



# Trans-form Notes

## IMAGES OF GOD The God of Compassion

**Reflect:** (Spend time with God thinking about these statements or questions)

- ❖ Take some time to read and meditate on Hosea 11:1-9.

**Interact:** (Discuss the following questions with your group, some friends, or just you and God)

- ❖ Describe how you have experienced God as a "God of Compassion. If you have not, why do you think that is?"
- ❖ What experiences in your past make it easy or difficult to be compassionate with yourself?
- ❖ What is it like for you when people are compassionate toward you?
- ❖ **Psalm 103:13:** *As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;*... Describe how God, in the Old Testament, showed compassion. Share stories you know from the Old Testament.
- ❖ Read Mark 1:40-41. Describe all the ways Jesus showed compassion to the leper. Why did he show compassion?
- ❖ Read Matthew 25:31-46. How do you think God will judge you? Which character trait does he most want us to exhibit according to this passage?
- ❖ Ask people to look up these passages: Acts 4:34-35; Acts 6:16; Colossians 3:12; and James 1:27. How did the early church view its role in reflecting God's compassion?
- ❖ "You can not give away, what you do not have." Is it hard to be compassionate when you have not received it yourself? Who do you find it hard to have compassion on? (Be honest. Once you name it and confess, God begins to change your heart.)

- ❖ Who do you have compassion towards? Have you acted on that compassion? Why or why not?
- ❖ What attitudes and emotions surface when you relate to emotionally needy or dysfunctional people?
- ❖ Begin to discuss as a group how you can begin to reflect God's compassion? As who, what, and how you are to show compassion. Be specific. You don't have to complete this tonight but make it an ongoing conversation in the group.

**Apply:** (Look for ways to apply at least one concept to your life)

- ❖ Become quiet and still. Desire to see Jesus. Read the crucifixion account in one of the Gospels. As you read, become one of the watchers. What is it like for Jesus to be abandoned by those he counted on? What is it like for Jesus to find that God is silent? What is it like for him to submit to the loneliness, the pain, and the nakedness? What desire draws Jesus to the cross?
- ❖ Think about who are the outsiders and the marginalized in your community. Choose one of these groups or individual and find out something about them. What do they need? What do they have to give? How is God calling you to be compassionate? \*\*\*Always think relationally not just as a separate act.
- ❖ Ask some people who are close to you, to honestly answer some questions about your character: How do I come across? What is it like to be with me? Do I show an interest in others? Do I listen or do I mostly talk about myself? Reflect on what you have learned about yourself based on their answers.
- ❖ Choose one way you can show compassion to another this week. Reflect on the experience in prayer.