

12

WEEKLY

Devotions

for

**FAMILIES CALLED
TO SERVE**

Karen Whiting



52
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Compassion

Family Beatitude: Happy is the family who has compassion, for they will develop kind hearts.

Focus: Showing concern for other people

Weekly Bible Verse: *You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient.* Colossians 3:12

Activity Options

- Practice first aid of cleaning a wound and dressing it with a bandage. Try it on a doll and then a family member. Be gentle.
- Make a get-well card or sympathy card for someone who is ill or who has lost a loved one. Add words expressing compassion and hope for healing.
- Bake bread or cookies for a hurting family and give them to the family with a few kind words.
- Every evening, ask each person in your family how they feel, how their day went, or if something had hurt their feelings lately. Really listen and show compassion for their hurts.





Tragic News 2 minutes

Marie woke during the night to voices downstairs. She sat up and listened, Marie's grandfather and dad spoke quietly. Her grandfather, a fire chief, said, "We couldn't get there in time. I drove as fast as I could." She knew her grandfather felt sorry whenever the firefighters lost a life.

She had heard the sirens blare and trucks whiz pass the house earlier. Marie overheard her grandfather describe how a man died when his car flipped over and went up in flames. Then he said the name of the man. She froze. It was the name of her best friend's father.

Marie cried quietly as she continued listening. The police were on the way to the home to tell the family. She started praying for her best friend, her friend's sister, and their mother.

The next day, Marie helped her grandmother bake bread for her friend's family. Her friend missed several days of school, but when she came back, Marie hugged her and listened to her talk about her dad.

Marie prayed every day for her grandfather and other people who worked to save lives. She knew they cared others and that's why he chose to fight fires even though it sometimes put him in danger.

Bible Story Connection 3–4 minutes

Read Mark 8:1–9 about a time Jesus felt compassion for hungry people. Discuss how it feels to be hungry and how we can help hungry people.



Chat Prompts

- *A Samaritan came to the place where the man was. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. Luke 10:33*

This man, called the Good Samaritan helped a man who had been robbed and beaten. He did even more than help the man. He took him to a hotel and paid the owner to continue to care for the man. The injured man belonged to a group of people who didn't like Samaritans, but the Good Samaritan felt sorry for him and responded with compassion anyway.

Discuss noticing when someone looks hurt or needs help. Why should you help even if the person hurt was mean or didn't like you?

- *A father is tender and kind to his children. In the same way, the LORD is tender and kind to those who have respect for him. Psalm 103:13*

Talk about hugs. How do they make you feel? How does it feel to have mom or dad kiss you and hug you when you feel hurt? Hugs are one way to show you care.

Chat about God's love and how he cares when anyone is hurting.

- *Here is what the LORD who rules over all said to his people. "Treat everyone with justice. Show mercy and tender concern to one another." Zechariah 7:9*

What does it mean to have tender concern? Discuss ways to show concern. Talk about how you can think of other people's needs and not just your own. Make faces and guess what they might show (joy, anger, hurt, sadness, victory).

MORE TIME?

Scrapbook/Prayer Journal Options

Add art as reminders of compassion to your scrapbook.

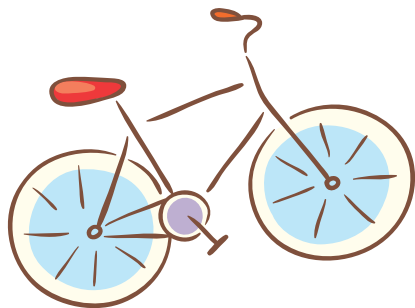
- Add tears with words that express compassion.
- Draw a bandage and write words of love on it.
- Draw hearts and write ways to show compassion on the hearts.

Frontline Tips

- Be ready to give big hugs to a family member who serves where there is danger (fire fighters, police, military, disaster relief workers).
- Listen if they want to talk. Understand that sometimes they don't want to talk about seeing people who got hurt or even died.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for showing compassion to us. Help us to notice when someone is hurting and to reach out with kindness. In Jesus' name, amen.



