

Series: 1 Cor
Title: Comforted to Comfort
Text: 2 Corinthians 1: 3-6
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2 Corinthians 1: 3:...the God of all comfort; 4: Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 5: For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6: And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. 7: And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

After all that the apostle Paul suffered, he praised God, saying, “Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”

Then Paul does for us, what he is teaching us to do in this passage—he comforts us with the comfort wherewith he was comforted.

Proposition: Great meaning is given to the believer’s suffering, when we know that in all our trouble, God comforts us that we may be able to comfort our brethren with the same comfort wherewith God comforts us.

GOD COMFORTETH

2 Corinthians 1: 3:...the God of all comfort; 4: Who comforteth us in all our tribulation,...

One sure and certain thing that all God’s saints can expect is trouble. Our Master said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” (Joh 16:33) The apostle Paul declared that “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14: 22)

Now, everyone in this world suffers trouble due to the fact we all fell in our father Adam and all come into this world “children of wrath.” “Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.” (Job 5: 7) Therefore, God’s saints suffer the same trouble as unregenerate sinners: family trouble, sickness, loss of every kind and more.

Yet, God’s saints suffer trouble that none but God’s elect suffer. It is what Paul speaks of in verse 5 as “the sufferings of Christ.” These are sufferings that come from identifying with Christ and giving ourselves for the furtherance of his gospel.

Philippians 1: 29: For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

They are called “the sufferings of Christ” because they are similar to the troubles Christ suffered, though to a much lesser degree. As we go forth unto him without the camp, we bear his reproach. (Heb 13:13)

Our Lord Jesus suffered persecuted, oppression, and scorning from those who hated him as he preached the word in truth—so shall we.

2 Timothy 3:12: Yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

Christ endured tribulation for his lost sheep, from his erring disciples, and ultimately from laying down his life for the church—in a lesser degree, so do we. We suffer tribulation over lost loved ones who break our hearts. Over fellow brethren fallen into error cause us much suffering. In our concern and care for other churches who are suffering various trials, we suffer.

Due to our Savior bearing our sins, Christ bore “the chastisement of our peace” and “with his stripes we are healed.” (Is 53: 5) Now by his grace creating a new spirit in us, we desire to honor him. Therefore we suffer great tribulation from our flesh, in which dwells no good thing. (Rom 7:18) Some of us have our thorns in the flesh, which God has given to keep us looking to him alone, which many will bear all our lives.

Brethren, because Paul lived to minister to the saints, he endured these “sufferings of Christ” above all. But Paul said, “I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation...[for] God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us.” (2 Cor 7: 4, 6) Therefore, let us be comforted by the apostle who knew from experience this comfort that he is comforting us with. Brethren, no matter our trouble, the God of all comfort comforteth us in all our tribulation.

COMFORTED TO COMFORT

2 Corinthians 1: 4: Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, with the comfort wherewith we are comforted.

When God comforts us in our trouble, though his comfort is sent for our good, it is never intended to be only for our personal benefit. God comforts us to make us able comforters to others who are in any trouble. God does not call us to live unto ourselves. We are not all called to preach, but we are all called to comfort those who mourn.

Be sure to understand, we do not have to suffer the exact circumstances that our brethren suffer to be able to give them this comfort. We tend to think this verse means that we are enabled to comfort others because we have suffered the exact trouble they suffer ourselves. If that were the case, in order to be able to comfort those “in any trouble” I would have to suffer every kind of trouble.

Remember, he is talking about “the sufferings of Christ”, those tribulations believers suffer as we live for Christ’s honor and glory, as we identify with Christ, as we suffer for the sake of his gospel. Each of God’s saints can say that every time our tribulation has been in the cause of Christ, God has comforted us.

Therefore, even if I have not suffered the exact circumstances that my brother is suffering, still I am able to comfort him with the assurance that God shall comfort him. This is what Paul says in verse 7, “And our hope of you [receiving this comfort from God] *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.”

My brethren, it is great comfort being assured that no matter what the tribulation, as God’s saints suffer for the sake of Christ, we shall be comforted by God! This ought to make us stand up to the enemy and shout the gospel from the rooftops. Someone might object, “But we shall suffer!” Yes, we shall. But we shall also be comforted by God!

How do we know this for certain? God has worked in our hearts this sure hope of expecting God to comfort us by the past troubles we have experienced and patiently endured. Notice verse 6, “And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual [which is wrought] in the enduring [in the patient bearing] of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.” When we are afflicted it is to be able to comfort our brethren. This experience

comes and this hope is worked in us by patiently enduring the sufferings we suffer. Paul says the same thing in Romans 5.

Romans 5: 3:...we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience [endurance] 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

As we endured past tribulations, the Holy Spirit flooded our hearts with the everlasting love of God, so that we can comfort our suffering brethren from experience, saying, “our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.”

OUR CONSOLATION

2 Corinthians 1: 5: For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

Our consolation—our comfort—is the consolation of Israel, Christ himself. (Lu 2: 25) The Son of God was made like unto his brethren that he, as a Man, might experience our tribulations for the same reason that tribulations are given to us.

Hebrews 5: 1: For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: 2: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

Hebrews 2: 17: Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18: For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Hebrews 5: 7: Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8: Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

As the Son of God, Christ was only Spirit. But though he were the Son of God, yet, he was made flesh, like his brethren. He made flesh in order to suffer. He made like his brethren in order to be comforted of God. He was made like us in order that he might be able to comfort us.

Oh, how thankful we are that he made reconciliation for those the Father gave him. The GodMan is the spotless Lamb of God made sin for us by whom we are made the righteousness of God in him. He is our scapegoat who bore our sins away forever. Christ is our High Priest who entered into the holiest with his own blood, having accomplished eternal redemption for us. He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

But also, we are thankful that our resurrected Redeemer, personally knows how weak our flesh really is. We are thankful that when he offered up supplication to God with strong crying and tears the God of all comfort comforted him that he might be able to comfort us in all our tribulations. Therefore, “as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”

Though Christ is in heaven and we on earth, he is touched with our sufferings. “The sufferings of Christ” not only means the sufferings that we endure in his cause, but it also means he is touched with our sufferings. The sufferings of his people are his sufferings. Christ is one with those God put in him by divine election.

He is the Head and each one in whom he dwells are members of his body. Therefore, when one member of his body suffers, it is his own body that suffers. Therefore, “As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”

My dear suffering brother, my dear suffering sister, I have suffered trouble like you suffer—maybe not exactly the same circumstances but I assure you, “The God of all comfort, comforteth us in all our tribulations. He does it “that we might be able to comfort them that are in any trouble with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted.”

So after Christ has comforted you in this trouble you now suffer, the next time one of your brethren suffers, tell them what you know! Tell them that no matter what they are going through, “As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ...And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.”

Amen!