

Sunday, January 8th sermon: "The Comfort Promised! The God of All Comforts (Pt 1)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,
by John Pittman Hey

Psalm 103:6-14; Micah 7:18-20

Recently, a very sad thing happened – a Reformed philosopher suddenly announced that he had "de-converted," and no longer could call himself a Christian. He no longer had any faith, and no longer believes in the deity of Christ, or in salvation by His blood shed at Calvary. But he still claims to be a theist, and to still hold the Reformed view of God's sovereignty.

This man's reason was, that when he went through a very tough personal crisis, he sought the comfort of God, but God never provided him with any comfort.

All this underlines the danger of elevating philosophy over God's Word, and seeking a logically rigorous knowledge outside of God's true revelation.

In reality, we can only know the truth about God from His divine revelation to us in His Word, no matter what philosophy tells us.

God's Word declares that God comforts us, consoles us, and sympathizes with us in our troubles.

The Old Testament promises this. The New Testament reveals to us the comfort of Jesus and the Holy Ghost.

In Psalm 111, the psalmist first establishes the glory and power of God's works, and their righteousness, and the fact that the Lord's people delight in them, and seek to remember them.

But then he asserts: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion!

God's comfort and compassion and grace are seen in His mighty power and righteousness. He provides for us, and His promises to us are sure and never to be forgotten.

By showing His people the power of His works, He assures us that His covenant with us will never fail. He has sent redemption to us, and we ought to have a proper fear for our God.

God's power prevails for His people! This is not so for the false gods who have no power.

In Psalm 103, God's righteousness and justice is provided for the oppressed.

God is merciful and gracious and slow to anger against His people.

God has not treated us according to our sins, but has put away our sins from before Him, and has forgiven us!

God pities us like a father pities his children, for our God knows our weakness, that we are but dust.

Think of it: in our world, wicked, powerful people exploit and abuse the weak and the helpless, but not so our kind God, Who pities us in our weakness.

Note carefully that God's comfort of us is principally seen in His forgiveness of our sins.

This is observed most strongly in Isaiah 40, where God comforts His people in this, our iniquity is pardoned by God! Judgment is past for His people!

God promises that, one day, the glory of the Lord will be revealed in this most important matter, and all the world will see it.

And when the Lord Jesus came into this world, Luke applied this promise of Isaiah 40, to declare that the glory that was foretold, is now revealed to be the Salvation of God by Christ!

The comfort of God for us, promised in the Old Testament, is now disclosed in the person of His Dear Son, our Savior, sent to take away our sin.

The comfort of God, as principally displayed by His pardoning of our sin, is even more clearly expressed in Micah 7: Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by our transgressions, because He delights in mercy!

He will have compassion on us, He will subdue our iniquities, and cast them all into the deep sea.

The greatness of God's gift to us in Jesus Christ, is because our sins are very great. As lost people, we sin in everything we do.

We hardly know how great our sins are. But God knows! He knows them all!

Because of that, our doom is sure, the judgment must fall upon us, God's wrath against our sin will be furious.

Therefore, the greatest comfort we could possibly receive from God, which was promised by God in olden times, is the pardoning of our sin, the taking away of our iniquities!

Pity the poor philosopher, who claimed God's comfort never came to him, because he did not grasp the horror of his own sin, and thereby missed the joy of having it taken away.

He now rejects the very One sent by God to be the comfort for poor sinners!

This poor man, so learned, never learnt the wisdom and faith of old Simeon, who when he held the baby Jesus in his arms, proclaimed that his eyes had now seen God's salvation, Whom God had prepared before the face of the people!

The comfort of God revealed!

How glorious that God should reveal to us that comfort in the incarnation of God the Son!

Indeed, our comfort from God is embodied, literally personified, in our Lord Jesus!

At the Lord's Table, we celebrate how Jesus took away our sins, and brought in that long-promised comfort for poor sinners from God.

Our sins were laid on Jesus, and in His very body He was punished in our place by God, so that we might be set free from judgment and wrath.

By His very own blood shed, all who trust in Him receive forgiveness of sins.

There is comfort in Christ's sacrifice at Calvary – comfort promised by God from of old, and now seen, visible and manifest in His Beloved Son.