**Jesus Comfort Us During This Affliction**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Isaiah 40:1-2**

**Wednesday Evening**

**March 25, 2020**

**Isaiah 40:1-2**

1 "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. 2 "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD's hand Double for all her sins."

**Many people today are crying out for comfort but don’t know where to find it or how to receive it**

**The Lord comforts His people by reminding them of His promises, attributes, and love**

**1. Although situations constantly change, the Word of God stands forever**

**Isaiah 40:8**

"The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."

**2. Like a shepherd, the Lord tends, gathers, carries, and gently leads His people**

**Isaiah 40:11**

He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

**3. The greatness of God’s power and knowledge are displayed in His creation**

**Isaiah 40:12-13**

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance? 13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has taught Him?

**4. Jesus is sovereign over all the events on earth**

**Isaiah 40:21-23**

21 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. 23 He brings the princes to nothing; He makes the judges of the earth useless.

**5. He gives strength to those who are weary**

**Isaiah 40:29-31**

29 He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. 30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, 31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Saints, although the apostle Paul endured great hardship and pain, he also experienced God’s amazing comfort in the midst of his suffering. In the short passage of 2 Corinthians 1:1-7, he uses the word comfort several times and describes the Lord as “the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction."

**2 Corinthians 1:3-7**

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 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.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. 6 Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

7 And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.

**What is Comfort?**

Saints, the New Testament word comfort means to encourage or come alongside. When Jesus was nearing the end of His earthly ministry, He promised to send another Comforter who would be like Him (John 14:16, 26).

**John 14:16**

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever"

**John 14:26**

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

At the moment of our salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us and walk alongside us through life’s challenges. He’s always there when we need Him to lighten our load, quiet our fears, lift our spirits, ease our pain, or invigorate us when we don’t think we can take another step.

Every aspect of our lives is included in the Holy Spirit’s ministry. Although we may not feel His presence at times, He’s always there teaching, guiding, leading, strengthening, and encouraging us.

**The Holy Spirit Seals Believers**

Saints, the evidence of our salvation is displayed by the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 1:11-14**

11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Saints, when we trust Jesus as our Savior, God marks us as His children by putting His unbreakable seal on us. The Holy Spirit comes to indwell and work within us, enabling us to become fruitful and accomplish whatever the Lord has in mind.

We may not be able to change our difficult situations, but the Holy Spirit’s presence and power in our lives remains constant. He knows exactly what God wants to produce in us and what we need in order to persevere and learn from it.

**What is the Source of our Comfort?**

Saints, Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, is the Comforter. He not only has the power to change our circumstances, but He can also give us the strength to endure them. He’s put a limit on what He allows us to suffer and promises that He will not let us be tempted beyond what we are able to bear.

**1 Corinthians 10:12-13**

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. 13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Furthermore, He’s promised to work out everything for our good if we love Him and are called according to His purpose.

**Romans 8:28**

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Saints, since He’s omniscient, He knows exactly what we need to become the person He wants us to be. And when we are hurting, He gives us God’s genuine, lasting comfort!

We may not have a choice regarding the difficulties that come into our lives, but can decide how to respond. Nothing can touch us apart from God’s permission, and we know that His reasons for allowing suffering are good.

His goal is to produce godliness in us, increase our faith in Him, and make us useful for His kingdom. When we trust Him and depend on the Spirit’s power to go through the fire, we’ll come out polished, reflecting the image of Christ

**How Does God Comfort Us?**

Saints, no matter what form our suffering takes, the wisest response is to immediately turn to God’s Word. But that is often the last thing we want to do when we’re overwhelmed with difficulties.

Too often we’d rather seek out our friends, but their knowledge and ability to comfort are limited. In contrast, eternal truth, knowledge, and wisdom are found in the Scriptures.

**Psalm 119:49-50**

49 Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope. 50 This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life.

**How can we find comforting Scripture verses?**

**1. Read the Bible Daily**

The best way to prepare for trouble is to make Scripture reading a regular part of each day. As we become more familiar with God’s Word, we’ll know where to look when we need comfort and encouragement.

**Psalm 119:105**

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

**Isaiah 41:9-10**

9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its farthest regions, And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away: 10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

**2. Ask God for Help!**

Saints, in those times when we don’t know where to turn, we can ask the Holy Spirit to guide us to a passage that will speak to our need. Since He’s the author, He knows exactly what promises will encourage us and what instructions will help us.

**Psalm 46:1-4**

1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear, Even though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; 3 Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling.

4 There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High

We can ask Him to show us the next step and reveal what He wants to accomplish in our lives. The Lord delights in speaking personally to us through His Word when we come to Him as His children seeking guidance and comfort.

**3. Choose to memorize God's Word and Hide it in your Heart**

**Psalm 119:9-16**

9 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. 10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

12 Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes! 13 With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. 14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. 16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

**4. You have to Believe God Does Care For Us!**

**Psalm 55:22**

“Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved”

**1 Peter 5:6-11**

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen

**5. God Will Stick Closer Than A Brother!**

**Proverbs 18:24**

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother”

**Hebrews 13:5-6**

5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

**In Closing:**

**6. Jesus Will Comfort Us!**

**1 Thessalonians 3:7-13**

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. 8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. 9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,

10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith? 11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,

13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

**Let's Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace." '**