

Compassion
Series: #Struggles

Welcome today to all of our churches. We are in part four of a five-part message series called *#Struggles*. We're talking about, how do we follow Jesus in this self-centered world?

Next week we're going to wrap up this message series, talking about, how do we rediscover rest and solitude? The studies are absolutely stunning, when we see just how addicted we are to technology, and I believe next week's message will be very, very powerful for a lot of you, as the study has been for me.

Today I want to talk about resurrecting compassion. How do social media and technology propel a spirit of compassion, and how might it hinder compassion?

The ways that social media can really help us make a difference in this world – there are so many different ways, when you think about it. We can now raise awareness for different ministries, organizations – all sorts of different things. We can raise money. There can be things that nobody was talking about before that everybody's talking about now. Overnight, something can become very, very popular and known, and then, also, overnight, people can also stop talking about it.

Just some examples ... Many of you will remember, overnight, *Coney* became an obsession of many people. It was all that anybody would talk about. Then, I guess, the producer fell on some personal challenges, and then that whole thing just went away.

Two hundred Nigerian schoolgirls are missing, and it captures the heart of the world. Everybody's talking about it, on social media and other places. Well, as of today, tragically, those girls are still missing, and I don't know anybody still talking about it. It's hot, and then it's not.

The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge ... Oh, my gosh! For three or four weeks, that's all anybody did, was got water dumped on their head, right? Before, nobody was talking about Lou Gehrig's disease. Then, a lot of money was raised, and a lot of people were talking about it. And then, it kind of passed, as quickly as it came. There are so many benefits, but we'll see that things can become very popular, and then they're not.

With all of the benefits that social media can provide, I'm going to show you today that, perhaps, there are also some downsides, as well, when it comes to creating the value of compassion. In fact, the University of Michigan did a comprehensive study on 14,000 college students between the years 1979 and 2009. And what they found was that there was a drastic decline in empathy. In fact, if you're taking notes, the results of this massive study showed that we care 40 percent less about other people than we did in the 1980s – 40 percent.

Now, what's really tragic is, I'm looking into the faces of a lot of people, and it looks like you don't even care that I just said that. I mean, here we have a 40-percent drop in the way we care about other people, and you're going, "Ehh, ehh, ehh, hope this goes fast. I'm kind of hungry today." And that's just kind of where a lot of people sit.

Well, I was interested, how did they determine that number? So, I did a little research in the research, and – just because you might be interested – they had questions like, "Write one to five – one is the least; five is the highest," and you'd rank where you fall.

One statement was, "I sometimes try to understand my friends better by looking at things from their perspective." There was a drastic drop in people who did that. "I often have tender, concerned feelings about people less fortunate than me" – significant drop. Fewer people call themselves "softhearted" than they did years ago, and others' misfortunes just don't bother us as much as they used to. Forty percent drop in how much we care about people, according to this study, since the 1980s ...

This raises the question as to, why are we caring less? And there are a lot of theories, but experts argue that they believe one of the top causes is, the rise in social media actually causes people to care less. And I want to raise a question: Why and how would that happen? And I'll show you three possible ways that social media could cause us to care less.

The first way, if you're taking notes: We have to admit we are more obsessed with ourselves. Right? I mean, just the whole idea – those of you who are younger, and *selfie* has been a part of your vocabulary, and that's just normal ... That's not normal! Turning a camera on yourself is not normal.

Now, I know a lot of you are new to this whole language; you've never even taken a selfie. If you decide to do it, you need to be careful, because there's way more about it than you may even imagine. There are so many different types of selfies. It's not just like the smiling selfie. There are lots of different types. And so, just so you'll understand – I'm trying to educate and bring all of us up to speed – I'm going to show you some of the most popular types of selfies.

You've got to have the “driving in my car” selfie. If you take it – I don't know why it's popular, but it is. There's also the “duckface” selfie, which, for some reason, girls are better at this than guys. That's the best I can do. There's “me and my bestie” selfie, hanging out with a surprised face. There's the “kissing somewhere cool” selfie - #OohLaLaLikeThatGirl. There's the “that's good preaching” selfie, which I actually took last week, while at church. There's the “me with my cute pet” selfie. If you look down, there's my dog licking my face. There's the “hey, we've got great seats, and you don't. You're sitting at home alone and I'm at the game” selfie. There's the “silly” selfie, which is not any good, unless you have the “serious” selfie. There's the “me and my food” selfie, in case you care. This actually was the only hamburger I ate in 2013.

