

Pray To Comfort Others

2 Corinthians 1:3–7

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Let's take a survey of our spiritual lives. That means that we are also looking at our emotional and physical lives. You don't have to answer out loud, but give your answers to Jesus.

On a scale of one to ten, with ten being almost like Jesus: Are you a person that is helpful to others? Do you see other people suffering and come to their aid? Can you do more than sympathize with people who are in trouble? Do you find yourself offering encouragement, solace and relief to other people?

This begins with prayer. If we are going to be a ten on this list, we need to take our prayer lives to a new level. You can't rely on your personality. You can't teach yourself these attributes. You can't ignore your inner desire to be like Jesus.

During the month of July I've been sharing about taking our prayer lives to a new level. When we take that step of faith in prayer, we also take a step of faith in our attitudes and actions. Scripture teaches us how to pray and also what to do after we pray.

2 Corinthians 1:3 (NLT) All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort.

Our God is always providing encouragement, solace, relief. The God who saves us and comforts us is worthy of every word of praise. Don't take for granted that our Savior and Lord is in our lives. Never forget that Jesus chose to come to this earth to live our lives. He was willing to teach, heal, and suffer for our salvation from sin. He willingly was attacked, abused, and killed. He became the sin of the world. He left that sin in Hell. He rose from the dead forgiving our sins and giving us a new life.

Jesus didn't save you from your sins and disappear. He promised to leave us with a comforter, an advocate, a helper. He had to return to heaven so that He could give us His helper. He went to heaven as your advocate at the right hand of God. He speaks to the Father all day long proclaiming your salvation, redemption, and deliverance. He has written your name in His Book of Life.

When Jesus left this world He gave to every believer His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit isn't just hanging out but is living within. The Spirit is dwelling within. He has moved in with all of His power and all of His gifts. He is teaching you what you need to know. He is empowering your life throughout the day. He is nudging, prompting and challenging you to forget yourself and be like Jesus. He is reminding you that you are saved, redeemed, and delivered. He is providing for you the comfort of God regardless of how bad your life becomes.

Think about encouragement, solace, and relief as God's comfort. During spiritual attacks you need God's comfort: encouragement. When the sidewalk jumps up to trip you, you need God's comfort: solace. As the molehill of trouble gets bigger, and bigger, you need God's comfort: relief.

God is with you. In all things God is with you. As your headaches or as it spins, God is with you. You are never alone. Give thanks to God. You won't be abandoned. Give praise to God. You won't be forgotten. Declare God's goodness. You won't be defeated. Thank you Jesus.

This is God's mercy and grace. He could let every bad thing happen to you, but He doesn't. He gives you the encouragement you need. His solace is more than enough every time. He provides the relief just when you need the most. God is worthy of all praise. God loves you.

2 Corinthians 1:4 (NLT) He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

This sounds like a wonderful blessing but, are we giving spiritual comfort to others? We have received encouragement, solace, and relief from our Savior and Lord. When you think about the worst situations in your life you received the comfort of the Lord. You cried out to God, He answered. You spent time in anguish and pain, He was with you. Your labor in prayer, searching for the right words, He heard your heart.

All this time in prayer, from the quick burst for help, to the long hours on your knees you were comforted by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. After the crisis passed, after you were encouraged, and your spirit found solace, and soul found relief you went back to your old life. The intensity of your prayers waned. Then the frequency of your prayers became more scarce. That is until another spiritual attack came. That is until another crisis formed on the horizon.

But, you long for that deeper prayer life. Your desire is for your relationship with Jesus to grow. You have a need to take your time with the Father to a new level. The Holy Spirit living in you is moving you along a path the Father has made just for you. Every crisis, all the times of trouble, each spiritual attack God knows about. Jesus is advocating for the Father to give you mercy and comfort. You receive God's grace. You are encouraged, you receive solace, and are given relief.

With each event in your life you have the opportunity to comfort someone else. Not the crisis or the trouble, but the comfort of God. You are given an opportunity to come along side another person to encourage them. A door is open for you walk along side another to provide solace. All you have to do is walk through the door and relieve another. Are you looking at your life this way? Are you seeing that in your life each moment of trouble God is comforting you, so that you can comfort someone else?

We're missing the point if we don't comfort others. Let me put it this way. Jesus told His disciples that they would be known by their love for one another, if they love the way that He loved them. Jesus told His disciples that the greatest thing one person can do for another person is to lay down their life for them. Jesus loved the disciples by calling them to follow Him. Jesus loved the disciples by teaching them the truth in scripture. Jesus loved the disciples even though they too often didn't understand what He was doing. Jesus loved the disciples when they all ran away. Jesus loved the disciples when they denied Him. Jesus loved the disciples when He died on the cross, then on the third day rose from the dead. Jesus loved the disciples when He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within them.

Through all of this Jesus was comforted by the Holy Spirit. Throughout His life the Holy Spirit encouraged Him. As He was attacked and even hung on a cross He found solace in trusting the Father. Jesus found relief from all the pain, suffering and trouble as He sits at the right hand of the Father.

He is giving you and me, along with every believer, comfort in our troubles so that we will comfort others. How are you doing in the comforting business?

2 Corinthians 1:5–6 (NLT) For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer.

As you suffer in any and every way God is empowering you to comfort others. Suffering for Christ is spiritual attacks and persecution. The apostle Paul and each of Jesus' disciples were persecuted for their faith in Jesus. They didn't shy away from continuing to speak the name of Jesus. They proclaimed that they were thankful to suffer so that others would hear the Gospel.

The persecution was real. They were verbally attacked. They were beaten and whipped. They were thrown in jail. They were martyred for their faith. Each of Jesus' disciples along with the apostle Paul faced spiritual attacks. The temptations were constantly before them. They had moments when they became upset. They faced moments of uncertainty. They were challenged by the fame of performing miracles in Jesus' name.

God was encouraging them, providing solace for their wounds, and relieving their pain. At every turn the Holy Spirit gave them a word of inspiration. When things looked their most dire the Holy Spirit offered them support. While the troubles mounted the Holy Spirit provided help.

Look back at your life and you will see God comforting you. In the midst of the crisis you may not be aware of God's comfort. As the challenge fades you see clearly that the Holy Spirit was working in you and through you. While you consider the events of your life you know that you were never alone.

Trouble includes everything else that happens during the day. Not merely the persecution and the spiritual attacks, but all the bad stuff is seen by our God. As God sees trouble coming our way, He prepares us for the challenge. When the trouble slaps you in the face, God is giving you everything you need. From encouragement to keep going on the path God is providing. From the solace to take the next step to honor God, He is providing. From the relief to see the outcome, God is providing.

Persecution, spiritual attacks, and daily troubles are the blatant and subtle work of our enemy. The enemy came to Adam and Eve with lies, then the trouble began. Every generation has faced the same stuff. In every generation there are those who pray their way through all the junk. Then there are those who don't pray.

God's power is available to everyone. His comfort is available to each person. Those who have received the comfort of God, see the pain that others are facing. Then we begin to comfort others. Even though the devil has tried to knock us down, we have prayed receiving encouragement, solace, and relief.

We are now able to give that same comfort to our family members. We can offer God's comfort to our friends and neighbors. We pass on God's comfort to our co-workers.

2 Corinthians 1:7 (NLT) We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

Pray for comfort and then give encouragement to others. Every Christian needs God's comfort. Jesus encouraged His disciples. We can inspire one another. Jesus gave solace to His disciples. We can support one another. Jesus provide relief for His disciples. We can show one another that our troubles won't last. One of our own used to say "this too shall pass," trusting Jesus through the trouble. That phrase has comforted many of us. We have encouraged one another with those same words.

Even though we don't like trouble, spiritual attacks or persecution we know that it is part of life. While there are days that are worse than others, we have made it to the next day by the grace of God, by His comforting Spirit, by His encouragement, solace, and relief.

We are blessed. We are blessed to be a blessing to others. Don't think that you can't be a blessing by comforting someone else. You can because Jesus saved you and dwells within you. You can because the Holy Spirit is dwelling within you. The people in your life need God's comfort. All of your experiences with God at your side and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit go toward comforting others.

Encourage them with words from God that will inspire them. Support them with the same solace God has given to you. Help them see that this life is temporary, but everything that's in God's hands is eternal.

All those who don't trust Jesus need to know about the comfort given by God. Every person needs God's comfort. Every sinner needs to know that God loves them regardless of their actions and their attitudes. Every sinner needs to know that Jesus wants to spend eternity with them. No matter what you have done in the past you need to be forgiven.

Jesus is the only one who can forgive you. Jesus is the only one who can take away the guilt and the shame of your sins. Jesus is the only who can give you a new life. Any sinner who turns to Jesus finds that their sins are not the only thing removed from their lives.

When you choose Jesus you discover that your old sins, your old life is not what you want. When you give your life to Jesus you experience joy; the sin of your past is no longer a burden. When you give your life to Jesus you are at peace; you don't have to carry the load any longer. When you give your life to Jesus you have hope; regardless of what happens God's Holy Spirit is with you. When you give your life to Jesus you are comforted day after day, all day long for all of eternity.

Any sinner who holds onto their sin will never experience the comfort of God. You don't have to go through the rest of your life without God's comfort. You can admit that you are not sufficient. You can admit that you aren't okay. You can admit that you need the comfort of God, that you need to be filled with God's love.

Talk to Jesus right now. Give Him your past. Give Him your sins. Give Him your spiritual battles. Receive God's comfort.