 - “I’m so saddened that hurt you.” (This allows people to know that you see them like God sees them).
 - “Please tell me your story.” (This lets people know that you care)
 - “I’d like to hear more.” (This communicates that you are interested in finding a comprehensive, godly solution)

- “How can I pray for you?” (This points people to the God of all compassion)
- “May I encourage you with something?” (This provides them the hope and comfort of God’s Word).

Compassion and The Cross

- In understanding the cross of Christ, people can fully see God’s compassion.
- Though we were all harassed and helpless, we all unfortunately also sinned.
- This is the great irony of humanity’s fallen state. The victims of sin, in fighting for themselves, can ultimately become the perpetrators of ongoing sin.
- Because of this never ending cycle of fallenness, there is an insurmountable debt that needs to be paid for all of our sins against a holy God.
- Only Jesus, the only sinless one could ever pay it.
- Christ’s compassion towards fallen humanity was ultimately expressed at the cross. He didn’t just observe our suffering. He entered into it and provided the solution that we needed to reconcile us with God and one another.
- When we turn to Christ, who is full of compassion, we are born again and have a new power by His Spirit that can literally change our world.

REFLECT AND DISCUSS (30 min)

- Scripture says that God is the “God of all comfort”. What does this mean? How does Jesus model this for us?
- When Jesus saw the crowds he had compassion on them. What about their situation moved him? Do you see the crowds as Jesus saw them? Do you see yourself as Jesus sees you?
- How did compassion move Jesus? What did he do? What did he tell the disciples to do?

PRAY & TAKE ACTION

- Thank God that he saw you and the crowds as you truly are, as harassed and helpless in need of a savior.
- Thank God for choosing to be moved by our condition into action, suffering at the cross for our sin..
- Repent of sin and ask Jesus for what you need. He forgave sin AND healed ‘every disease and affliction’. (Matt 9:35 and 2 Corinthians 1:3)
- Ask God to send laborers into the harvest field bringing his good news of the kingdom with compassion and power.
- Volunteer yourself to labor in God’s field bringing his compassion through sharing the gospel and praying for afflictions to be alleviated.

Scriptures

Matthew 9:35-38

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

Resources and Quotes

“Mental pain is less dramatic than physical pain, but it is more common and also more hard to bear. The frequent attempt to conceal mental pain increases the burden: it is easier to say “My tooth is aching” than to say “My heart is broken.”

— C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain