

Be Empathetic
10 Commandments of Love
Romans 12:15

January 29, 2017

1. This week Pastor Jim spoke about the ninth commandment of love, be empathetic. In referencing this week's episode of "The Small Group," he described their behavior as "a failure to engage with others in their sorrow or their celebration." Can you think of a time where you experienced this lack of empathy?
2. Pastor Jim defined the word empathy as "feeling your way through" and compassion as "to feel along with." While we may not always be the best at doing this, we usually can identify someone who is. Take a moment and think of someone you know who fits this description. What about this person makes them empathetic and compassionate?
3. In the sermon, we looked at the character of God as seen in Exodus 33-34. In honoring Moses' request, God reveals as much of who He is as Moses can handle. In doing so, God described Himself as "the compassionate and gracious God." Is this the image we have of God? How do you think a person going through loss or pain might feel about this assertion?
4. Pastor Jim reminded us that in Exodus Moses only saw a veiled view of God, but that in Jesus, in His character we are seeing the "full manifestation of God's compassionate nature." How did we see this in Luke 10:17-21? Take a moment to re-read this section and recall what Pastor Jim taught.
5. Another great example we see of Jesus' empathy is the story of Lazarus in John 11. Take a moment and discuss this story and what it teaches us about God's compassionate nature.
6. Pastor Jim mentioned two reasons why we struggle to be empathetic and compassionate: fear and a culture of observation. They create barriers and hurdles that keep us from engaging with people. But God showed us the way through incarnation. Discuss what this could look like in your family, work place, neighborhood and more. How can we be truly present with people?
7. Pastor Jim closed the message by reminding us that, "the power of incarnation is not that we are currently having the exact same experiences as someone else. It is that life is life and there is always something in our experiences now or in the past that is comparable." Take some time to pray together and ask the Lord to show you who in your life could use a dose of compassion and empathy and for Him to reveal to you the comparable experience, remember the emotions and then join in.