

Comfort Received and Given

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Online Sermon: http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we have received.” (verse 3)

Showing comfort to others sounds easy, right? It is hard enough to identify the physical, psychological or spiritual needs of another but to comfort them ... well that is far from easy! Too often we respond to the needs of others by feeling “pity” for them while we pass them by on the other side of their road! Our indifference is not born out of unfamiliarity, for most of us have personally experienced plenty of suffering in our lives, but out of selfishness, ignorance or lack of courage we simply feel incapable of seeing our walking a mile in a sufferers shoes as being an honor and not a heavy burden! While advice is somewhat easy to give without sacrificial, loving action it becomes like pity poured into wounds of affliction! We as Christ’s ambassadors are called and have been prepared to love one another not just in words but also in deeds. When a man/woman of God have endured the assaults of this world, the flesh, devil, sicknesses and numerous financial and social tribulations and yet joyfully cry out “blessed be the name of the Lord,” such a person has been refined and dare I suggest prepared to be a messenger of comfort for others.¹ The following sermon is going to explore 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 in hopes that with the comfort we have received from God we might offer it to others so that they too might praise God in all of life’s circumstances!

Knowing the Sources of Tribulations

Before we strap on the amour of God and attempt to comfort another one must first understand the sources of tribulations we are going to face. Jesus told us that before we became saved, we had to be willing to give up everything to become His disciple (Luke 14:25-35)! To minister in this alien, fallen world Spurgeon says we must look upward, downward, around and within to understand four key reasons why the sufferings of Christ abound within His own.² When we look upward do we not tremble a little for to become more like the sinless, Lamb of God will require much time in the crucible of suffering and affliction!³ And when we

¹ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Comforted and Comforting.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 446.

² C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 94.

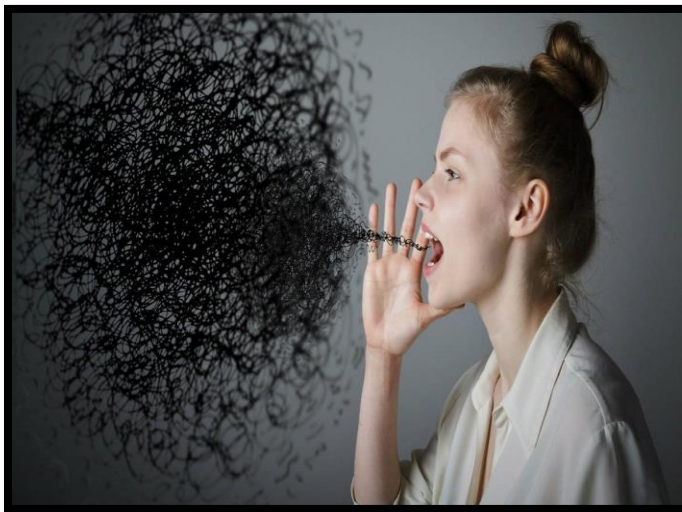
³ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 94.



look downward do we not see the fierce anger of Satan who in loosing the battle for our soul is now thirsty to devour and break the backs of our joyful ministry with intense pain?⁴ And when we look around this alien world are not most willing to persecute us due to the light shining within us exposes their darkness and futile ways of living?⁵ And finally if we look within at our deceitful hearts (Jeremiah 17:9) that are “bomb-shells ready to burst at the slightest spark of temptation”⁶ it is no surprise that some of our suffering

is discipline by a loving God who merely wants us to conform to His likeness!⁷ If we want to comfort others, then strap on the amour of God (Ephesians 6:10-20)⁸ and get ready to participate in the sufferings of Christ as promised by Him (Romans 8:27)!

Dealing with our Murmuring Hearts



Before we can comfort another, we must first stop reminiscing and spewing the muck of our defeatist attitude amongst any who will listen! One would think that nothing would shake the faith of those who saw first-hand God’s might and power of the Ten Plagues (Exodus 7-11) that delivered them from their enemies and yet despite plundering Egypt (12:36) God’s children murmured even when God provided manna, quail and water (16-17)! Often, we make our troubles far greater by turning them

⁴ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 95.

⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 95.

⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 96.

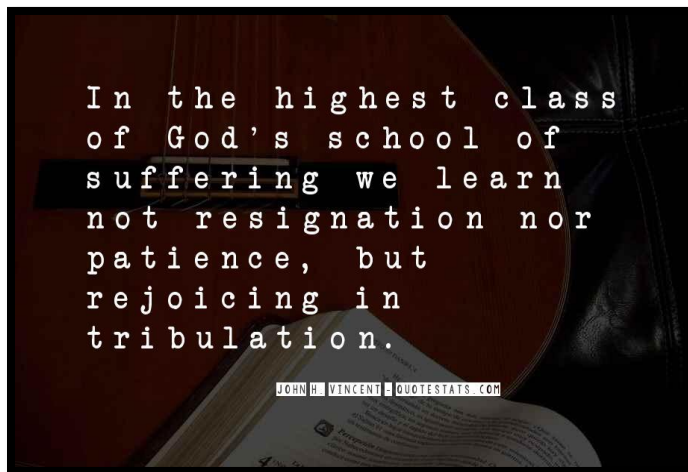
⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 94.

