

the shallow **END**



6-WEEK STUDY

DIVING INTO THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD

WEEK 2

DISCUSSION GUIDE

COMPASSIONATE AND GRACIOUS

the shallow END



WEEKLY READING

Primary text from this week: Exodus 34:6-7

Secondary texts from this week: 1 Kings 3:16-28, Isaiah 49:15, Jonah 4:1-3, Psalm 86:15, Luke 15:11-32

GETTING STARTED

Goals for this session: To develop a more accurate view of God as compassionate and gracious

Missed the sermon? Watch it at www.youtube.com/venturamissionary

Break the Ice: Would you rather eat breakfast for dinner or dinner for breakfast?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. On a scale of 1-10, how compassionate are you? Would your spouse (if you are married) agree with your score? Your best friend? Your co-workers?
2. Typically, when we think of compassion, we think of it as an emotion or a feeling. Is it strange to think of God as having feelings? Do you think God is affected by His feelings the same way we are?
3. Pastor Doug taught that the Hebrew word for "compassion" is the word *raham*, which is closely connected to the word for a woman's womb. How does that deepen your understanding of God's compassion?
4. Have group members read the following verses: **Matthew 9:35-36**, **14:14**, **15:32**, and **20:34**. What do these verses tell us about Jesus? What does the ministry of Jesus tell us about the nature of God Himself?
5. In English, the word gracious usually refers to the kindness or generosity of a person. For example, we might say, "she is such a gracious host." Pastor Doug taught that the Hebrew word for "gracious" is the word *hanun*, which means to show grace or favor—especially towards someone who doesn't deserve it. How does that deepen your understanding of God's graciousness?
6. Have group members look up and read the following verses: **Nehemiah 9:16-18**, **Psalm 86:15**, **Psalm 103:8**, **Psalm 111:4**, **Psalm 145:8**, and **Joel 2:13**.
7. Why is it significant that the words compassion and gracious appear together so many times in descriptions of God?
8. Have someone in the group read the story of the Prodigal Son in **Luke 15:11-32**. What does this story reveal about Jesus' understanding of God's character?
9. How might this understanding that God is compassionate and gracious affect your relationship with Him? How might it affect your relationship with other people?

PRAYER

Pray for each other: Pray that each person in your group would grow closer to God during this series.

Pray for yourself: Pray that God would use this series to help you better understand God and grow in your relationship with Him

Pray for your four: Identify four people who don't know Jesus (friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers/classmates), and commit to pray for them consistently. Pray that **(1)** God would reveal Jesus to them, **(2)** that God would turn their hearts towards Him, **(3)** that God would put Christians in their path to represent Christ, and **(4)** that God would give you an opportunity to share what Christ has done in your life.

ACTION STEPS

Remind yourself that God is compassionate and gracious. Every time you see a parent with their child this week, let it remind you that God is compassionate and gracious.

NOTES