That's why I took a picture before I dove in to that hamburger. And then, for way too long, ladies have owned this final selfie – I'm taking some ground back with some man stuff – is “looking good in this outfit” selfie, complete with a chic phone case, which is not mine - #IBorrowedIt.

That's just the beginning. We didn't even get into the “I just woke up” selfie, and the “here's my new haircut” selfie, and there's a whole bunch of other ones. But you've got to admit, we're massively more obsessed with ourselves.

Studies show – and this is interesting, to me – that 80 percent of what a person does on social media actually relates directly to the user. In other words, if I'm going on social media, I'm going to see what I'm interested in, what you're saying about me, did you like my picture, did you comment on it – about 80 percent of what we do on social media relates directly to us. And when we see something related to us, our brain releases a little chemical called “dopamine,” which gives us a legal buzz – *Ha! I like this!*

And therefore, since we're looking at stuff dealing with us, and dopamine is being released, our bodies are actually training us to be more self-centered. Social media can cause us to care less about other people because, now, our bodies are literally transforming to become more self-centered.

The second reason that it can cause us to care less is that an overwhelming exposure to suffering desensitizes us. The more pain we see, oftentimes, the harder it is to care.

I'll give you an example. Years ago, whenever I'd see a television commercial with the starving kid from Africa, with flies buzzing around his head, it would so disturb me. I felt so much inner turmoil that I would literally change the channel, immediately, because I didn't want to feel the guilt of living in my nice home when that was going on.

Well, I've seen so much of that, that it doesn't bother me anymore, at all. I've seen picture after picture, post after post. I can see the hungry kid, and it doesn't even bother me nearly as much as it used to, because I've been desensitized to it.

Also, experts are saying that because we see everything on a timeline – one post, one post, news story, post, link – we see everything on a timeline, our brain doesn't know how to differentiate which one's more important than the other. So, you may be scrolling through your news feed, and you see a new recipe for guacamole, followed by another football players beats his girlfriend, followed by a funny cat video, followed by an innocent reporter is beheaded in some other part of the world. And literally, our brain doesn't do well distinguishing between, which one's more important – the guacamole, or the beheading? And it's because it's equal on the page, it becomes more equal in our minds. And therefore, we start to care less.

The third way that technology can cause us to care less is, a lack of personal interaction makes it easier not to care. A lack of personal interaction – it makes it easier not to care.

For example, if you lose your job, and you put on Facebook, “I lost my job,” and I see it, you know what I’m going to say? “Oh, so sorry. Praying for you.” And then, I might pray for you, if I remember, or I might forget. Let’s call it what it is, right?

If we’re sitting across from each other, and you say, “I lost my job,” and I see the desperate look in your face, and you explain how you just told your daughters they can’t be in dance anymore, and you’re paying for your mom in a nursing home, and you know you’re not going to be able to make that payment, or your house payment ... Suddenly, I’m moved to a very deep place in my heart, and I care deeply for you, in a way that I would not from a distance. It’s easier to disconnect from a distance, and when we relate so much to others based on what we see through social media, we actually end up caring less.

What’s the challenge? We need to understand that, as followers of Christ, God calls us to so much more. Compassion counts. And what I want to do is give you two main thoughts that will drive us through this study. Then, we’re going to let the Holy Spirit speak to us in a way that, I believe, will make us different in God’s presence.

The first thing, if you're taking notes, is this: We need to understand that true compassion demands action. True compassion demands action. In fact, the Greek word that's translated as *compassion* is the word *splagchnizomai*. I'm going to say that again, because I practiced all week long on it – *splagchnizomai*.

And let me tell you what this word means. It means “to have the bowels yearn.” I've got to be honest with you. I'm not even sure what that means, but it sounds serious, to me. That's just what my Bible dictionary said. I mean, like, your intestines are doing something inside of you, right? There's an aching on the inside for somebody else. It means “to feel deep sympathy.”

The word *splagchnizomai* – don't miss this – it means “to be moved to action.” This is so powerful. It's not just an emotion. Compassion is an action. True compassion demands action.

The next thought, if you're taking notes, is this: To say that you care, but not act, is to not care at all. To say, “Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I care,” but to do nothing about it, is seriously to not care, at all.

What happens? Well, we see something on Instagram, we see something on Facebook – *Well, okay* – *Click! Click! Click!* They're going through a hard time, so I like that.

Which, emotionally, it's hard for me to like something bad, but yet, we do it, because that's how we do it. Right?

Caring is not clicking. Caring is acting. Caring is not clicking on something; it's actually being involved to make a difference. Caring is not liking a post, but it's loving a person. It's being moved from the depths of your soul to get outside of yourself to get involved in the life of someone else.

In fact, it's amazing to me, when you look at the life of Jesus, and every time you see the word *compassion* in the Gospels, as related to Jesus, it's always represented by a corresponding action – every single time. Any time, in the Gospels, when you see “Jesus was moved with compassion,” every time, you see an action, because He felt something, therefore, He did something. Let me give you a few examples.

Mark's Gospel chapter 1, verses 40 and 41: “A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. ‘If [You're] willing, [Jesus,] You can heal me and make me clean.’” Jesus was moved with – what? All of churches help me out. He was moved with – what? He was moved with compassion, *splagchnizomai*. Therefore, He acted. “Jesus reached out and” – what? – “[He] touched [the man]. ‘I am willing,’ He said. ‘Be healed!’”

Verse 14 of Matthew 14: When Jesus landed, and saw such a large crowd, what did He have? He had compassion, *splagchnizomai*, on them. So, what did He do? He healed the sick. He didn't say, "Be praying for y'all ... Hope you do okay." He felt for them, and, therefore, He was moved to action.

Matthew 20, verse 34, when some blind guys were crying out to Jesus, what did He have, church? Say it aloud. Jesus had compassion on them. So, what did He do? He touched their eyes, and, immediately they received sight, and they followed Him. Jesus felt compassion. Therefore, He acted.

True compassion demands action. To say you care, but not act, is to not care at all, and it is tragic to live in a society that would care 40 percent less about people. Tragic ... And it's going to be unacceptable, I believe, in God's church, to sit by and not act, when people are in need.

Here's the bottom line, for me. I'll just be real honest with you. The more I obsess over social media – "Did you like my picture? Did you like my duckface selfie?" – the more I obsess over social media, the more I care about me, and the less I care about other people. But the more I obsess about Jesus – want to know Him, serve Him, get close to Him – the less I care about me. Suddenly I'm going to deny myself, take up my cross. In other words, I'm literally dying to myself, and I'm following Him. The more I get close to Jesus, the less I care about myself, and strangely, the more I care about other people.

So, I want you to think about this, just really think about it. When is the last time you've given a whole day, or maybe even a weekend, to serve somebody else? When is the last time you've gone significantly out of your way to give financially – not just what you're expected to do, but something like you felt it, you felt it – to make a difference in someone else's life? When is the last time you didn't do something you really wanted to do, because you went and invested that time in someone else?

A lot of you would say you've done that recently, and praise God for it, but a lot of you ... Maybe you can't remember the last time you did. If that's the case, that might tell you, you're not that close to Jesus. Because when you're really close to Jesus, life's not about us. It's all about glorifying Him, and loving others. Compassion demands action.

So, what I want to do, in the rest of our time together, I just want to bring some application to it – what are we going to do about this? And let me just give you three thoughts. I'll tell some stories, then we're going to pray, and let God do what He does in our hearts. What does compassion do?

The first thing I want you to notice is that compassion interrupts. Compassion interrupts. When you look at Jesus, you're going to see, time and again, when He was interrupted by needs. Let me give you three different examples. I'll give you the text, if you want to read it.

Mark chapter 6 – Jesus and the disciples had been working their tails off doing ministry. They were exhausted, fried. In fact, the Gospel says that they hadn't even been able to eat because they'd been so busy. So, Jesus says, "Let's go take a break. Let's go rest." That was Jesus' idea. I don't know if you've ever been like this, but you're just, like, so spent that you're like, *I just need some "me" time. Somebody take these kids before I give them away. I need to read a book, or I need to just veg. I need to take a nap* – whatever it is. That's where Jesus was.

Then, suddenly, this big crowd comes up, and Scripture says He was moved with compassion, and when He wanted more than – they hadn't even eaten, and He wanted to rest. He got up, and He taught them. Because that's what you do when you're moved with compassion. You do something. You act. Jesus was interrupted in His "me" time and said, "I'm going to go and serve them."

Luke chapter 8 – He was on His way to heal a dying girl. That's pretty important. And another woman comes up: "I'm sick! I'm sick! I've had this thing for 12 years." On His way to do what God wanted Him to do, He stopped to see God wanted Him to do something else! And He healed the woman first, and then went on to heal the little girl.

