

June 13, 2010

“The Unexpected Fruit of Comfort”

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Intro

- Main point: God comforts us so we can comfort others.

The Source of Comfort: *God the Father (v. 3)*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort” (v. 3)

“And I will pray the to the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever” (John 14:16)

The Purpose of Comfort: *Inward & Outward (v. 4-6)*

Inward

“who comforts us in all our affliction” (v. 4a)

“For as we share abundantly in Christ’s sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too” (v. 5)

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4)

Outward

“so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction . . .” (v. 4b)

“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.” (v. 6)

1. We comfort others with *sustaining* comfort

- Finding the common denominator in the experience of human need
- Question: What specific truth about God or myself has comforted me in my own experience?
- *Definition of ‘comfort’*: “bringing the truth of God to bear in a situation in a way that sustains you and assures you of His loving care for you”

2. We comfort the lost with *saving* comfort

“If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation” (v. 6)

- Paul & Silas (**Acts 16:25-34**)
- We are both recipients and dispensers of comfort.

The Fruit of Comfort: *Unshakable Hope* (v. 7)

“Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.” (v. 7)

*“More than that, we rejoice in our **sufferings**, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces **hope**, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:3-5)*

“For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.” (2 Corinthians 7:5-7)

Conclusion

- God is at work in us giving us comfort. He is working in others giving them comfort. And by His design, our hope can overflow to one another.