

20-0202a Transcript

20-0202a - *Faith, Comfort, and Gospel Perseverance*, Steve Cain

Bible Readers: Not recorded and Dominic Donnellan

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Finding Comfort and Assurance Through Faith: A Call to Perseverance in the Gospel

Transcript (0:00 - 25:01)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader

This first scripture reading was not recorded.

2nd Reader: Dominic Donnellan

(0:00) The second scripture reading will be out of Hebrews 10, verses 19 through 25. (0:08) That's Hebrews 10, verses 19 through 25, found on page 1203 in the Black Pew Bibles. (0:19) Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, (0:25) by a new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the veil that is his flesh, (0:32) and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart, (0:39) in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil, (0:44) conscious, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope (0:51) without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stimulate (0:58) one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, (1:04) as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day (1:10) drawing near.

Transcript

Preacher: Steve Cain

(1:20) Good morning once again. Good to see everyone out this morning.

(1:28) My passage that I'm going to develop today and this morning is found in 2 Corinthians. (1:35) Be looking at the first chapter in particular.

We want to recognize the fact that God is (1:47) creator of all mankind, and it is our concern to be pleasing to him and to know how to worship him. (1:56) And we know that God has not been silent

as to what pleases him, what our lifestyle ought to be, (2:03) how we ought to conduct ourselves in our life. It's no secret because he's made it known to us (2:11) right from the very beginning.

And we also know that he's let us know how to worship him, (2:18) and he's made that known right from the very beginning. And so it is with that in mind that (2:24) we want to make sure that we're worshiping God in spirit and in truth. And it is with this in mind (2:30) that we come together to acknowledge God and to receive him and to honor him in every way that we (2:40) can in our lives.

Let's go to our Heavenly Father in prayer as we prepare for this lesson. (2:48) Most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for your love. We know that John 3.16, (2:56) we have it memorized that you sent your one and only son to die on the cross for us so that we (3:02) might have the forgiveness of our sins.

But we also know that you did not send him into this (3:07) world to condemn the world, but to give us the hope that we can have of being with you eternally. (3:15) We pray that as we understand this and grasp a hold of the fact that this hope is found in Jesus, (3:21) there is no other name under heaven whereby man may be saved. We are constantly given that (3:28) information and for us to forget it or to ignore it is to our shame because we know that that's (3:35) exactly how we are to come before you and how we are to worship you and how we are to please you (3:41) and to conduct our lives after the manner of Jesus' teachings and instructions.

We thank you (3:48) for the privilege of being able to be here this morning to reflect upon his death, burial, and (3:54) resurrection, to reflect upon that which he accomplished in providing us with the forgiveness (4:00) of our sins and the hope of eternal life in heaven with you. We pray these things in Jesus Christ's (4:07) name. Amen.

We're looking at 2 Corinthians, the first chapter, (4:17) and as we do that, I would like for us just to go ahead and read that account. (4:25) Starting with the very first verse. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, (4:34) by the will of God and Timothy, our brother, in other words, Paul is an apostle and it is (4:42) God's will that he be an apostle.

That's why he's acknowledging the fact that it was not something (4:48) that he took upon himself. It is an honor that he did not take upon himself, but it was appointed (4:53) to him. And so we see that he's constantly knowing and letting us know that he knows that he's (5:02) an apostle by the grace of God.

And so are we Christians. We are Christians by the grace of (5:08) God and we need to make that constantly aware. And he's writing to the church of God in Corinthians (5:16) together with all the saints throughout the church.

And as we reflect upon that, he's saying, (5:24) grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And he knows that he's (5:30) speaking to them through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and that the things that he's willing (5:36) to share with them is things that the Holy Spirit has provided him with. And we know that the Holy (5:42) Spirit has been authorized to provide this information for the Holy Spirit is an agent of (5:49) God and being an agent of God, he cannot speak anything other than that which is authorized (5:54) by God.

And so he says, praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we are (6:01) acknowledging ourselves. We are going to be praising to God and the Father of our Lord (6:07) Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. And notice that that word (6:14) all

comfort is the theme of this chapter.

Comfort. God is the Father of all comfort, (6:26) who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort (6:34) we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, (6:42) so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

If we are distressed, it is for your comfort (6:51) and salvation. If we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance (7:02) of the same sufferings we suffer. Notice what he's saying, that this comfort is going to produce, (7:09) that it produces patient endurance of the same sufferings that we suffer.

So we're going to be (7:17) patient. Consider that, what does James say, consider it pure joy whenever you face trials (7:22) and tribulations of any kind because it develops patience. And patience when it is complete, (7:29) develops perseverance, and perseverance provides maturity, lacking nothing.

