

WORSHIP @ HOME



WHAT DOES YOUR SPRING WARDROBE LOOK LIKE?



Preparing for worship:

Christian meditation music <http://www.viewpure.com/g51ExyTuZbM?start=0&end=0>

Take a few moments to be still.

The Greeting:

ALL: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN'. Our tradition is to cross ourselves as this is said.

Opening prayer and lighting the candle:

O God, as light comes from this candle,
May the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,
Warming our hearts and brightening our way.
May Christ our Saviour
Bring life into the darkness of this world,
Amen.

Bible Reading:

A reading from Colossians chapter 3 verses 12-14

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

A message:



Have you ever noticed that some people are more naturally compassionate than others? Maybe it is their personality or upbringing. Nevertheless, every believer is told to "put on a heart of compassion" (Colossians 3:12). When empathy does not come naturally, some Christians may wonder if something is wrong with them. So, what can we do to develop a greater sense of caring?

While emotions cannot be manufactured on demand, we can change our thoughts, which in turn affect our emotions. Compassion, like all the other qualities listed in the passage, is possible only when we think of others before ourselves. Self-centeredness keeps us from seeing the needs and hurts of those around us and acting on their behalf. What we need is a renewed mind. We are all born with a selfish, sinful nature, referred to as the "old self." But when a person puts his trust in Jesus, he receives a "new self" created in righteousness by God (Ephesians 4:22-24). As our minds are renewed with His Word and we grow in obedience, Christ's love and compassion begin to flow through us. Instead of our being oblivious to the pain and suffering around us, God will open our eyes and use us to comfort those in need.

A heart of compassion is achieved not through self-effort, but through a God-focused life. As we draw near to Him through His Word and His Son, He transforms our focus,

thoughts and feelings. What a relief to know that God has provided everything we need to follow Jesus' example of caring. He always equips us to obey His every command. Compassion is what we would call a "heart of pity." It is a sense of sympathy, of empathy with someone. It is an approach to life and way of living.

At this time, compassion is acknowledging that we are not alone, we may all have fears, anxiety about our health, education, jobs and income as well as sadness. We must accept these emotions and work with them together, rather than push them away or deny them. This helps us manage when times are difficult and stay strong. It helps to hold in our mind the wonderful things people are doing for the benefit of the community and how, if we keep this alive after this crisis, it will change the world we live in.



Compassion does not just strengthen relationships and communities or reducing inequalities; it stretches much further than this into the way we interact with God's world. There have been many reports about the beneficial impacts on lockdown on the natural world; how quickly it can adapt and thrive in our absence. The environmental changes were first visible from space, then sensed in the sky above our heads, the air in our lungs, the ground beneath our feet and even the liberated wildlife taking back towns and cities! Faith and compassion brings healing, not only to people, but to all living things.

Again, if we keep this increased awareness of our environment alive after this crisis, it will change the world we live in! Perhaps we can accelerate the transition to a cleaner world, focus on conservation and maintain biodiversity? In all that we do, let us approach life with compassion.

A time for reflection:

What could our new future look like?

Reflect on the meaning of the word compassion. It is more than kindness. It is wanting to halt suffering. It is what motivates people to engage with distress and suffering and find ways to alleviate it and prevent it. What would it look like if we all worked together to solve the problems of the world? This would take courage and wisdom.

Listen to this song: <http://www.viewpure.com/cV9pGpl1MDo?start=0&end=0>

We can't change the world for the better or perhaps we can together?

How will you dress up in compassion?

- Check up on friends. Not everyone reaches out when they need help.
- Volunteer doing anything that helps.
- Be encouraging. When you are encouraging, you are able to push others to do their best and succeed.
- Feed the birds
- Make a bug house or a butterfly feeder
- Plan to do something wild every day in June! Sign up ready for the Wildlife Trust annual nature challenge. There are 30 simple Random Acts of Wildness! (<https://action.wildlifetrusts.org/page/57739/petition/1>)
- Share local and garden wildlife sightings via our social media #everydaywildlife
- Use both sides of the paper
- Reduce, reuse and recycle
- Finally, be compassionate with yourself. Take time to pray and meditate. Enjoy walking or simply relax in the garden (or near an open window) and listen to the birds calling!

Closing prayer:

God of compassion,

be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.

In their loneliness, be their consolation;

in their anxiety, be their hope;

in their darkness, be their light;

through him who suffered alone on the cross,

but reigns with you in glory,

Jesus Christ our Lord (words from the Church of England website)

God of compassion,

Open our eyes to the suffering of the natural world.

May polluted air, be clean and blue;

may poisoned waters, flow fresh and clear;

may threatened habitats, be restored;

through the signs nature is sending.

Help us learn to protect all life

and prepare for a better future.

May we put on your clothes of compassion,

so that all may feel your healing touch.

ALL: Amen.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of
the Holy Spirit be with us, now and evermore. Amen.**