

“Comfort For The Brokenhearted”

October 29, 2023

Scripture Text: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 ESV **3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, **4** who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. **5** For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. **6** If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. **7** Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

Paul was not held in high regard among the Christians in Corinth and he had to remind them that his appointment as an Apostle came from God.... not from men. With all the problems in Corinth, Paul calls the Corinthian Christians **saints** along with those in the region who might read the letters. The work of Holy Spirit in their lives and ours is an ongoing process as we endeavor to be effective witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Paul reminds us that we are sons of God, not by nature, but by election; not by ancestry but by adoption; not by right but by redemption from the blood of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,*

If there was any one person that could declare that God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ was the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, it would be Paul the Apostle. The man who attempted to destroy the church of God was given mercy and a second chance by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul endured being ship

wrecked, without food and clothing, bitten by a poisonous snake, beaten many times, imprisoned often, stoned left for death and survived.... to spread the word of God.

In all his calamities the mercy of God was extended to him and the comfort by the Holy Spirit assured him that God was being glorified. The comfort in the New Testament is always more than soothing sympathy. The Holy Spirit has the power of strengthening, of helping, of making us strong and enabling us to be brave in contending for the faith.

VERSE 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Paul realized that his troubles were not for his benefit alone but for the benefit of many by encouraging and strengthening others who would endure such hardships as he had. He learned to praise God because he knew that he might not live through the next day, for his enemies were many, cruel, and mighty.

The very day that he encountered Jesus, as Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus to destroy the church, his life was forever changed. He became the chosen Apostle declaring Jesus Christ the Son of God to the gentiles and Jews alike. Jesus made it clear that Paul would suffer for His sake as He witnessed to the Jews and gentiles concerning Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. The persecutor became the persecuted... suffering many things and death threats from Christian Jews who refused to believe.

In all of Paul's troubles he considers the Father a comforter, a Paraclete who comes along side. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit from the Father as our paraclete to indwell us and provide all the comfort that we need in carrying out the ministry of Jesus Christ. Sometimes people don't receive the comfort that God desires for them because of their pride. Pride keeps us from revealing our

needs to others and cause us to miss the comfort that God could give to us through others.

VERSE 5 *For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.*

In **2 Corinthians 11:23-28** gives a list of Paul's sufferings.... stripes... prisons... beatings... stoning... shipwrecked... perils of waters... robbers... in persecution from his own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold and nakedness. In all of this Paul knew that his sufferings was for the sake of Christ.

When our suffering comes from doing the will of God or doing what is right, then we feel the comfort of Christ through the person of Holy Spirit. We in turn can be led by the Holy Spirit to comfort others who are suffering. As members of the body of Christ we relate by praying affirming each other through God's love and grace.

VERSE 6 *If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer.*

Jesus said in **John 16:33** *In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* When Paul and other believers were afflicted, it was for the sake of God's people (like the Corinthian Christians) and for those who will come to Christ. God had a larger purpose in Paul's suffering and our suffering than just working on our character. In the end result, God will bring **consolation and salvation** to others through our sufferings.