Perhaps one of the craziest stories, in Mark chapter 2: Jesus is teaching to this – it's record attendance day. The house is so full it's overflowing. These four crazy men are trying to get their paralyzed friend into the house, but they can't because of the crowd.

So, they get up on the roof. Jesus is teaching, and, suddenly, they're digging through the roof, and roof droppings are falling on the head of Jesus.

What does He do? If I'm teaching, and someone tries to get through this roof, I'm calling security to deal with it right now. I've worked hard on this message. Do not interrupt me. Right? What does Jesus do? Jesus stops what He's doing – teaching the crowd – listens to this guy, forgives his sin, and then actually heals him. He was interrupted. I'm going to argue, all day long, that God often works through divine interruptions, and we often miss those because we're too busy doing our own thing.

One of the most powerful stories I've ever been a part of – I've told this before, but I want to tell it again. I was on a connecting flight home that had been delayed, after teaching all day in another city, and I was like Jesus in that exhausted time. I'm just like, "Nobody talk to me. I just want to get home to my family." And, sure enough, a lady came up to me and said, "Oh, Pastor, you're my pastor," and was real excited. And so, I – you know, like, "Ohhh" – trying to be nice, and it was like, "Great to see you. Do you mind if I read?" And I gently moved that on because I was so tired.

And the moment I did, man, I'm telling you, I felt like God was moving on me, "Don't you be selfish. There was more I wanted to do through that. Go talk to her." And so, I was like, "All right."

I got up, and I went over. I said, “Man, I’m so sorry. I felt like you wanted to say more, and I want to talk to you.”

And then, she just burst into tears, and it was highly emotional. She said the night before, she was on a business trip. She normally didn’t drink alcohol, and she did, and she drank way too much. And then, she just blurted it out. She said, “I had an affair on my husband last night, and I’m devastated.” I was like, “Okay. Now, God, I see why You wanted me to be here.”

And so, I called a counselor that I know, and put her on the phone to this lady, and we set up a counseling appointment. And I talked to her, probably, the next 30 minutes, and prayed for her, and said, “Okay, you need to confess this to your husband.” So, we set up a time – 10:00 on Saturday, when he gets back from his trip – 10:00 a.m., she’s going to tell him. I’m going to pray for her, then we’ll follow up next week.

Well, Saturday morning rolls around. My daughter had a dance thing, an unusual thing in a different part of town, so I took her to it, dropped her off. Ten a.m. comes around, so I pray for this family. And then, I’m driving around going, *I’ve got two hours to kill. What am I going to do?* I’m driving around, like, “God, what should I do?” And suddenly, I think, *I need to go to Walmart.*

Now, you need to understand, I hate Walmart! I would rather go to a pet store and look at kittens than go to Walmart. And I don't know what – So, I just feel like I'm supposed to go to Walmart. So, I drive up – I've got nothing to get – and I walk into Walmart. I'm like, *What am I doing in Walmart?*

And this guy looks up at me, and he goes, “Oh, my gosh, you're my pastor!” Like, “Oh, great! You're in the meat section. Nice to meet you.” And the next thing he does is, he starts crying, puts his whole weight on my body, and he says, “Thursday night, you were in Kansas City, in an airport, and my wife was there, and she confessed to you what she did.” I was like, *Oh, wow ...* And he said, “She just told me, and I didn't know what to do, so I came to Walmart.” Hundred-percent true story ...

I'm sitting there, I said, “You know what? How much do you think God cares about you, that He delayed my flight to be stuck in the city where your wife was, to hear her confession, and then to send me here, as your pastor, on this day, to talk to you? God must want to do something pretty special. I know it's going to be hard, but I believe, with all my heart, He's going to heal your marriage.”

And with a lot of counseling, and a lot of tears, and a lot of forgiveness, He totally and completely healed the marriage. And I thank God that I was sensitive enough, in that one moment, to let Him interrupt me. And I cannot tell you how many times I must have missed those divine opportunities because of my selfishness. I wanted to do what I

wanted to do, rather than being open to the interruptions from the Holy Spirit to do something else.

I don't know what it'll be for you, but God may move you to pick up the phone and call somebody. Or you're driving along, and there's someone with a flat tire, and you fantasize about being in the Indy 500, changing tires, like, *Okay, this one's mine*. And you pull over, and you help somebody. Or someone's got a need, and you can meet it, and you're like, *I was planning on doing this, but oh, I'm going to meet this*. Or you listen to the annoying person in your life, "Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah" – because every life group has one of those people. It's a principle. You may argue back and say, "Mine doesn't" - #ItMightBeYou. They all have one.

