

God Comforts in the Afflictions of Life

Introduction and Review

- Believers have a glorious future in the new heavens & earth (Rev. 21:1-5a)
- In this present life there is much that causes pain & grief
- Paul writes this letter to a church that is causing him pain & grief – opposition
- Paul gives encouragement & instruction for handling affliction & suffering with the grace of Jesus Christ

I. Believers Experience Suffering & Afflictions

A. All believers suffer

Church leaders & members face suffering. Both are called & appointed by God – “by the will of God” (v. 1-2; 1Co. 1:1-2; 12:18, 24b). Church leaders & members must have the confidence of God’s calling in order to endure the suffering in life & ministry. The emphasis is on affliction & sufferings for righteousness sake (Phil. 1:29; Mt. 5:10-11).

B. All kinds of suffering

There are many kinds of affliction & sufferings for Christ’s sake – “any affliction” (v. 4) & “sufferings” (v. 6). Some forms of affliction & sufferings are life-threatening (v. 8-9a).

All believers will experience suffering of some kind in varying degrees.

II. God Comforts Believers in Suffering & Afflictions (v. 3-4a)

A. God comforts all believers

Comfort (παρακαλέω) means to encourage, strengthen or help. Our heavenly Father comforts all his children without bias (Rom. 2:11; Mt. 7:11). God comforts us in two ways: encourages us “in” affliction (v. 4a) or delivers us “from” affliction (v. 10a).

B. God comforts in all kinds of suffering

No trouble or suffering in life is beyond God’s ability to show compassion & encourage a believer – “who comforts us in all our affliction” (v. 4a). God’s comfort is always present & available when we need it – “abundantly” (v. 5).

All believers can experience God’s comfort in any suffering!

III. God Has Purpose for Comfort in Afflictions

A. Praise for our God (v. 3, 9b-11)

God is worthy of praise because of who He is – (v. 3). God is worthy of praise because of what He has done: taught us not to trust in ourselves (v. 9b-10) & to ask other believers for help (v. 11).

B. Comfort for other believers (v. 4, 6-7)

*God comforts believers in order to **make us comforters** (v. 4; Jn. 13:14). God comforts us in suffering with HOPE so that we will give HOPE to others who are suffering (v. 6-7).*

God comforts believers in order to make us worshippers & comforters!