

The Comforts of God

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald explores the profound comfort that God provides to believers in times of sorrow and affliction, emphasizing His promises and presence.

Duration: 34:11

Scripture: Psalm 30:5, Psalm 56:8, Isaiah 61:1-3, Hebrews 13:5, Revelation 21:4, Revelation 22:5

Topics: "God Of All Comfort"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the comforting promises of God found in the book of Revelation. He highlights the verses that describe a future state where there will be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, pain, or night. The preacher emphasizes the intimate relationship between Jesus and his people, as he shares in their sufferings. He also reminds the audience of the value God places on them, even comparing them to sparrows. The sermon concludes with a focus on the comfort of God in times of sorrow and the sufficiency of His consolations.

Transcript

This is a morning of mixed emotions here at Fairhaven. First of all, there's the joy of seeing this dear young sister publicly confess Christ as her Lord and Savior. It's wonderful.

Joining that glorious band who down through the years have taken their place in baptism and owned Him as Lord and Savior. Then I know that many of us have come here with a heavy heart too. When they think of the sorrow that has come to a much loved family here at Fairhaven, the Sharps, Eric and Shelly, Philip, Molly and Haley, our hearts go out to them and we share their grief.

I didn't have the pleasure of knowing Paul, but I know that fitting tribute will be paid to him on Wednesday at the service that is held. This morning I'd like to speak to you on the subject of the comfort of God and how God can comfort our hearts when we pass through the valley of sorrow. The verse I've chosen is in Job, Job chapter 15 and verse 11.

It's only the first part of the verse actually. It's a question. Job chapter 15 and verse 11.

The question is this. Are the consolations of God too small for you? Are the consolations of God too small for you? And I hope at the end of our talk together that we'll be able to say. His comforts are sufficient.

They truly are. So let me just go over some of the marvelous comforts of God that we find in his precious word. Second Corinthians chapter one, verses three and four.

I'll read them to you. Second Corinthians chapter one, verses three and four. 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 tribulation that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble. With a comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

It really is true that God is the only one who can adequately comfort us. We as Christians. Flee to the side of those who are sorrowing and in our own way we try to express consolations to them.

But there's nothing like. That experience when God comes to your heart. It's supernatural.

At a time when you should be devastated. At a time when you should be torn apart. And God comes to you through some verse of scripture perhaps.

Perhaps some verse of scripture comes to your memory or perhaps you're reading it in the Bible. And it lights up with a neon light. And it's just what you needed.

Just what you needed. Only God can do that and he does it. And he does it all the time.

He is the God of all comfort. So how does he comfort us? Well, dear friends, he comes to us through his word. God speaks to us through his word.

And the pathway to heaven. Is paved. With the comforts of God for his people.

Precious promises to that he has given us along the way. Isaiah chapter 63 verse 9. The comforts of God. Isaiah 63 verse 9. In all their affliction.

He was afflicted. The angel of his presence. Saved them.

In his love and in his pity. He redeemed them. And he bore them.

And carried them. All the days of old. That has been precious to me many times in life.

You don't go far through life without encountering trials and tribulations and sorrows. Tears. But you know those first verses are marvelous.

In all their afflictions. He was afflicted. Imagine that.

The personal intimacy of our God. He knows exactly what we're going through. Isn't that wonderful? He feels it.

Paul spoke of filling up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ. The Lord Jesus suffers. In the sufferings of his people.

And you could hardly have a relationship that's more intimate. And loving. Is that.

I think it's wonderful to know. He knows just. What I'm going through.

And he cares. He cares. And he's working all things together.

For good to those who love him. Or the called. Luke chapter 12 verses 6 and 7. Luke chapter 12.

Verses 6 and 7. Are not two sparrows sold for two copper coins. And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are numbered.

Do not fear. Therefore. You are of more value.

Than many sparrows. There's hardly anything. In creature life that's more insignificant.

Than a sparrow. I think it was Spurgeon who said that if you take all the sparrows. If you take all the feathers off a sparrow.

There's hardly enough left to make soup for a sick grasshopper or something like that. That's an insignificant burden. And it preaches.

It's a Bible teacher. It's a Bible. Preaching to us all the time.

Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins. Not one of them is forgotten before God. Amazing.

Of course. We're of more value to God than sparrows are. And if it's true.

As Dr. Ironside said that. God attends the funeral of every sparrow. He does.

He attends the funeral of every sparrow. How much more. Does it mean to him.

What we are. Passing through the very hairs of your head are numbered. Do not fear.

