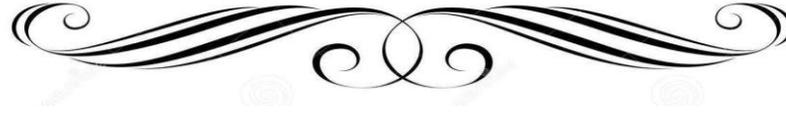


“The Comfort of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” *



Where do you go to find comfort when faced with challenges, trials, hardships, or disappointments? Some seek their comfort in alcohol, drugs, or sex. Others seek their comfort in man-centered philosophy, or in the keeping of religious rituals and ceremonies; still others by dedicating their lives to social causes. All of these may bring a temporary form of comfort but they will never be the kind of comfort that is lasting, not just in life but also in death. Is there a better, more lasting solution?

The answer is definitely yes! Let’s consider the only true comfort in life and in death, which is found only in God, our Creator, Judge, Redeemer, and Heavenly Father.

God Our Creator

In six ordinary days God created all that exists, including man, who was created after God’s own image in true righteousness and holiness¹. In creating him in this way, God made man so that he would be able to obey His righteous laws so that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him, and live with Him in the comfort of eternal blessedness, to praise and glorify Him, forever².

But all mankind, because of the disobedience our first parents, Adam and Eve, became incapable of obeying God’s righteous law perfectly; and became prone by nature to hate God and our neighbor. Because of sin we became spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins coming under the control and influence our own sinful lusts and desires; lifting ourselves up being wise in our own conceit. We rejected His comfort in rebellion and hostility toward Him seeking our own way³.

God our Judge

Further, Since God is a Holy God and by His nature cannot be in the presence of sin and will not allow such disobedience and turning away from Him to go unpunished, He became our Judge. He declared all mankind guilty before Him and man came under the condemnation of sin carrying with it the sentence of death, eternal separation from God and fellowship with Him broken. Our punishment was and is both in time and eternity. All of mankind came under the curse of the Law and condemned to eternal damnation in Hell⁴.

Since mankind became hopelessly lost in sin, helpless to save himself, and unable or unwilling to restore fellowship with God His Creator and His comfort, how can man be saved from this condemnation and delivered from his bondage to sin?

God our Savior and Redeemer⁵

God wills that His justice be satisfied; therefore we must make full satisfaction to that justice, either by ourselves or by another on our behalf. The problem is that we are not capable of saving ourselves, nor do we see our need to be saved. In fact, we add to our guilt daily. Not only that, no mere creature can bear the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin, much less, redeem others from it⁶. Since no man or any creature can satisfy God's justice, what kind of mediator and redeemer must we seek to save us from our sins?

The answer is that person must be one who is a true and righteous man and yet more powerful than all creatures; that is, one who is also true God. It is this man who will be able by the power of His Godhead to bear in his manhood the burden of God's wrath, and so obtain for and restore to us righteousness and life⁷.

Does such a man exist, who is true God and true man? **The good news** is that He does! It is **our Lord Jesus Christ**, who by the grace of God is freely given to us for complete redemption and righteousness. He bore the burden of God's wrath against our sins in His body on the cross, the just dying for the unjust. Once and for all time, He made full satisfaction to God's justice on our behalf, saving us from eternal condemnation by His death, and by His resurrection from the dead we are assured that we have been justified and eternal life obtained⁸. But are all men saved by Christ as they have been condemned in Adam?

God our Father and God the Holy Spirit

The answer is that only those who are born again by God the Holy Spirit. He makes sinners, who are dead in their sins, alive in Christ. He also gives renewed sinners the gift of faith to believe, so that they are made willing and able to receive all His benefits⁹. It is in this way that God becomes our heavenly Father. Sinners are declared righteous in Christ, and made fit to be adopted by God as His children; also said to be the *“called-out ones,”* who are separated from others who are redeemed by the blood of Christ and saved from the penalty and power of their sin to live to Him out of thankfulness to Him¹⁰. They are commonly called in the New Testament, *“the saints in Christ Jesus.”*

What is this faith that is given by the Holy Spirit? It is not only a sure knowledge that steadfastly holds for truth all that is revealed to us in God’s Word; it is also an unwavering and heartfelt trust that is worked in sinners’ hearts by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel, where it is declared that forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness, and salvation are freely given by God, by grace alone, only for the sake of Christ’s merits¹¹.

So it is only those who by true faith come to God through Jesus Christ that a right relationship is restored between God and the sinner. Therefore, in order to be righteous before God, the sinner, by true faith, must come to God confessing that although his conscience accuses him, that he has grievously sinned against all the commandments of God, and has never kept any of them, and is still prone always to all evil; yet, God, without any merit of the sinner, by grace alone, grants and imputes to him the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if he had never committed nor had any sins, and had himself performed all the obedience that Christ has fulfilled for him; if only he accepts solely such benefit with a believing heart¹².

It is only by coming to God in this way that sinners will be saved and know the comfort of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today is the day of salvation - won’t you this day come to God in true repentance of your sins, by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, relying fully in His saving work on cross for the forgiveness of sins, embracing Him alone as your living hope of that eternal inheritance obtained for you? If you will, it will evidence that special work of grace in your

heart, and you will begin in this life to taste of the comfort and joy of belonging to God as His child through Christ Jesus our Lord, who will also keep and protect you no matter the challenges, trials, hardships, or disappointments.

Oh, what a comfort in life and in death, both of body and soul!!!^{**}

To talk further about the comfort of the gospel, please contact:

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Bible References:

¹Genesis 1:26-27, 31

²Ephesian 4:24; Colossians 3:10

³Genesis Chapter 3; Romans 5:12, 18-19; 3:9-20; Psalm 51:5; Genesis 8:21

⁴Hebrews 9:27, Deuteronomy 27:26; John 3:18; Romans 6:23; Galatians 3:10-12; Matthew 25:41

⁵Exodus 34:6-7

⁶Psalm 5:5-6; Revelation 14:11; Exodus 23:7; Romans 8:3-4; Job 9:2-3; 15:15-16; Matthew 16:26; Hebrews 2:14-18; 10:4; Psalm 130:3

⁷1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 25-26; Jeremiah 13:16; Isaiah 53:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:15-16; Isaiah 7:14; Hebrews 7:26; Romans 5:15; Isaiah 53:3-5, 8; Acts 2:24; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:2

⁸Matthew 1:23; 1 Timothy 3:16; Luke 2:11; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Acts 4:12

⁹John 1:12-13; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Ephesians 2:1-10; Hebrews 4:2-3; 10:39

¹⁰Romans 3:24, 28; 4:4-5; 10:10; Ephesians 2:8; 1 John 2:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:19, 21; John 3:18

¹¹James 1:6; Romans 4:16-18; 5:1; 1 Peter 1:1-4; Philippians 2:13; Romans 1:16-17; 10:17; Ephesians 2:7-9; Galatians 3:24-25; Galatians 2:16; Acts 10:43

¹²John 20:21; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:15; John 6:35-40; 10:27-29

¹³1 Peter 1:3-9; Ephesians 1:11-14

** This presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is drawn from the Bible as expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism*

*** Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-5*