

## Comfort

by Heath Rogers

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Cor. 1:3-4).

The word "comfort" is translated from a Greek word that means "to call to one's side, to render aid to one." This concept of comfort does not mean deliverance from pain and misery. Rather, it refers to strength and courage that one brings to us as we are enduring trials and tribulations. Comfort is a welcomed friend and companion to those who are suffering. Notice some things that this passage teaches us about comfort.

**1. God is the source of comfort.** Strength and comfort can come through different channels, but all these channels ultimately flow from one source – God. Our God is a merciful God. That is, He cares about His creation and is moved with pity for them. As such, He is ready, willing and able to impart His strength to those who call upon Him. This comfort can come in different ways. We can find strength and peace through prayer (Phil. 4:6-7). We can find comfort in the promises that are found in God's Word. We are strengthened when we assemble to worship God in spirit and truth. We are encouraged by the love shown to us by others.

**2. Godly people will need comfort.** Some have the misconception that if they serve God faithfully, and if their faith is strong enough, then they will never have any problems. This simply is not true. Paul was a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, serving in the capacity of an apostle, yet he suffered terribly for the cause of Christ (2 Cor. 1:8-9, 4:8-10, 11:23-28). Paul did not blame God for these tribulations, nor did he abandon God because of them. Instead, he saw that God was a source of comfort during these tribulations.

**3. God comforts us in all our tribulation.** I have known of some Christians who have left the Lord and His church during times of trouble. When questioned about their absence, they replied, "I am just going through a tough time right now. When things get better I will be back at church." How sad. Why do some Christians believe that they must look to someone other than God for their help? There is no problem too big for God. The apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). As long as one is serving God faithfully, there will never come a time in his life when God will abandon him. God's comfort is available and sufficient for any problem we will face.

**4. Comfort is to be shared.** God allows suffering in the lives of His children, not solely as a means of chastening, but also as a means of equipping them to be more compassionate servants. As recipients of God's mercy and comfort, we are obligated to extend these same blessings to others, and thus make ourselves a channel through which God's comfort can flow to others. For one to receive God's strength and comfort in their hour of need, but not share it with others, is a sign of unkindness and ingratitude. Such a person should no longer expect to receive God's comfort (Matt. 18:32-33).

Do you need comfort? God can give it. Are you burdened with the guilt of sin? Why not turn to God for forgiveness? When one repents of his sin (Acts 2:38), confesses his faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), and is baptized, his sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). Such a cleansing will bring you comfort and peace with God. Do you know anyone who needs comfort? Share the comfort that you have received with someone else.

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