

SEPTEMBER 11

Moved with Compassion

*As a father has compassion on his children,
so God has compassion on me.*

How is compassion portrayed in Scripture? Let's look at an incident from the first chapter of Mark.

Now a leper came to Him [Jesus], imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean." Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed.
(Mark 1:40–42)

It says that Jesus was "*moved with compassion.*" This response refers to the bowels—compassion is a gut feeling. The King James Version refers to the "*bowels of compassion*" (1 John 3:17). The "bowels of compassion" are where our deepest feelings lie—not in the physical heart, but in the gut. This is where it all begins. This is the source of everything.

When my first wife, Lydia, was writing her autobiography, she used the phrase, "My bowels were moved." The editors of the book had to explain that this was not the right way to express that feeling in English. But in every other language I know—Latin, Greek, Hebrew—the deepest, innermost part of you is not referred to as the heart but the bowels. Whether it is love, fear, hatred, or another emotion, its place of origin is the bowels, which are at your very depth.

Thank You, Lord, that You care so much. I proclaim that just as Jesus was moved with compassion, I want to respond in the same way in the deepest, innermost part of me. As a father has compassion on his children, so God has compassion on me. Amen.