



# COMPASSION

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## Small group questions

*Colossians 3:5-14 – Clothe yourselves with compassion*

Leaders – if the questions make no sense or you don't know the answer – please contact the preacher!

1. If you were on death's door needing a liver or heart transplant and suddenly one became available, how would you feel once you had received it and started a new life? What do you think would change for you? Priorities? Perspective? Compassion? Something else?

### **You've been raised > therefore raise your hearts**

2. 3:1 - We were dead but now raised! What does Paul mean by 'set your hearts on things above' – when the mundane things of living in this world still need to be taken care of?
3. Mark said that the things which ought to be keeping us up at night ought to be the excitement of dreaming up new ways of making Jesus known. That may be something of what it means to 'set your minds on things above'. What do you reckon?

### **You died > therefore put to death**

4. What stands out for you in the list of things we must 'put to death'? Why so much about sex? Are Christians "obsessed with sex" as some accuse us of? Why does the Bible make a big deal of this?
5. How would you encourage a young Christian struggling in this area to 'put to death' their desires?
6. Is "greed" a big blind spot for us as Christians? *How* can we 'put it to death'?
7. Work through the list of v8 and discuss various challenges there.
8. What might it mean to 'bear with one another'? What is the measure or inspiration of forgiveness?

*PERSONAL reflection: how are you doing putting these 'to death'? Where will you find help?*

### **You're loved > live loved!**

9. What stands out for you in the list of things we must 'put to death'? Why so much about sex? Are Christians "obsessed with sex" as some accuse us of? Why does the Bible make a big deal of this?

We've seen in this series, God's very nature is one of compassion (Ex 34), that he has compassion to blot out transgressions (Ps 51); that is compassion sometimes annoys because he has compassion on those we'd rather he didn't! (Jonah); that even in the midst of Israel's darkest days in exile, there was still compassion to be seen every morning; that in response to compassion for the lost we are to pray for more workers to be sent into the harvest field; that compassion can be dangerous – leading to insult and persecution – even the confiscation of one's property; that it was God's compassion for us that led him to crush his son in our place; and that when we know God's compassion and comfort, we can share that with others.

10. Having seen that the nature of God's compassion for us, and knowing that we are chosen, holy and dearly loved (v12), *how* can we 'clothe ourselves with compassion'? How can we work on this?
11. What will be the greatest enemy of compassion in our lives? (Or to put in another way, under what circumstances do you think you struggle – or will struggle – to show compassion?)
12. In what ways are you encouraged because we *are* demonstrating our compassion in our church? What other ways can we work on increasing our compassion in 2018?

**Date:** 22 October 2017  
**Services:** Peregrin (only)  
**Series:** Compassion  
**Passage:** Colossians 3:5-14  
**Title:** *Clothe yourselves with compassion*  
**Outline:** You've been **raised** > therefore raise your hearts....  
You **died** > therefore put to death...  
You are **loved** > therefore live loved

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people - radical transformation - virtually - new life

alcoholic - liver transplant - Susan - always said - what an insult if that person goes and drinks again  
or person with heart transplant... how would that feel?

OR - someone rescued from the ocean and given a new life... what would change for them?

Finally falling pregnant with IVF baby....

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In Col 3 - and he does it in Ephesians and Philippians - he puts it to them that what they have in Christ means they have a new life.

Not pull moral socks up

Not adopt a philosophy - no a fundamental change has taken place...

...they were dead - now they are alive... that's pretty significant - read with me 2:13

so three exhortations in this passage...

1. You've been raised - raise your hearts
2. You died - therefore - put to death
3. You're loved - lived - loved!

So briefly on the first two - a bit more time on the third

1. You've been raised - raise your hearts

3:1 - read... what is it that most fills your hearts...

what's the predominant thought pattern...?

'set your hearts on things above'...

our whole mindset - not about getting the most out of this world - not about getting more and more stuff... not about getting ahead - here and here... power - influence - status, recognition....

No - our thoughts - are taken up with - giving more attention to God... fixated on the things of God - ie the values of God, the priorities of God, the character of God...

Our concern - how can we get this word out - this word of life and forgiveness and protection and hope and a future?

How can more and more people get to hear about him?

How can we convince more people?

How can we live out all that he told us?

You've been raised from dead... you were done, dead and buried... but raised to life – a brand new life – which will never end... and the things of God ought to be keeping us awake at night... not with anxiety – but excitement... how we can play our part in his plans to take over the world!!!

2. You died, therefore put to death....

Old life where you were in charge – where you called the shots – that's gone...

Therefore – put whatever characterised that old life which didn't satisfy you and didn't please God – put it to death...

Have a look with me – vv5 – sexual immorality – any sexual physical union outside of marriage – lust – evil desires – and you might say 'tick, tick, tick...' but what about now – greed... = idolatry... we always over look that...!

Preacher – series – 7 deadly sins – bet in the office – poorly attended week – greed – and it was...

