**Compassion and Commitment Discussion Questions**

Sharing experiences of suffering or joy can make even strangers feel more bonded together.

Think about some peak moments in your week, positive or negative, that you experienced. Who do you naturally go to share these moments with?

1. Speak about a time when someone was able to sense your feeling or you were able to sense someone else’s feeling (whether good or bad) and were able to empathize with you and enter into that experience with you. For example, someone sensed that something isn’t going well at work, so they empathized with your pain, and provided support beyond their momentary feeling of empathy for you.
2. If you don’t regularly share these feelings, why not? What keeps you from telling someone about your experiences and how you feel about them?

Being understood in relationships comes from sharing these experiences of suffering and joy.  What elements are important that allow you to share your suffering and joy with others?

What keeps us from showing compassion, and being attune to what others may be experiencing?

**Commitment is the foundation of intimacy, because without commitment there can be no trust, and without trust, there can be no intimacy.**

When we trust someone and commit to being that person’s friend, spouse, or business partner we create a space to share in more- and deeper- experiences. Those commitments also reflect our relationship with God. We are made in the image of a vowing, faithful, covenant–making God, Who has created us for connection and Who promises not to disconnect from us.

Read Luke 9:23-25. What do you think these verses mean? What kind of commitment do you have to Christ now? Are you devoted to Christ or distantly connected to the Lord?

Consider any relationships that you have a promise or commitment to. Would you describe that relationship as covenantal?

A covenant is a promise to remain committed even when times are tough. Throughout the Bible many relationships and friendships made covenants to remain committed.

What barriers get in the way of you becoming committed to a covenental friendship?

**Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4**

Jonathan and David remained committed to one another in very difficult circumstances, at great sacrifice, even until death.

 We describe our relationship with God and His relationship with us as covenantal. We also see marriages in the same way. Do you see any other relationships that are covenantal in your life? Ones that you have a promise to remain committed to one another in a sense of loyalty?

Is it possible that because we don’t have covenantal relationships outside of our marriages or family members, that we become over-reliant on one individual to be everything for us?

What are some friendships that you would like to develop into a covenantal relationships? What would it take to transform it into this commitment?

Spend some time in prayer asking God to reveal to you who should build covenantal friendships with. Ask God to open your eyes to become attuned to the feelings of those who desire to be in intimacy. Ask the Lord to heal our hurts and restore intimacy, commitments, and trust in our relationships.