Therefore. You are of more value. Than many sparrows.

We have a God who loves. We have a God who cares for us. We have a God who knows.

What we're passing through. Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5. Hebrews chapter 13 verse 5. For he himself has said. I will never leave you.

Nor forsake you. What is a wonderful thing it is to be in a personal relationship with the one who created the world. And with the one who died for us on Calvary's cross.

And hear him say to us in all the trials. Afflictions. Problems and difficulties of life.

I will never leave you. Nor forsake you. Sometimes our tears.

Stop us from seeing how near he is. That was the trouble with Mary in the garden. He was there.

But her tears. Hid him. From her view.

That's often time. True. With us.

Wonderful to have him come in as it were put his. Arm around your shoulder and say I'll never leave you. Nor forsake you.

The seminary student. Had come home and he was. Seeking to share the word with a dear old sister.

And he pointed out to her that. That verb that word never is a very intensive form here. It's as if the writer to Hebrews had said.

I will never. Never. Never.

Leave you or forsake you. The dear old sister said well. That's OK.

For you Greek students but once is enough for me. Never. And I think most of us can say that.

Just to have the Lord say to us. Don't you worry. I'm with you always.

Even. Until the end of the age. Isaiah chapter 41 verse 10 is somewhat similar.

But we don't want to pass it by. Fear not. For I am with you.

Be not dismayed. For I am your God. I will strengthen you.

I will help you. I will uphold you. With my righteous.

Right hand. I like that I am your God. He's the God of Abraham.

God of Isaac. God of Jacob. But you can put your name in there too.

If you know him. You're saved by his wonderful grace. He's the God.

Of John. And Jane. And any other believer.

Whose name you want to put. In there. Be not dismayed for I am your God.

I will strengthen you. Yeah I will help you. I will uphold you.

With my righteous. Right hand. Hebrews chapter 4 verse 15.

Hebrews chapter 4 verse 15. For we do not have. A high priest.

Who cannot sympathize. With our weaknesses. Sympathize.

He was in all points tempted as we are. Yet without sin. The Lord Jesus knows exactly.

What we are going through. With that single exception participation in sin. He took our sins.

And our sorrows and made them his very own. Went all the way to Calvary. To save us.

By his grace. When it says he was in all points tempted as we are. He was tempted from without.

But he was never tempted from within. You and I can be tempted from within and from without. Jesus was never tempted.

From within. He was sinless spotless. Pure.

You could say the prince of this age comes and finds nothing in me. He knew no sin. He was without sin.

He did no sin. Romans chapter 8 verse 18. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time.

Are not worthy to be compared. With the glory which shall be revealed. In us.

Just think of this verse with me for a while. The sufferings of this present time. The glory which shall be revealed.

In us. It's a vivid contrast, isn't it? And what Paul what Paul is saying here in effect is this. If you take all of those sufferings that we go through at the present time.

There are nothing but pinpricks. Compared to the glory. That shall be revealed in us.

Paul lived in heaven a long time before he was ever there. Didn't he? And he thought of being there in a glorified body just like the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus. Body without sin.

He said anything we go through in life. Is hardly worth talking about. When you think.

Of the glory which shall be revealed. In us. And 2nd Corinthians.

417 is similar to that it says for our. Light affliction. Which is but for a moment.

Is working for us. A far more exceeding. An eternal weight of glory.

In other words, no matter what I might be called to go through with the way of suffering. It's light. It's light.

It's working for me a far more exceeding an eternal. Weight of glory. I'll tell you that speaks peace to the troubled heart.

Psalms 88. Twenty two. Cast your burden on the Lord.

And he shall sustain you. You shall never permit the righteous. To be moved.

This is something we can actually do. We don't always do it. Sometimes we just insist on bearing our own burdens.

But the Lord Jesus is there all the time. Say Lord Jesus. We can say to the Lord Jesus.

This is too much for me. The trials of life are ganging up on me. I'm just going to cast them on you.

Will he take them? Of course he'll take them. Don't you take them back. No need of two of you.

And bearing them. He has promised to do the bearing. We all love Deuteronomy.

Thirty three. Twenty seven. Underneath.

Are the everlasting arms. Underneath are the everlasting arms. It might seem at times in life that the scaffolding is falling around all around us.

Murphy's Law is operating as they say. If anything is going to happen it will happen. Today.

Underneath. For the child of God. Underneath are the everlasting arms.

Nothing can come. Apart from his. Permissive will.

I think of all the comforts of Scripture. One of the most precious to me is Psalm. Thirty.

