

## **Sermon Discussion Guide**

### **October 14, 2007**

**Sermon Title: CHRIST'S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH, PART 9  
THE ROLE OF COMPASSION AND OUTREACH**

**Anchor Text: John 12:20-26**

**Big Idea:** The ultimate purpose of the church is found in its response to the world's pain by the character, wisdom and love of Christ.

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**Approach:** *getting learners interested/immersed in the topic*

1. What kinds of human need do you notice most readily and acutely? (e.g. hunger, grief, career issues, homelessness, victims of abuse, addiction, etc...)
2. Have you ever been in a place of need where you depended on the help of others to make it through? If so, please share this with your group.

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**Life Exploration:** *helping learners relate the topic to their lives*

1. When you stop to think about the world's pain, what feelings do you have? What do you most typically do with those feelings?
2. How do the world's needs personally affect your spiritual life and walk with Christ?
3. How do you know or recognize when you are being nudged by the Holy Spirit toward personally being Christ in a particular situation or toward a particular need?
4. In what kind of situations do you feel most (or least) prepared and able to respond in the character, wisdom and love of Christ?

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**Bible Exploration:** *helping learners build a bridge from their lives to the Scriptures*

1. After reading this passage, why do you think the Greeks (who were known for their love of mere intellectual dialog) wanted to see Jesus?
2. What do you think went through Philip and Andrew's mind when Jesus answered them in the way He did (v. 23-26) in relation to dying and following Him?
3. What do you think is meant by the analogy of the grain of wheat that Jesus gives in v. 24?

4. What appears to be the ultimate outcome of the dying & following that Jesus is suggesting in this passage?
5. How do you think the Son of Man is glorified by the dying & following that Jesus speaks of in this passage?
6. What does this passage suggest about the true nature of walking with Christ and living a life of compassion and reaching out to others?
7. What do you think might happen if the body of Christ really began to live and function under this dying-following dynamic?
8. What do you think keeps us from doing so?

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**Heart Exploration:** *helping learners build a bridge from the Scriptures to their hearts*

1. How do you see your life in comparison to the way described in this passage?
2. What emotions do you encounter when you think of a dying-following lifestyle that Jesus is pointing to, especially as it relates to reaching out to the world in the compassion of Christ?
3. What do you think keeps you personally from yielding to Christ in the way He is suggesting?
4. What would God need to do in your heart to enable you to feel prepared and able to respond to the world's pain in the character, wisdom and love of Christ?
5. When you hear opportunities to reach out to your community in the compassion of Christ, what practically can get in the way of making yourself available?
6. If you were to sit down with Jesus at Starbucks over a (beverage of choice...Jesus is buyin') to talk about how you respond to the world's pain, what do you think He might say to you?
7. What would it look like for you to respond to the world's pain in the spirit of dying-following called out in this passage?

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**Conclusion and Decision:** *helping learners integrate the Scriptures into their lives this week*

1. As a result of this week's study, what might be one change in your thinking or lifestyle that God is nudging you toward so as to be able to respond to the world's pain with the character, wisdom and love of Christ?
2. What is one concrete step you take in that direction over the next seven days?