



Celebration

Celebrating God's Compassionate Love

What holds you back from celebrating? What keeps you from being home and full of joy for this season? Instead of being critical of the commercialization of Christmas, we ought to be overwhelmingly engaged with the fullness of the meaning of Christmas. We celebrate because God is a compassionate God. His compassion shifts something inside us, making us want to change, to be new, to be like Him.

FOCAL POINT: God doesn't care as much for our intellectual assent as he does our connection and response to His love.



Getting Started

Catch up together about how your week has been, possibly also revisit last week's meeting.

- ▶ When was the last time you made a change in your life direction?



Exploring Scripture

Read the following passage together.

Psalm 86

- ▶ Where do you hear God's heart in this passage?
- ▶ What words or phrases stick out to you?



Reflection

Take time to reflect together about the passage.

- ▶ David talks about facing danger and destruction, then rejoices because God is a "compassionate" God. What is important for David about having a God who is "compassionate" in times of trouble?
- ▶ What difference does it make for you when you receive compassion in times of trouble?



Praxis

With the understanding that we gathered here are the body of Christ, let's allow the truth from today's scripture to impact us as a LifeGroup.

- ▶ When we receive God's compassion, our minds and feelings change. Our behaviors and emotions change. It's not the things we know or understand that change our behaviors, but the experience of relationship with another.
- ▶ When we meet together, there are times when we discuss and talk about information, and there are other times when we connect in a more personal or present way in relationship with each other. What do you think keeps us from engaging each other in a more relational or compassionate way? What might we each gain if we did?
- ▶ How are you doing with connecting with God's presence in your life right now? What gets in the way of experiencing more of God's compassion in your life? How could we help each other in this?



Moving Outward

Challenge each other to live out God's truth this week.

- ▶ Spend time tomorrow morning receiving God's compassion.

Psalm 86

Hear me, Lord, and answer me,
for I am poor and needy.

Guard my life, for I am faithful to you;
save your servant who trusts in you.

You are my God; have mercy on me, Lord,
for I call to you all day long.

Bring joy to your servant, Lord,
for I put my trust in you.

You, Lord, are forgiving and good,
abounding in love to all who call to you.

Hear my prayer, Lord;
listen to my cry for mercy.

When I am in distress, I call to you,
because you answer me.

Among the gods there is none like you, Lord;
no deeds can compare with yours.

All the nations you have made
will come and worship before you, Lord;
they will bring glory to your name.

For you are great and do marvelous deeds;
you alone are God.

Teach me your way, Lord,
that I may rely on your faithfulness;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart;
I will glorify your name forever.

For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the depths,
from the realm of the dead.

Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God;
ruthless people are trying to kill me—
they have no regard for you.

But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,
slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Turn to me and have mercy on me;
show your strength in behalf of your servant;
save me, because I serve you
just as my mother did.

Give me a sign of your goodness,
that my enemies may see it and be put to shame,
for you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.