And verse five. It says weeping. May endure for a night.

But joy. Comes in the morning. Not good.

Weeping may endure for a night. But joy. Comes in the morning.

When I was younger. Quite a lot younger. Our family was called upon to go through a very deep sorrow.

Very deep sorrow. And our dear friends came around. The elders came around.

And talked with us. And prayed with us. And we appreciated it.

It was wonderful. But I'll tell you what was even more wonderful. We got a letter from an esteemed servant of the Lord.

He wrote it in his scrawly handwriting. And down at the bottom. He wrote Psalm.

Thirty. Five. Thirty.

Verse five. And we looked it up. And it said weeping may endure for a night.

Joy. Comes in the morning. And you know that.

That broke the chains of sorrow. That day. For us.

It's all we needed. That's how the God of comfort works. Giving you a verse like.

Psalm. Thirty. Verse five.

And that verse will always be precious to me. What do you think about Psalm. Fifty.

Six. Verse. Eight.

Psalm. Fifty. Six.

Verse. Eight. The word of God is really wonderful.

Psalm. Fifty. Six.

Verse. Eight. It says.

You number my wanderings. Put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? Isn't that wonderful? Our tears are precious enough.

To God. That he saves them in a bottle. Now, I know that's figurative language.

It's poetic language. It's beautiful, isn't it? You've already got them registered in your book. Does God know every tear that has fallen from my eyes? Every one of them.

Every one of them. And they really. Are meaningful.

To him. Isaiah. Sixty.

One. Verses. One.

And three. Isaiah. Sixty.

One. Verses. One and three.

And the Lord Jesus is speaking, of course, prophetically here. The Lord has anointed me. To give them.

Beauty. For ashes. The oil of joy.

For mourning. And the garment of praise. For the spirit of heaviness.

I want to tell you. Beloved friends. That's marvelous.

When the Lord can take all of these untoward things in life. And change them into things of beauty. God can take.

All our sorrows. He can. Make beauty out of ashes.

The oil of joy. For mourning. The garment of praise.

For the spirit of heaviness. You may not think so at the time. But this is only a chapter.

You haven't read the whole book yet. And you don't know. How God is going to work it out.

Eventually. This is a comfort to me. First.

John. Three. Two.

Beloved. Now. We are children of God.

It has not yet been revealed. What we shall be. But we know that when he.

Is revealed. We shall be like him. But we shall see him as he is.

Poet has said. Our earthen vessels break. The world itself.

Grows old. But Christ this precious dust will take. And freshly mold.

You'll change these bodies vile. He'll fashion like his own. He'll bid the whole creation smile.

And hush. It's grown. It's wonderful to me to think that.

A sinner of the Gentiles. As I was. God should save me.

By his grace. And destined me. To be morally and spiritually.

Like the Lord Jesus. In a coming day. I don't think the human mind can.

Conceive of anything better than that. We shall be like him. But we shall see him.

As he is. And Paul says similarly in. Philippians chapter three verses.

Twenty and twenty one. For our citizenship is in heaven. From whence we.

Also eagerly wait for the savior. The Lord Jesus Christ. Who will transform our lowly body.

That it may be conformed. To his glorious body. According to the working.
By which he is able. Even to subdue all things. To himself.
He's going to take these bodies of our humiliation. Which they are. He's going to transform the same body.
But in a glorified state. According to the working. By which he's able to subdue all things.
To himself. And then we have those marvelous verses in the. Book of Revelation.
Revelation chapter twenty one verse four. And God will wipe away. Every tear from their eyes.
There shall be no more death. Nor sorrow. Nor crying.
And there shall be no more pain. For the former things. Have passed away.
And Revelation twenty two verse five. And there shall be no night there. They need no lamp.
Nor the light of the sun. For the Lord God giveth them light. They shall reign.
Forever and ever. One of our hem writers wrote. We shall see his lovely face.
Some bright. Glorious morning. When the clouds have rifted.
The shades have flown. Sorrow. Will be turned to joy.
Heartaches. Gone forever. No more night.
Only light. When we see his face. God shall wipe away all tears.
Some bright. Glorious morning. When the journey's ended.
And the course is run. No more crying. Pain or death.
In that home of gladness. Trials. Cease.
All is peace. When we see his face. We shall meet to part no more.
Some bright glorious morning. At the gates of glory. Where our loved ones stand.
Songs of victory. Fill the skies. In that hour of greeting.
Endless days. Endless praise. When we see.
His face. I'd just like to dwell for a moment or two on those verses. No more.
There shall be no more. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death.
Nor sorrow. Crying. There shall be no more pain.
For the former things. Passed away. And I was thinking about those two words.
No more recently. And I took my pencil and started. Making a list of the things.

