
God's Comfort For His People

(2 Corinthians 1:3-11)

If anybody knew what it was to be constantly bombarded by trials, troubles, and pain, it was the Apostle Paul (Acts 19:21 ff.; 1 Cor. 15:30-32; 2 Cor. 4:8-12; 11:23 ff.). But instead of fighting it, he embraced it, and instead of resisting, he welcomed it (2 Cor. 12:9-10) because he knew that God would comfort him.

God is a God of comfort (Isaiah 40:1-2; 49:13; 51:3, 12; 66:13). The word comfort (“paraclesis”) means “someone who is called alongside to help” (Psalm 124:8). Comfort does not mean convenience or the absence of problems, troubles, and difficulties. Comfort means to be with strength. God wants us to learn four truths about His comfort.

1. *God always _____ of His comfort*

God, who promised us His comfort, never fails. Paul knew and understood this truth (Romans 8:31-39). The Psalmist declared his hope of comfort in God (Psalm 42:11). God will always be there for you. The scope of His comfort encompasses everything. He comforts us “in all” our tribulation. His absolute power makes that possible (Jer. 32:17).

2. *God always has a _____ in comforting us*

God is a God of purpose. God extends His gracious comfort so that we may comfort others as well. That's what makes the comfort of God as a blessing. But God's has boundaries in verse 5. God's comfort only extends to the point where we suffer for Christ (Matt. 5:10-11; 1 Peter 4:12-16). Only when we suffer for Christ are you we blessed and not when we suffer for sin or the wrong things that we do.

Our comfort is not limited to us. It extends to others. We participate in each other's life (1 Cor. 12:26). Paul became, as it were, God's exhibit of a life of suffering and pain so that at the same time, God will also use his life as an exhibition of God's gracious comfort and consolation so that the Corinthians will be enabled to endure the same suffering.

3. *God is never _____ to comfort us*

In verses 8-9, Paul mentions a particular horrible trouble where he thought he was going to die. God brought him through that situation so that he would fully realize his own weakness and totally rely on God. The Lord brings us to the end of our rope, to end of our resources, to the end of our abilities, to the end of ourselves so that He can effectively rescue us from our distress. In verse 10, God's deliverance was mentioned in all three tenses, past present and future. Go will always be so faithful (2 Tim 4:16-18).

4. *God comforts His people _____*

God chose to comfort His people through the avenue of their prayers. Paul needed the prayers of his fellow believers for his sufferings. It's a portrait of mutuality, connectedness and solidarity among believers (1 Thess. 5:11; Hebrews 3:13 and 10:25; James 5:16). God does move through the prayers of His people.