And you let the Holy Spirit interrupt you, because God often works through divine interruptions. To say you care, but not act, is to not care at all. Compassion interrupts.

The second thing, if you're taking notes, is, compassion costs. Compassion costs. Jesus told a compelling story about the Good Samaritan guy, who goes and helps a Jewish guy, and he goes way out of his way to help someone that would have actually hated him. And he bandages this guy up, and he picks up a bloody guy, and he puts him on his donkey. And he goes and he pays two days of his own earnings to a hotel owner so the guy can stay there. I mean, who would take two days of what they make to pay for a total stranger? It costs us.

But too often, in our culture, we want to do drive-by compassion. We want to do what's easy for us; it's not inconvenient. "Oh, I'll click. I'll retweet. I'll like this. I favorited it. I shared the link." And this is so easy. But true compassion generally costs us something.

In fact, Amy and I were at the grocery store, and there was this husband and wife, and another lady that just looked like they had had a hard life, and it was odd. I'm not a real touchy-feely person, but I was moved with compassion. My intestines were doing that thing. And I was like, *I need to help them*. And I thought, *I want to buy their groceries*, which is odd. I don't usually think that.

And then, as soon as I thought that, I was trying to talk myself out of it, going, *I'm not going to buy their – that's weird. That must be Satan tempting me to be like Jesus again*. I'm arguing with myself about doing something good. *I'm not going to do something good. Why would I do something good?*

So, I start doing these things with God, like, "Okay, if they come down the next aisle at the same time as me, then I'll buy their groceries," and they did. I was like, "Just to be sure, God, on the next aisle, if they pick up Honey Nut Cheerios with low sodium from the third row, I'll buy."

Anyway, all this kind of stuff happens, and so I went up and said, “I know this is weird, but don’t be offended. Can I buy your groceries?” And this lady looks up, and she goes, “Oh, my gosh! Before I went to prison, I used to go to your church.” And then, she explains how she just got out of prison that day, and she had no place to stay.

And my mind was like *Ding! Ding! Ding!* Amy started a home for women coming out of abusive situations, and so ... “You don’t have a place to stay?” And, “I thought I was going to buy your groceries, but, instead, we’re going to get you a place to stay. And it’s going to be so easy, and so cool, and I can tell this story one day.”

But guess what? It didn’t work out that way. It didn’t. We have rules that are there for a reason. If I told you the rules, you’d see why they’re there, and because of it, she wasn’t qualified to be in the home, based on her situation. And so, we had to refer her to another organization, and then we had to bring more people in to try to help her help herself so she can qualify, because we want to desperately to get her in her home.

And what I thought was going to be an easy “here’s some money” has actually become weeks of multiple people working with this lady. And this is the beauty of compassion, is that it actually costs something. It’s not clean. There’s no happy ending yet. The story’s still going.

And that's the thing. Clicking is clean; compassion is messy. And there's beauty in that, when you get outside of yourself, and you follow where God leads you. And you think it's one thing, then you think it's something else, and it may lead into a whole 'nother chapter that you never, ever saw coming.

So, some of you, you'll be moved to compassion like this, and you're going to do something, and it's not going to be clean. You're going to mentor an inner-city kid, and it'll be complicated. You're going to serve at Switch, and your heart's going to be captured by some 15-year-old who's cutting, and it's complicated. You're going to foster, and you're going to fall in love with a kid, and you're going to give that kid back. And you're going to serve some purpose, but it's going to be difficult. But that's what compassion does. It costs. It interrupts.

It costs, and then it changes lives. Compassion changes lives. Everywhere Jesus went, when He was moved with compassion, He changed lives.

In fact, a week ago Sunday, my mom came over with her husband, Jack. We call him "Grandpa Jack." And I had a bunch of brush to burn at my house – where we live, it's legal – and so, I was out there burning. And Grandpa Jack, at the age of 84, was helping me. And for about two hours, man, we're like pyromaniacs, having a blast. And he was telling story after story after story, and we were having this great bonding time.

And Grandpa Jack, all of a sudden – I don't know how it came up – started telling me about Freddy, this 12-year-old kid, years ago, that, through Scouts, when he was 12 – Freddy didn't have a dad, and Jack said, “Well, I figured I could take him fishing. So, I took him fishing. And we did stuff together. And I didn't think much of it, until, one day, Freddy put his head up against my shoulder and started crying, and said, ‘You know, I never had a dad, but now you're kind of like a dad to me.’”