⁸ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.”](#) in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 93.

over repeatedly, weighing, thinking and meditating on the best way to escape. And when we are not thinking about current tribulations we tend to fret and drown in the sorrow of afflictions yet to be realized!⁹ A murmuring soul is truly a rebellious soul¹⁰ for in chewing on the dung hills of our affliction¹¹ we often forget the sweet taste of the King's impregnable armour that can catch the fiercest of Satan's arrows of affliction!¹² What must unbelievers think that in sharing in their furnaces of tribulations we too share in their fear, despair and sense of doom? Are not murmurings music to Satan's ears¹³ but unshakeable faith as living, sacrifices a pleasing aroma unto God?

Rejoicing in Tribulations

If we are to comfort others, then we must first learn how to find joy in our afflictions. Since tribulations are promised to aliens living in a hostile environment against God's people,¹⁴ it is not escape but perseverance and love under the wings of our Father that is the source of all



comfort! Instead of reminiscing and throwing a pity party when witnessing to others tell them how in the depths of your pain that you have been more than compensated by personally experiencing how "wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" (Ephesians 3:18) in your life!¹⁵ I would rather walk a thousand miles in tribulations arm and arm with my Savior than spend a single day of earthly, carnal pleasure without Him by my side! Those who bow their

knee and rejoice in their afflictions bring honor to God because their testimony is clear ... take my life and let it be consecrated Lord unto thee! Rejoicing in tribulations is the key to being content in all situations (Philippians 4:11) for steadfast faith that His ways and thoughts are higher than mine (Isaiah 55:8-9) opens the door to sacrificial obedience which magnifies His

⁹ C. H. Spurgeon, "[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)" in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 99.

¹⁰ C. H. Spurgeon, "[Comforted and Comforting.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 447.

¹¹ C. H. Spurgeon, "[Comforted and Comforting.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 447.

¹² C. H. Spurgeon, "[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)" in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 96.

¹³ C. H. Spurgeon, "[Comforted and Comforting.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 448.

¹⁴ Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 70.

¹⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, "[Comforted and Comforting.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 448.

name¹⁶ and our attitude of thanksgiving!¹⁷ Nothing keeps our heads above the waters of trouble better than crying, “Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.”¹⁸

God is the Source of all Comfort

When witnessing to others the joy we have in our afflictions it is crucial that we point them to God and not ourselves or others as the source of our comfort. Praise be that the



“Father of compassion and God of all comfort” (verse 3) does not abandon His children during tribulations!¹⁹ Because of the sympathy and mystical union between us and Christ (Romans 8:17),²⁰ the firstborn and Son of God (Romans 8:29),²¹ not only have Christians been forgiven and redeemed²² but also “have been blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3). Our union with Christ means suffering for His name’s sake²³ and when this happens it will be for our

maturity, consolation²⁴ and to magnify our witness of the divine might, power and love of the Father!²⁵ Spurgeon states that “when a man blesses God for the bitter, the Lord often sends

¹⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Comforted and Comforting.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 447.

¹⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Comforted and Comforting.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 446.

¹⁸ C. H. Spurgeon, [“Comforted and Comforting.”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 446.

¹⁹ James M. Scott, [2 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 27.

²⁰ David Brown, A. R. Fausset, and Robert Jamieson, [A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation](#), vol. VI (London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d.), 337.

²¹ James M. Scott, [2 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 24.

²² Paul Barnett, [The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 72.

²³ James M. Scott, [2 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 27.

²⁴ David Brown, A. R. Fausset, and Robert Jamieson, [A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation](#), vol. VI (London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d.), 337.

²⁵ Paul Barnett, [The Second Epistle to the Corinthians](#), The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 73.

him the sweet. If he can praise God in the night, the daylight is not far off!”²⁶ This does not mean Christians always escape hard times but that God provides them “consolation in the midst of tribulation, joy in their sorrows, and comfort in their afflictions.”²⁷ Standing on the promises that Christ will never leave²⁸ but remain with His loving arms wrapped around us allows His own to walk through the “rough and thorny brakes of this vast, alien wilderness”²⁹ of life with divine joy that we are eternally His own!

