

God of All Comfort

Part 1

3-25-20

God Comforts us in affliction

The kids here at Twin Rivers Church have been working hard preparing for the annual spring musical. Like everything else, it is on pause. So often the songs and Scripture tied into the musicals seem to be just what we need to be dwelling on during that specific time. This year's spring musical is no exception. One of the songs, "We Will Not Fear" is so very appropriate for what our World is going through at this time. It is based on Psalm 46. The life lesson or theme of this musical suddenly became very applicable for us all.

When I began studying what God had put on my heart to write about over the next few days, what first stood out was what seemed to be the opposite of comfort...

Affliction.... tribulation... suffering.... storms of life... tragedy... trials.... To be honest I feel like I have heard enough about those words lately...but understanding those words from God's Word is what I believe, He wants us to learn right now. It truly became a huge lesson of Hope for me.

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 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.

Affliction is allowed in all our lives. It helps us understand the storms that others go through.

When we look at this passage, first what stands out the most is the word... comfort.

In fact, we hear the word comfort 10 times in these 5 verses.

The Greek word for comfort, (paraklesis) that Paul uses here, means so much more than our watered-down understanding of comfort.

It means more than:

"How are you doing? Oh really?... we'll I'll remember to pray for that...sometime...maybe..."

It is so much more. The comfort that God wants us to understand is more like this:

"How are you doing? Okay then, let me cancel everything I have going on in my life today and stay with you and pray with you until this is all figured out. You are my priority".

Yes, God allows us to go through trials and storms in life, but He is there with us. Greater yet, He gives us the ability to share that comfort with others who are going through trials and storms, even when we are going through those storms together.

Verse 4: ***“Who comforts us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”***

When we go through these tough times in life, the comfort from God is so abundant that we will be able to share it someday with someone else. For some, it might be right away, for others maybe down the road a little bit. God will make it clear when you should share from your experiences the comfort, He gave you.

Have you ever had someone come alongside you who has been through a similar affliction, or has had a trial in their life and they just share with you about it?

As I was recently calling folks from our church and checking in, well mostly visiting and being encouraged myself, I had a special moment talking to someone from what is called “The Greatest Generation”. She is 96, was born during the Great Depression and remembers World War II very well. She is taking precautions right now because of Covid-19, but she wasn’t really that concerned. She has been through affliction.... tribulation.... suffering.... storms of life.... tragedy and trials. She has relied on her Lord and Savior and has gained strength through His comfort. Comfort that she shared with me. I don’t know that she even realized just how much she comforted me with her words.

This got me thinking, Church... are we all doing our part in sharing God’s comfort with those we know? How about those we just met? I talked with another person who said she had called five people that she knew wouldn’t be able to have much contact with others right now. She was able to pray and visit with them on the phone. It was a blessing to her, and she is going to do that again. You might have a busy time at home right now with kids bouncing off the walls or maybe it’s just you at home. Either way...you can minister to others with a simple phone call. We are used to checking in with others on Sundays and Wednesdays, in person. Right now, we can’t... but, we need to stay connected as the body. We need to lift each other up in prayer and encourage each other to be a light in this community. The truth is, we should always be doing that, shouldn’t we. I know I have felt more convicted about that.

I’ll be adding to this little series... so check back for part 2.

Blessings,

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