

# HELPING THE HURTING WITH HOPE

## LESSON 3: Do You Know What I'm Like?

### OPENING PRAYER

### INTRODUCTION

How well do you know the hurting? Sometimes we think we can know the hurting by their clothing, their haircut, their tattoos, or the way they talk. But could these stereotypes and assumptions actually lead us down a path of not really knowing much about the hurting who need help? In the last lesson we saw who the hurting were. Today we'll see what they are like. God helps us to see this in his Word.

### SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1.) In Romans Chapter 3, the Apostle Paul quotes the Psalms and Isaiah to help us understand what the hurting are really like. What is true about all people by nature? What does this mean about how we perceive each other on the outside?

**Romans 3:9** What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.

2.) Give some examples from Scripture of individuals that appeared hurting and irredeemable on the outside, yet were dearly loved by the Lord.

3.) Continue reading Romans 3. What do you think are the most vivid and memorable descriptors? How does this description reframe our expectations?

**Romans 3:10-18** As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. <sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." <sup>13</sup> "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." <sup>14</sup> "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." <sup>15</sup> "Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace they do not know." <sup>18</sup> "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

4.) Let's see how God interacts with the hurting. Based on three paragraphs of **Psalm 107**, let's fill out the chart below, noting what the hurting are like.

- 4 Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.  
 5 They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.  
 6 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.  
 7 He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.  
 8 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,  
 9 for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.
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- 10 Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains,  
 11 for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High.  
 12 So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.  
 13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.  
 14 He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains.  
 15 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,  
 16 for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.
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- 17 Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities.  
 18 They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death.  
 19 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.  
 20 He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.  
 21 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.  
 22 Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.

	What happened that someone needed help?	What did God do for them?	What are they like afterwards?
v. 4-9			
v. 10-16			
v. 17-21			

5.) What truths can we draw about what the hurting are like from Psalm 107?

6.) Complete this sentence based on the following Scriptures: "When it comes to the hurting, God is a God who \_\_\_\_\_."

**Luke 18:6-8a** And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. <sup>7</sup> And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? <sup>8</sup> I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly."

**Luke 18:13-14a** "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' <sup>14</sup> I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God."

**Psalm 68:5-6a** A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. <sup>6</sup> God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing.

7.) Jesus is the perfect Shepherd, who knows every one of his sheep. What do the following passages tell us that Jesus knows about his sheep? How will this help our congregation?

- What Jesus knows about his sheep:
  
- How this will help our congregation:

**Matthew 9:36-37** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

**John 10: 3, 11, 14-16** <sup>3</sup> ...the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ...<sup>14</sup> "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—<sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

## **BRINGING IT HOME**

8.) What are some practical ways that we can find out what the hurting are like and how we can help them?

9.) What can we as a congregation do help keep and improve our awareness of the hurting? What challenges might we face?

## **LIVING MY FAITH**

No one wants to feel that they are forgotten or unknown. You learn about people by asking them questions about themselves.

- Practice getting to know others and see them as Jesus' sheep. Pick out someone this week at church whom you have not really talked with much. Ask them questions about themselves to get comfortable getting to know what someone is like.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**