That there won't be. Any more of. What we have in heaven.
No more sin. I want to be in heaven friends. I want to be in heaven where.
I'll never grieve the heart of Christ again. By sinning. Don't you.
To me that's joy. Everlasting joy. No more sorrow.
We live in a world of sorrow. You don't believe it. Read the newspapers.
Day by day. What is it? Sorrow. But God is going to wipe all tears.
Away. No more tears in heaven. No more sickness.
No more cancer. No more heart trouble. No more Parkinson's disease.
No more. Alzheimer's disease. Is that wonderful.
Breaks my heart. Breaks my heart to go to Bethesda and see. Dear people who had such brilliant minds.
You know. And now they're laid aside with. Alzheimer's disease.
I'm glad there's going to be no. Alzheimer's disease in my heaven. Arthritis.
Impaired vision. Cataracts. Macular.
Degeneration. Tell you that's something. For us to look forward to.
Not you but me. No more hearing loss. And no more memory loss.
Just imagine all the doctors and nurses will be. Unemployed. But so will Bible teachers.
No more. Infirmary. I like this.
No more needles. Tubes. Wires.
Antibiotics. Cat scans. Or wheelchairs.
Heaven's going to be a wonderful place. No more pain. You don't need a leave anymore.
Or Tylenol. No more death. Death is a time of separation.
Separation from loved ones. No more death in heaven. No more accidents.
No more tragedy. No more war. I love it when I read in Isaiah 2 for.
They shall learn war. No more. Good.
We won't need Annapolis. Or West Point. Or the Air Force Academy anymore.
No war. There all is peace. When we see.
His face. No more complaining. Do you complain? I don't think I've ever heard so much complaining as when I was in the Navy.

It's a way of living in the Navy. But I read in my Bible once that God doesn't like complaining. And so I'm trying.

The rest of my life not to complain. I told you about my friend in Chicago. I used to say to him, Jim, how are you? And he'd say, it would be a sin to complain.

No more worry. You know, some of us are proud of our worry. We say, well, if we didn't worry, there'd be precious little of it done around here.

No worry in heaven. No more stress. We live in a world of stress, don't we? There'll be no more night there.

I think of dear people. Right now in beds of illness and. Awake through the night hours longing for the first gleam of dawn.

You know, night. In heaven. And no more sea.

I've often wondered about that expression. Revelation 21 one. There'll be no more sea.

Well, the seas separate us. Some of you are separated from loved ones. They're in a different continent.

There'll be no more sea in that sense. No more. Separation.

So we come back to our initial question. Are the consolations of God too small for you? And we can say from our hearts. Lord Jesus.

Your comforts are all that I need. I don't like to close without giving an opportunity for any here who may not be decided Christians. And there's always that possibility.

What I've been saying to you probably has been just so much idle talk. It's just not part of your experience. But God wants it to be.

Sooner or later. If not already. You're going to be called to go through difficult times.

If God spares you. As it is now. You have no hope beyond.

No harbor waiting where your storm tossed vessel. You can see steer. I just like to invite you to.

Come to the Savior. No his intimate. Personal love for you.

And here his promise. I will never leave you. Nor forsake you.

Say how do I do that? Well it's not so very difficult. You just come before the Lord. And you say Lord Jesus.

I know I'm a sinner. I know I deserve your judgment. But I believe that.

You died for me on the cross of Calvary. I believe that you paid the penalty for my sin. And the best way I know how.

I trust you as my Savior. I believe you died for me. And I receive you.

As my own. Is that too difficult. It's as easy as opening a door and going through.

As easy as eating bread. Christ is the bread of life. We pray that you will do it.

Today shall we pray. Blessed God we come with grateful hearts to you. And we think of.

Of your word and how it speaks to us in every. Circumstance of life. Especially in times of sorrow and trial and tribulation.

How we can come to this sacred book. And hear you. Giving us these wonderful promises.

Promises of your guidance your protection. Your care for us. Every step.

Of the way we pray especially. For. Eric and Shelley and their family at this time.

That you will pour in the bomb of Gilead. Into their lives. Comfort their souls.

We ask it. Should there be some here today who do not know you. Lord Jesus.

We pray that they might. Quit stalling. That they might bury their pride.

They might come as contrite sinners. And receive the Savior. We ask it in his worthy name.

And for his sake. Amen.

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