

**"COMPASSIONATE HEARTS!" - MARCH 31, 2019**  
**THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**  
**JOSHUA 5:9-12; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:16-21; LUKE 15:1-3, 11B-32**  
**Promises for your pocket or purse - Take notes and carry them with you.**

**How would you define `compassion'? When was the last time, you felt, the true compassion of another? When have you longed to feel the compassion of another, only to be left feeling empty? In your spiritual walk, are you able to trust The One who keeps his heart on you, fills you with compassion, and is driven by grace to have you feel the compassion of his heart alone? Today, as we share the parable commonly referred to as the prodigal son, we see the truth and joy and hope of the loving Father, we feel the compassion of our Father's heart! The Father proclaims for us, too, grace is real, really here for all of us; compassion is ours through God's love for us in Christ alone! In our loving Father, we are blessed to live each and every day, refreshed and renewed, alive and found, in our Father's compassion, in our Father's amazing grace!**

1. Our Father's heart is compassionate, seeing us from a distance, running to us, taking us in his arms, welcoming us home. Luke 15:11b-32
  - A. Our Father's heart is compassionate, seeing us, even from a distance. Joshua 5:9-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18
    - i. A good parent keeps his or her eye on their children.
    - ii. Our heavenly Father never takes his eyes off of us; he forever keeps his heart on us!
      - a. Yes, he sees it all.
      - b. In compassion and grace, he sees it all and is here for us, keeping his heart on us!
  - B. Our Father's heart is compassionate, even when we are wrong. Joshua 5:11-12
    - i. Easy to often jump right to discipline.
    - ii. Our heavenly Father starts with compassion, loving and caring for us first.

- C. Our Father's heart is compassionate; he runs to us. 2 Corinthians 5:16-17
    - i. Our heavenly Father does not hesitate to come to us.
    - ii. Our heavenly Father does not wait for us to come to him.
  
  - D. Our Father's heart is compassionate; he takes us in his arms. 2 Corinthians 5:18
    - i. For some, letting someone hold them may take some getting use to and some trust.
    - ii. Our heavenly Father takes in his arms what matters most.
  
  - E. Our Father's heart is compassionate; he welcomes us home. Joshua 5:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:20
    - i. To know you are not welcome is painful. To know you can come in but you do not belong is an empty feeling.
    - ii. No matter how long you have been gone, or how new you are; to feel the gracious, authentic, word of 'welcome' is fulfilling.
    - iii. Our heavenly Father celebrates and rejoices every time we see The Spirit reveal there is no place like home.
2. As our Lenten journey continues, let us trust The One who keeps his heart on us, even from a distance, sees us, has compassion on us, runs to us, takes us in his arms, welcomes us and saves us! Thanks to the compassionate heart of our Father, we were lost and now are found, in the amazing grace of Christ alone! Luke 15:32