Leaving our Burdens with Jesus

When the burdens of tribulations threaten to crush your soul cast your burdens and yoke upon Jesus and you will find rest! To join God’s army and fight by His side one must realize that every blow and slander one takes is a blow and slander against He whose battle and



victory has already been secured!³⁰ That being said we as heirs of the kingdom live in a alien land in which we are still blind, naked, deaf³¹ and often in much need of the loving touch of the Great Physician. There are times that even with wearing the armour of God that the honor of serving in His kingdom requires divine strength lest in our weariness our burdens might crush our very souls. It is in times like these that Jesus says, “come to Me you who are burdened and weary and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Though

deep trials and afflictions³² often threaten to break these fragile jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4:7-12) we are to rejoice that He who is sovereign over all things seen and unseen (Colossians 1:16) will only allow the furnace of afflictions to further kingdom goals and to further refine our hearts to be more like Him. Praise be that we are not responsible for the results of kingdom

²⁶ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Comforted and Comforting.](#)” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 447.

²⁷ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 93.

²⁸ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 99.

²⁹ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 94.

³⁰ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 97.

³¹ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 98–99.

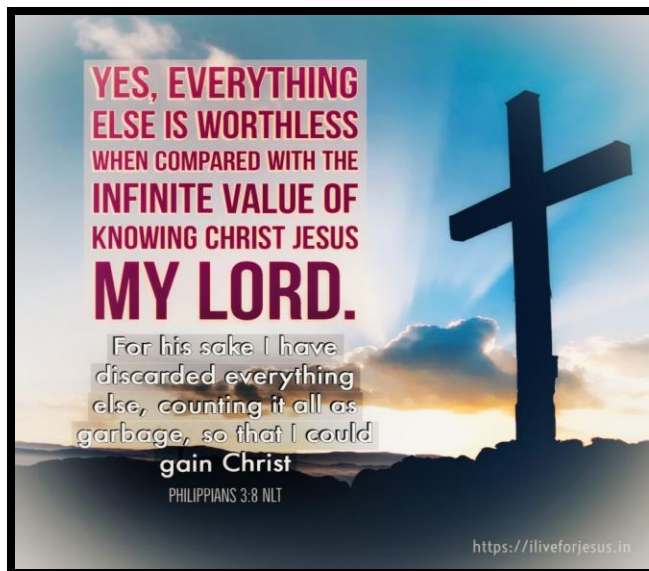
³² C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 99.

service but merely to be willing servants, sustained by mercy and grace³³ to be His hands and feet!

How to be a Good Comforter

Ultimately receiving and giving comfort comes from knowing and sharing the value of the Father and Son as our Creator and Redeemer. I want to share a story from Charles Spurgeon.

“I remember a story of a great commander, who, having won many glorious victories, led his troops into a defile, and when there, a large body of the enemy entirely surrounded him. He knew a battle was inevitable on the morning, he therefore went round to all the tents, to hear in what condition his soldier’s minds were—whether they were dispirited or not. He came to one



tent, and as he listened, he heard a man say, “There is our general; he is very brave, but he is very unwise this time; he has led us into a place where we are sure to be beaten; there are so many of the enemy’s cavalry, so many infantry:” and then the man counted up all the troops on their own side, and made them only so many. Then the commander, after he had

heard the tale, gently drew aside a part of the tent, and said, “How many do you count me for? You have counted the infantry and calvary; but how many do you count me for—me, your mighty captain, who have won so many victories.” Now, Christian, I say, how many do you count Christ for? How many do you put him down for? Hast thou put him down for one? He is not one, nor a thousand: he is the “chief among ten thousand.” But he is more than that. Oh! put him down for a high figure; and when thou countest up thine aids and auxiliaries, put down Christ for all in all, for in him victory is certain—the triumph is secure.”³⁴

³³ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Comforted and Comforting.](#)” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 451.

³⁴ C. H. Spurgeon, “[Consolation Proportionate to Spiritual Sufferings.](#)” in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 97.

Looking up, down, around and inside one can find many reasons for the afflictions of life. Today's sermon focused on just one of those reasons: to share the comfort we have received from the Father with those who are being afflicted. To comfort others, we need to



stop murmuring and start rejoicing! We need to put on the armour of God and take up our position in His army. We need to tell those who are suffering for His name sake that when the battle gets so intense that they grow weary and burdened can take their deceitful hearts and fragile jars of clay to the Son who will forgive, straighten, strengthen and gives them rest! Above all we need to tell our fellow Christian sufferers that since God alone is sovereign, He alone is their source of comfort. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are invaluable to

humanity for they alone created and sustain our very lives. While afflictions and tribulations are inevitable, our reaction to them can either be one of fear and misery or faith and rejoicing! So, the next time someone feels overwhelmed by life's circumstances point them the Father, the source of all comfort so that they might find joy and peace!