Wrath of God coming... and this is how it used to be... but your life now in Christ – so radically different – that all that stuff has to go – not just a little bit dead – totally dead – v8 – anger, rage, malice, slander... filthy language... lying... like Beta Max and VHS being incompatible... or Apple and Android... forget – all that stuff and your new life, don't belong together... none of that old stuff belongs to us now.... New life!!

Your new self is being renewed – it's a work in progress – but you can hurry up the progress by taking the axe to these things...

3. You're loved > live loved!

Look how we are described...

(not do all these things and you will become chosen, holy, loved!)

this is your current status as children of God... as people who died with Christ and have been raised to a new life...

this is the essence of the new life you've been raised up into...

so therefore – live this way – live consistently... be who you are...

what will that look like – what difference will it make – what things characterise this new life?

Have a look with me... v 12...

We could spend a lot of time on each of these – but as today's sermon brings to a close our series on compassion – I want to zoom in on compassion...

It's the first in the list...

Why?

Where have we come from in this series. Do you recall?

We started back in Ex 34 – God reveals himself to Moses as the gracious and compassionate God

We saw that God has compassion to blot out transgressions – even the most awful – yours!

We saw that his compassion sometimes annoys – because he has compassion on people we'd frankly prefer he didn't!

We saw that even in the midst of Israel's darkest days in exile, God still showed his compassions... new every morning

We saw Jesus' compassion for the lost as a result of which he urged us to be people of prayer – for the lost... particularly that God would raise up more workers...

Last week we saw the danger of compassion – that sometimes our compassion will result in insult, persecution and the confiscation of our property...

In our two talks yesterday morning – it was God's compassion for us – that led him to meter out the judgement we were due, on his son in our place

And that because he has compassion on us and comforts others – we are well placed to have compassion on – to comfort others...

Our God – compassionate through and through. Doesn't mean he doesn't take sin seriously – he does – so seriously – he bears the punishment for sin himself – in his Son

It doesn't mean that he doesn't demand people change – he does – the woman in adultery? He welcomed her – protected her from those about to stone her... then – parting words – 'go and sin no more'.

Zacchaeus up the tree – greedy tax collector – met him where he was – but didn't leave him where he was... and he have back more than he had ripped of people..

Story of prodigal son... welcomes him back – runs to him with compassion – but then takes him back into his family – doesn't leave him where he is.

God's compassion – he suffers **with** us – he suffers **for** us!!

So when he says – we are his dearly loved, holy and chosen people – it's not surprising that when he urges that we live like the people we are – he starts with compassion.

Clothe yourselves with **compassion**...

Clothe yourselves with the compassion God has for **you**...

With the compassion **Jesus** has for you

The compassion which led him to give of himself **entirely** for you – the **dangerous** compassion – compassion which **costs**... compassion which means you're prepared to get your **hands dirty**... //

Are you prepared to **suffer** with others..

To get alongside people where they're at?

To suffer with them....?

I'm sure there are lots of compassionate people here... I've seen it action... even yesterday some of you cooked up meals for the hungry or needy...

As you've responded with compassion to Ian in his situation...

This is a compassionate church... our work out at Johns Landing – our work with Samaritan Care – our visiting elderly in their homes – our seeing people in hospital...

The very reason this Peregian congregation exists is out of compassion for the people of Peregian and surrounds that they may hear about Jesus...

Do we have a way to go? Is there still room for more compassion?

I'm sure there is... both at the individual level and as a church...

There are times and situations in our lives aren't there when we come across someone doing it tough – maybe someone in our own family – and the reality is – we don't care.... For whatever reason – we don't care...

Maybe because of history in the relationship, maybe we are compassioned-out, maybe because we're overwhelmed with our own issues... and at those times – we need to go back to the Lord Jesus who had compassion on us... and inspired by him who in his compassion went to the cross for us... we need to clothe ourselves with compassion...

Compassion for our kids sometimes runs thin...

...or for our parents... or parents in law...

compassion for that older person who keeps bugging us about something...

compassion for that student who won't go away – or client – or patient – or colleague... who we just personally don't like... and we start thinking like – compassion is an option here...

how do we 'clothe' ourselves... is there a clothes shop somewhere??

We consider God's compassion... we consider again the compassion of Jesus... we remember and dwell on and mull over and meditate on the compassion that's been shown us – all that we've explored in this series...

I praise God for the compassion I see in this church... and pray that we may continue to grow in that compassion in every way....

...the other words here – I think are all closely related aren't they – have a look with me...

humility

gentleness

bear with each other

forgiving one another... - just as the Lord forgave you...

bind them – in love...

...all after the pattern of the Lord Jesus – love – like a big overcoat.... Keeping them altogether...

...

realise who you are today – chosen, holy, dearly loved.

That's your settled place with God, which will never change

If you're going to live as chosen, holy and dearly loved... then you will wear – and be seen in all the beauty of – compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...

You will bear with each other... and you'll forgive whatever grievances you have against one another... and over all of them... you'll put on love.

Brothers and sisters in Christ – clothe yourselves with compassion!