

**Word Notes Sunday 28/10/2012 Tony Hodge**  
**God of Compassion**

**Summary** (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

**Key Text: Psalms Matthew 9:35,36**

The Bible is full of the message that God is a God of Compassion. The definition of the English word and the meanings of the Hebrew and Greek words of the Bible talk of a love that is so deep that it physically moves the compassionate to suffer with. In God's case this culminates in His Son Jesus who came not just to tell nice stories, or show us how to lead a moral and upright life but to suffer alongside and in our place. God does not stand aloof on some mountain watching dispassionately as life unfolds, He steps into history and bears our burdens with and for us.

The Love story narrative of the bible tells of God continually calling us back to him. Through leaders, judges, kings and still people cast him off. God's compassion shown in Jesus is once for all. The Motive is LOVE; the Mission is salvation to bring people back; the Message is of the kingdom and relationship and the Method, sacrifice as the way back to God. Because of compassion Jesus endured all the same sufferings that we or others experience – and more so as God lays on him the sins of all.

Through the physical suffering and death we see our suffering shared by Jesus, now through his body, the Church, he reaches out to others to demonstrate his compassion to people we meet.

**Application** (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

Discuss one or more of the following 3 topics:

1, Read Is 53 (if you have different versions read the two most different versions). Discuss the following:

- Which bits stand out, what is your personal reaction to the text?
- Some of the text is very dark, talking of great pain and suffering – how does that sit with your understanding of a God of Compassion?
- The ultimate viewpoint is one of victory and hope, what is our part, if any, in ensuring that Christ's suffering and sacrifice attains the most?

2, Read Psalm 103:1-18 and discuss:

- What do you most have to thank God for as a result of what Jesus gained on the Cross?
- What does God's compassion look like in everyday experience?
- We know that we are saved by grace (God's Riches At Christ's Expense) but does that mean we are passive and just receive? How do we ensure we continue to walk in blessing?

3, Read Matthew 25:35-40.

- What does this passage tell you about the God of Compassion? How are you personally challenged by Jesus' words?
- Also read Matt. 26:6-11 and 1 Cor 13:3. How do these words of Jesus and Paul put Christian service into perspective?
- Ask yourself: do I have a heart of compassion, what does that mean 24/7 in Newmarket in 2012?

## **Witness**

Discuss how God's compassion in our hearts can reach out to others. Do we always have to use words or should something else come first? Do fall into the trap of talking hypothetically – be real in discussing what, how and when each of us, the Cell and the fellowship can and should be doing to take God's compassion and demonstrate it to others.