

Winsome:

BEGINNING TO SEE

GETTING STARTED

In our sermon series “Winsome” we will be leaning into what it would look like to partner with the Holy Spirit to be Jesus’ heart and hands in our lives. How we can be present to God, ourselves and others...where we live, where we work, where we play...in any area of our lives.

Living winsome lives begins with a change of heart. We can only see people when we gain God’s heart for the world, and see with his eyes of compassion. Not unlike Jesus’ healing miracles, his feeding of the crowd shows his compassion of human beings and their needs. Jesus cared for the people in their ordinary hunger and demonstrated loving hospitality.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Spirit we invite you into this space, to speak to us as we read scripture together. Jesus, we desire to be more like you. Would you move us, would you guide us, and would you correct us? We surrender this time to You. Amen.

STARTER QUESTIONS

We live in a broken world, filled with sin and injustice. Where are some of the places in the world you notice injustice? In the United States? Locally?

Despite injustice, there is still good happening. Share a person or organization who’s compassion or work has moved you.

READ ALOUD

Consider reading the passages twice in different translations.

MATTHEW 15:29-38

29 Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. 30 Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. 31 The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel. 32 Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way." 33 His disciples answered, "Where could we get enough bread in this remote place to feed such a crowd?" 34 "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. "Seven," they replied, "and a few small fish." 35 He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. 36 Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and they in turn to the people. 37 They all ate and were satisfied. Afterward the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. 38 The number of those who ate was four thousand men, besides women and children.

MARK 6:32-44

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. 31 Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." 32 So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. 33 But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. 35 By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. 36 Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." 37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?" 38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish." 39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. 42 They all ate and were satisfied, 43 and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. 44 The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stands out to you from both passages? Have group members share what they noticed.
2. Why do you think both Matthew and Mark mentioned that Jesus was moved by compassion? What do you think this means for us?
3. Notice how much Jesus does with so little. Where have you seen God do that in your own life?
4. Notice, too, how he relies on the help of the disciples to help him do the feeding. Where have you sensed in your own life the compassion of Jesus stirring in you? Where would you like the Holy Spirit to stir in you a newfound sense of compassion? Take some time after prayer ministry to pray for each other in these areas.

PRAYER MINISTRY TIME

Encourage people to settle into a comfortable position and pray, "Come, Holy Spirit." Wait. Breathe. Have people share if they heard the Lord speak, give space for the Holy Spirit to move. People can divide into smaller groups to pray together or you can stay as a large group. Also make space to pray for needs & requests.

FURTHER REFLECTION & ACTION

The Kingdom of God is not simply what awaits us in Heaven at some time in the future. By becoming one of us in Christ, God revealed how the Kingdom of God breaks into history, here and now. The Kingdom of God is not a place but a way of living and being.

As you pray this week, ask: how does the call of Christ move me now? What Holy desires stir in me when considering Jesus' view of the Kingdom of God?