I was sitting there, stunned, because here we're having guy time, and the next thing I know, it's emotional, and I wasn't expecting this. And I was watching this 84-year-old guy, who's lived a really good life. I said, “Grandpa Jack, when did that happen?” He said, “Oh, it had to be at least 50 years ago, or so.”

And I realized, 50 years ago, God changed not one life, but two lives. God touched a little 12-year-old boy named Freddy, and God changed the life of a man named Grandpa Jack. Because when you get outside of yourself, God does change lives, and, often, the one He changes the most is yours.

Compassion: to ache from the inside for somebody else. And yet, in our society, we care even less. That is unacceptable in the Church that represents the Lord Jesus Christ, and, therefore we will care, and because we care, we will act.

Father, I thank You that Your Spirit is speaking to people today, and I thank You, in advance, for all the lives that will be impacted when we are moved with compassion, like Jesus, into action for Your glory, and to serve other people.

All of our churches today, you may even look around and say, “Yeah, I totally can see, people are more self-centered. As a society, we definitely care less about others. But that won’t be me, and that won’t be us.” Today, I would just ask you, if you want to give the Spirit permission to speak to you and say, “Yes, make me more compassionate, God. I give You permission. Interrupt me. If it costs me, that’s even more beautiful, because, God, I want You to use me to care for others, to show Your love, and to change lives” – if you’re open to what God would do to make you even more compassionate, like His Son, Jesus, all of our churches, would you just lift your hands right now? I hope that’s everybody who would say this.

Father, I thank You so much that Your Holy Spirit is going to say what I’m incapable of saying, and do what I could never do, but, God, You would stir a divine compassion in the hearts of Your Church. God, I pray that as Jesus dwells within believers, that we would have His heart for others – *splagchnizomai*.

God, I thank You that people at Church Online today would be moved to do something, even before the sun goes down where they live. God, I thank You, in advance, that there are people in buildings all across our country, and even beyond, in

church, that will not get out of the building they're in without reaching out to somebody – to meet a need, to pray for someone, to show compassion. God, I thank You that ministries will be born, and people will serve and partner with those that we believe in, to serve our communities, and that our communities, God, would be different because Your Church cares.

God, create in us a hunger to know You more. And when we do, God, we thank You that we will die to ourselves, and serve You by serving others. Make us compassionate, oh God.

As you keep praying today, at all of our different churches, as we're talking about God and such, some of you, right now, you're going to recognize that you may believe in God, you may not. You're certainly not walking with God. He's not leading you every single day. But there may be something right now that's drawing you toward Him.

Let me tell you about God. He is just, and He is righteous. But that's not what draws people. His kindness is what leads people to repentance. His compassions, they never, ever fail.

And right now, some of you, you're sensing that God is real, that He loves you. What I want you to understand is, He loves you, not just because that's something He does, but that's because that's who He is. Love is not just what He does. God is love. Love is

who He is. And there's nothing you can do to make Him love you more, and nothing you can do to cause Him to love you less, because He is love. And because He is love, He became one of us, in the Person of Jesus, who was without sin, gave His life on the cross, rose again, so that anyone who turns to Him and calls on His name would be saved, forgiven, and transformed.

And that's why many of you are here today, and you know it; you can sense it. His kindness is drawing you to repentance, and today is your day to call on Him and say, "Yes, I turn my life over to You. Yes, I turn from my sins. Yes, I surrender to Jesus. By faith, I give my life to Him." At all of our churches, those of you who say, "Yes, that's me. He's drawing me to Him, and today I surrender to Him," right now, lift your hands high and say, "Yes, that's my prayer."

All around the church – right over here – saying "yes." Lift your hands and say, "I surrender" – right back over here – "to the Lordship of Jesus Christ." One, two, three of you guys, right over here ... Right over here, as well – God bless you guys. Right here, in this section, say, "Yes, I surrender. I trust Christ." Others of you today, "I need His grace. I sense His love. I give my life to Him." Lift your hands and say, "Yes, I surrender to Christ." Right over here, ma'am – God bless you, as well. Praise God for you.

Pray today with those around you. Pray, “Heavenly Father, today I surrender my life to You. I believe Jesus died for me, and He rose again so I could live for You. Fill me with Your Spirit that I could know You. Forgive me of my sins that I could serve You. Thank You for Your grace, for Your love, for new life. Today I give You my life. In Jesus’ name I pray.”

Would you all worship really, really big right now? Thank the God of compassion who has grace on us through His Son, Jesus Christ.