Wrap-Up

Discuss what *compassion* means and ways you can show compassion to those who are hurting.

Family Mission Statement

Week **4**

Family Beatitude: Happy is the family who knows their purpose, for they will be united.

Focus: Writing a family mission statement to have a unified purpose

Weekly Bible Verse: *Choose for yourselves right now whom you will serve. . . . But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.* Joshua 24:15

Activity Options

- Write a mission statement as a family. It can be a verse that you expand or words you choose. Write it on a poster board or notecard and hang it up or stick it on the refrigerator.
- Make a list of what your family can do to serve others together: pick up litter after church, watch children of a military family during a deployment, take a prayer walk around your block, etc. Choose from your list on a regular basis.
- Plan a family meeting. Keep it simple. Start with prayer. Ask each member to praise something done as a family. List a need or change to make. Ask each person how the family can help them. Make plans for a family outing. End with a prayer and snack.
- Make a family acrostic sign. Write a word for each letter of your family's last name that is a good quality or action to take. Frame it and hang it or make it into a sign for the door.



Daniel's Friends 2 minutes

"Come on Daniel. Let's take Jimmy and Chris for a walk." Rebecca volunteered.

"I'll read them a story when you get back." Michael said.

For several months after their mother's death, Rebecca's mom picked up the two preschool boys weekly. It gave their dad a day to focus on his business or shop for groceries. Rebecca and her whole family helped. It fit their family mission statement.

Rebecca's family had a family meeting every month to discuss how they lived their faith. One time they decided to make a family mission statement. They wrote, "We will notice when people in our church or neighborhood need help and do what we can to serve them."

When the mother of Daniel's best friend died, they helped. At first, they cooked food and brought it to them. Rebecca offered to babysit for free. She came home and said, "I think Mr. Jim needs more help than my watching the boys once in a while."

Daniel said, "I want to help, too. They could come here and play with me."

That sparked the idea to pick them up weekly for the afternoon and evening. So they've been doing that ever since.



Bible Story Connection 3–4 minutes

Read 2 Samuel 9 about David wanting to help a son of his friend Jonathan who had died.

Chat Prompts

- *Then the family groups of Judah will say in their hearts, “The people of Jerusalem are strong. That’s because the LORD who rules over all is their God.” Zechariah 12:5*

These words speak about the people of Israel. The strength comes from being with God. Chat about how your family is stronger with God, too.

- *From the Father every family in heaven and on earth gets its name. Ephesians 3:15*

Chat about your family name and its origins, if known. Chat about why it’s great that God put each person in your family.

- *I will make you into a great nation. And I will bless you. I will make your name great. You will be a blessing to others. Genesis 12:2*

God gave Abraham and his family a simple purpose. He wanted them to bless others. Chat about how you can bless people and how ancestors also blessed people.

- *If any of these things has happened to you, then agree with one another. Have the same love. Be one in spirit and in the way you think and act. By doing this, you will make my joy complete. Philippians 2:2*

The verse before this one talked about encouragement and fellowship. It’s good to agree with one another and have some common goals. Chat about unity in your home. How do you create harmony?

MORE TIME?

Scrapbook/Prayer Journal Options

Add art to reflect your family's mission statement.

- Add a house and write words in it that help unite your family.
- Write the mission statement on a heart with a cross on top.
- Draw hands with hearts on them as a sign of helping others. Add text to describe or a picture to represent something your family did to help someone.

Frontline Tips

- Show appreciation for members who serve others.
- Make a thank-you card—and a hero sandwich!—for someone you know who serves others.

Prayer

Father, we thank you for our family.
Help us to follow and serve you
together. In Jesus' name, amen.



Wrap-Up

Celebrate your family. Take a new family photo or selfie. Chat about service you did together.