**“The Ministry of Comfort” The Present Truth 13, 5, p. 70.**

AS a sparrow cannot fall on the ground without your Father, much less can anything fall into your life without your Father. And when anything does fall into your life, it is only that you may be more able to minister to all others the knowledge of God; it is only that you may be able the better to convey to others the knowledge of the salvation of God. This also is written. Here it is: “And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation.” Why was Paul afflicted?—It was for the consolation and salvation of other people. Why was Christ afflicted? Why was He, the majesty of heaven, made as we are, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?—It was for the consolation and salvation of all. Why, then, are *you* afflicted?—It is for the consolation and salvation of other people. That is the truth. The Lord says it, and it is so. {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.1}

Yet many, instead of looking at trials and afflictions in this way, allow Satan to deceive them into thinking that the Lord is angry with them, and is punishing them for some great sin that they are afraid they have done. And so instead of meeting, in their trial or their affliction, “the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort,” they see only the black, scowling face of a god of vengeance, of their own imaginings and Satan’s suggestion. And thus, instead of meeting God’s purpose in being, by these experiences, made better able to comfort them that are in any trouble, and to bear consolation and salvation to other people, they only cripple themselves in them. Let it not be so any more. Let God be true, and say with Paul: “Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation;” “or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.” So that whether we are in affliction or in comfort, there is to be consolation and salvation to others in it. {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.2}

There are on every hand those who are in trouble, those who are afflicted, those who are sorely tried and in discouragement. They do not know God; they do not find Him and His comfort, His power, His strength, His courage. Christians are in the world to convey to these poor, troubled souls the comfort of God. Christians are here to say to them that are cast down. In God “there is lifting up;” to say to the discouraged, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world;” “be strong and of a good courage;” to the weak, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” Christians are here to “comfort them which are in *any* trouble.” {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.3}

And now the Lord knows whom you will meet next week or next year. He knows now what will be the trouble of those souls when you do meet them. He wants you to be able, when you meet those souls, to comfort them with the comfort of God. But you are not prepared now to do that; for you have never had the experience that will be the experience of those souls when you meet them. Therefore, that you may be able to minister to their good when you meet them next week or next year, the Lord leads you to-day through the experience which you need in order that you may be able to comfort them when you meet them. So that what He is doing with you now by these experiences, is simply making you a better minister of his grace, a better minister of the knowledge of Himself in every place. It may be that He leads you through the dark waters that fairly go over the soul. But do not fear nor faint. Jesus went that way before you. And now He says, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee.... I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand.” “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” I comfort thee, that thou mayest be able to comfort them which are in any trouble; that thou mayest be for consolation and salvation, in every place. {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.4}

This is what the Father did with the Son in this world, that He might bring consolation and salvation to you and me. This is what Jesus did with Paul, “for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.” If “it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings,” shall we say that it does not become us? If, in order “that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God,” “in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren,” shall it be that we, whom He has made a royal priesthood, shall shun to partake of like experiences of our fellow men, in order that we may the better convey to them the knowledge of God? If in order that He might be “able to succour them that are tempted,” it was necessary that He Himself should suffer, being tempted in all points like as we are, shall it be that we shall shun the trials and sufferings of mankind, and so shut ourselves of mankind, and so shut ourselves off from being able to succour the tempted, to comfort the afflicted, and to lift up the cast down? {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.5}

No, no! “As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.... Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” “As He is, so are we in this world.” We are here in Christ’s stead, praying men “in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” Therefore let every one who has name the name of Christ say in the joy and courage of a living faith, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-5. {PTUK February 4, 1897, p. 70.6}

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