

The Christian's Comfort

Dear Reader,

Do you enjoy true comfort?

True comfort helps us deal with life's troubles and uncertainties. We need this true comfort, because life always will have troubles.

The elderly know this. The body breaks down; the organs do not work as they should any longer; aches and pains are constant; and all this reminds us that death is coming.

The young need true comfort too. Disease and sickness come on people of any age; loss of job, troubles in relationships, and other problems afflict the young as well as old. When all goes well with us, we might forget that we need true comfort - but we do.

Even if we do not admit we need such comfort, our life shows that we are trying to find it. Some deal with life's problems by turning to drugs or alcohol. Others try to buy happiness with money or possessions. Some pursue sport or recreation, take many trips and vacations, and "live life to the fullest."

Money, possessions, sports, recreation, vacations, are not wrong; but they do not give us true comfort.

None of these things take our troubles away. None of them help us be satisfied and happy *in* our troubles. All they do is help us forget our troubles for a little while. When our earthly pleasures are over, and we remember our troubles again, they are as real and big as ever.

We need a *true* comfort - one which helps us see that, even if our troubles do not go away, they will not destroy or defeat us; one which helps us say of our troubles: "these serve a greater good!" One which puts a smile on our face, even *while* we suffer!

The 15 year old boy, dying of cancer, but not afraid! The elderly lady, suffering the effects of childhood polio the rest of her life, walking on two crutches, always smiling! The man, oxygen tank at his side, always interested in hearing how *you* were, not dwelling on his own problems!

These people had true comfort. It showed in all their life.

What is this true comfort? That we do not belong to ourselves, but to Jesus Christ.

Let me quote one beautiful statement of this comfort. I refer to the first question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism, written in 1563, which for centuries has been a catechism of Reformed churches and believers.

Q. What is thy only comfort in life and death?

A. That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who, with His precious blood, hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, and therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto Him.

Notice the aspects of this comfort.

First, I do not own myself, but I belong to Christ in life and in death. Romans 14:8 says: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

Second, I belong to Christ because by dying on the cross, He fully paid for my sins. I Peter

2:24 says: “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.”

Third, because I belong to Christ, He will take care of me! He views and treats me as a precious possession. He governs every part of my life, down to the smallest details (hairs falling from our head, Matthew 10:30, Luke 21:18)! If He governs our bodies in such detail, He also cares for our souls. Romans 8:28 says: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.”

Fourth, because I belong to Christ, I will serve Him gladly in this life. When I die, I will go to heaven to live with Him and serve Him forever. “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

This is true comfort.

It does not take our troubles away today. But it reminds us that God who sends us our troubles, still loves us. And this comfort reminds us that when our troubles are finally over, we will not be destroyed - we will live with God forever, free of trouble!

Only those who sincerely profess Jesus Christ as God and Savior enjoy this comfort.

Every Christian, professing Christ as Savior, has days when he does not feel this comfort. That is because we are not looking to Christ for it; we are looking to other creatures.

Those who refuse to profess Christ as Savior, will not enjoy this comfort.

Those who do not profess Christ as Savior, but desire true comfort, can find it in the way of learning of Christ and trusting in Him.

For to know Him, and the God who sent Him, is to have eternal life! (John 17:3).

Pastor Douglas Kuiper

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

John 17:3

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. . . Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

Psalms 23:1, 4

For the LORD shall comfort Zion: . . . I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die?

Isaiah 52:3, 12

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.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4