

“Who Is This Man?”
“The Compassionate Jesus”

The Season of Lent has begun. We have begun a new sermon series “Who is this Man?” The next few weeks we will concentrate on seeing God in all the faces and experiences of Jesus. Last Sunday we focused on the Tempted Jesus. Yesterday we concentrated on “The Compassionate Jesus.” Many of the images of Jesus are those of him being caring, loving and kind. Those are excellent images, made more real by the fact that Jesus also grieved: at the tomb of Lazarus, over Jerusalem and particularly for our readings this week, at the death of his cousin John. May this Jesus be a source of strength and help during the coming week. ---Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“The Compassionate Jesus”**

Prayer for the Week

Almighty and all-loving God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, You have reconciled the world to yourself. Help us now to be reconciled with one another that again we might dwell in the warmth of your love. Remind us, as your children, to put on compassion, kindness, gentleness, but most of all, to put on love. we pray in our friend and savior’s name, Jesus. Amen. (Adapted from a prayer by Michael J. O’Donnell)

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, February 26, 2018 Mark 6: 30-32

Immediately preceding these verses is the story of the death of John the Baptist. The disciples had been sent to proclaim the gospel and do wonderful things. They come back excited, but Jesus is grieving. His cousin John has been executed on a whim. So Jesus invites his disciples to get away, to retreat for a while. It is good to retreat, to “come away” to re-energize, to grieve, to focus and to rest. Can you imagine the flood of experiences and emotions happening with Jesus? His disciples must be so excited, and Jesus so sad, but still willing to open his heart and spirit to them. In the midst of life, people need to rest and find Sabbath. Even when the work is exciting, one risks “burning out” without it. *How do you find rest, Sabbath in the midst of the busyness of life?*

Tuesday, February 27, 2018 Mark 6: 33-34

Jesus and the disciples got a brief respite, but it was brief. Everyone figured out where they were going and raced around the lake to meet them on the other side. Remember, Jesus was tired and grieving, but the crowd, they were desperate, lonely, overwhelmed and looking for grace, hope and faith. Jesus could have gotten back in the boat, could have said “I am tired, not today.” Instead, Jesus “had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.” Perhaps Jesus could have more compassion because he was grieving, because he understood how hard life could be. *How do you find ways to be compassionate when you are tired and weary and needing a time away?*

Wednesday, February 28, 2018 Jeremiah 23: 1-2

This may have been one of the passages Mark was referring to when he writes that Jesus had compassion because the people were like a sheep without a shepherd. These words are a warning to the “shepherds” of Israel. In the Common English version, “This is what the LORD, the god of Israel, proclaims about the shepherds who “tend to “my people: You are the ones who have scattered my flock and driven them away...I will take revenge on them.” Wow. In the verses we will read in the next couple of days, redemption is promised for the people of Israel. There is no patience for leaders who are not taking care of the people. This is why Jesus, again and again, reached out with compassion and love. *In your life and spirit, where do fail to live out your calling and compassion for God’s people?*

Thursday, March 1, 2018 Jeremiah 23: 3-4

God himself will gather his people from far away, take care of them and provide leaders who will care for them. “They will no longer be afraid or dread harm.” Read those words again, “They will no longer be afraid or dread harm.” The poignancy of these words speak to God’s distress that the religious leaders caused his people to be afraid. How often do we see religious leaders that have caused harm and distress? The promise of God is that the time is coming when God will give new shepherds who will kindly and compassionately care for God’s people. *In fact, in Jesus, we see that kind of compassion. How do you live out God’s compassion for all people day to day?*

Friday, March 2, 2018 Jeremiah 23:5-6

In these verses the promise is clear, a messiah, a Christ is coming who will be good, just and right. When we look at the compassionate Christ, in Jesus we see this promise fulfilled. When others would turn their backs on the hurting, the broken and the outcast, Jesus did not. In his fatigue, in his grief, he had compassion on people who were also fatigued, grieving and afraid. Out of that compassion, Jesus teaches them the way of the kingdom. *How will you love and serve the compassionate Christ this week?*