

**Cultivating Covenant Community**  
A Study of the One-Another Commands of Scripture

**Lesson 10: Comfort One Another**

Key Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

**When others in the church are grieving, we are called to comfort one another.**

1. **God's Plan to Make Us Comforters** (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)
  - a. God cares deeply about our grief.
    - i. He is the Father of mercies and God of all comfort (v. 3).
  - b. God comforts us so that we can comfort others.
    - i. He wants us to be instruments of comfort (v. 4).
    - ii. We comfort others with the same comfort we have received from God.
    - iii. Application- When you are suffering, recognize God is at work. He is preparing you to minister to other sufferers. Ask yourself: in what ways have I suffered and how does God want to use me to comfort others who have suffered in similar ways?
  - c. We share in both suffering and comfort through our union with Christ.
    - i. This is both individual and communal (vv. 5-7).
2. **Christian Comfort is Deeply Theological** (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
  - a. In this passage, Paul is seeking both to comfort the Thessalonian believers and to show them how to comfort one another (v. 18). What Paul teaches the Thessalonians in 4:13-17, he wants the Thessalonians to teach each other for the sake of mutual encouragement!
  - b. The source of their distress is a misunderstanding of good theology about the return of Christ. That's why Paul says, "But we do not want you to be uninformed..." (v. 13).
    - i. The Thessalonians thought that their deceased loved ones had missed out on the return of Christ and the resurrection.
  - c. Christians grieve with hope (v. 14).
  - d. The hope comes from Jesus and what He shall do when He returns.
    - i. The dead in Christ will be raised (v.16).
    - ii. We will meet the Lord in the air and always be with the Lord (v.17).
  - e. Application- When seeking to comfort others in their grief, we must certainly be careful and wise with our words. It is easy to speak the truth unseasonably or make trite comments, which are not helpful. At the same time, we must look for appropriate opportunities to comfort with words of hope.
3. **Jesus Shows Us the Way** (John 11:17-37)
  - a. Notice how Martha and Mary make the same statement to Jesus in their grief.

- i. Martha: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” (v. 21)
  - ii. Mary: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” (v. 32)
  - iii. But even though they both said the same thing, Jesus responds to them differently. With Martha, He gives her hope with truth (v. 23, v. 25). With Mary, He simply weeps with her (v. 35).
- b. Jesus knows exactly what each of us need. He is the perfect comforter.
  - c. We also learn from Him that comforting one another is intensely personal.

#### 4. **Closing Applications**

- a. You don't always need to say anything. Be present with others in their suffering. Job's friends did the right thing at first (Job 2:11-13).
- b. Be mindful that many suffer in silence. It's easy to overlook them. This calls for us to be sensitive and ask others how they are truly doing.
- c. At appropriate times, give brief words of hope.
- d. When others are suffering, listen carefully and avoid the inclination to rush to judgment. We often say things that aren't true when our hearts are hurting, and we don't always need immediate correction.