

THE GRACE OF COMFORT

The Grace of Comfort

Key idea:

Our afflictions are avenues for abundant comfort for the lost.

Key text:

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 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. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. 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. Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

Key points:

1. Comfort, rightly defined, is always tied to the work of Jesus in salvation.
2. God comforts us because:
 - a. It is inherent in His character
 - b. We are connected to Him
 - c. It is part of His commission for us

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. How does a biblical understanding of comfort (as being tied to Jesus' saving work) impact the way I am viewing present circumstances in my life? How does it impact the way I reach out to others?

3. Three aspects of the grace of comfort were presented (see above). How does each aspect strengthen and encourage me? Is there any way that they convict me of sin and call me to active repentance, and if so what does that look like this week?
4. In the relationships God has given to me, who can I extend grace and mercy to this week as a way of reflecting the grace and mercy God has shown to me?
5. In what ways am I enduring suffering, trials, affliction, or even discomfort? How can I persevere in a godly way this week, and how might God use this to reach the lost through me?
6. Who do I know who is not a believer, but is suffering in some way? How can I pursue them, persevere alongside of them, and extend the comfort of grace in practical ways this week?
7. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

**Preview of next week:
The Summary of God's Law (Matthew 22:34 - 40)**