(7:37) So he says that this produces in us patient endurance for the same sufferings we suffer. (7:44) And our hope for you is firm because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, (7:51) so also you share in our comfort. We'll stop there and develop this a little bit for us, (8:00) and then perhaps if time permits, we will look at the rest of it.

(8:04) But God is the comfort, the provider of all comfort. He is the one who's provided us with (8:10) comfort, and God wants us to develop patience. He wants us to learn to be patient.

So he says (8:21) patient endurance of the same sufferings that we suffer. He wants us to learn how to endure (8:28) suffering. He wants us to know how to be patient with our trials and tribulations.

He wants us to (8:35) know that. That's what James said, isn't it? Because consider it pure joy whenever you face (8:39) trials and tribulations because it develops patience, and patience, perseverance, and (8:46) perseverance, maturity, complete, lacking nothing. So Paul is wanting us to recognize the fact that (8:53) comfort is what we're looking for.

What is the source of the comfort? God is providing the (9:00) comfort that we need in every aspect of our lives. It doesn't matter what that aspect of life might (9:08) be. He's wanting us to be comforted in some way or another.

And what is the source of that patience (9:15) or comfort? It comes from God. And what is that source? It's the gospel. It is the gospel that (9:25) provides us with the comfort that you and I need.

We're introduced to the gospel in Acts the (9:34) second chapter, starting with, sometimes I have to write these things down. You'd think that I (9:44) would write in Acts 2.38. It's an automatic thing, Acts 2.38. And so as we look at this in (9:52) 32nd verse and following on down to the bottom, that Peter is standing up there talking to a (10:00) crowd of individuals who have just witnessed and who have just been involved in the crucifixion (10:06) of Jesus. Probably many of them were there.

Probably many of them were standing on the (10:13) mountains and all around trying to get a good view of the fact that Jesus was going to be (10:18) crucified. That person that was providing them with the reminder of their sins, because we know (10:25) that Jesus was the light. He came into the light, into the world, and the light could not receive (10:30) him.

And the light did not want to receive him because the light revealed their imperfections (10:38) and their sins. And so Jesus was the light, and he was an individual that whenever you were around (10:44) him, you were made aware of the fact that you were not what you ought to be in the sight of God, (10:50) because he was, and in every way he was. And so he would convict everybody, no matter who he was (10:58) with, he would convict them of their sins.

Some accepted it, and some realized that Jesus was (11:04) the one who had the words of life. Others rejected the fact that, and were made angry at the fact (11:14) that their imperfections and their shortcomings were made aware. And so they wanted to get rid (11:20) of that light.

They wanted to extinguish that light, get rid of it that condemns them every (11:25) time they see him. I would say that there were more who were more willing to be a part of this (11:33) crucifixion. I'm sure that Jesus did have followers.

I'm sure that Jesus did have individuals that (11:41) loved him, and Jesus was able to share upon them compassion and love, and give them the words of (11:47) life that they needed to have. The encouragement, the comfort that Paul's talking about here. God (11:54) is the father of comfort, and he's giving them the opportunity to do what they ought to do, (12:02) and to walk in the light as he is in the light.

But we know that John tells us in 1 John, (12:10) the first chapter, verse 5, that as long as we walk in the light as he is in the light, (12:14) his blood will continue to cleanse us. And so the light is where we need to be in our life. (12:20) But as we see here that Paul's pointing out to them that we need to know what that comfort is, (12:27) and where that comfort comes from, and how to use that comfort.

So here is this crowd on the day of (12:35) Pentecost, and all of a sudden Peter convicts them of the fact that they crucified the Son of God. (12:46) After all the events, Jesus rising from the grave, showing himself three days later, (12:52) to 500 people or better, to a large crowd of individuals who recognize the fact that he (12:59) is alive, and then he ascends into heaven. How many people were present? We don't know.

(13:06) We know his apostles were, and we know that they witnessed the fact that Jesus ascended into heaven, (13:13) and there he is in heaven interceding for us. That's comfort. That's what the gospel is.

(13:21) The gospel is providing us with the comfort of knowing that we're (13:26) welcome in the sight of God, in the presence of God. And the only way that we can be welcome (13:34) is to accept the gospel, and respond to the gospel, and know that we are adopted by God, (13:42) and he recognizes us, and he's willing to forgive us for what it was that put his son on the cross. (13:49) And we know that our sins is what put him on the cross.

He came to die for all. (13:58) For there is none, there is none who is perfect, for of all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (14:10) And so here they are, they're wanting to know, what must we do in order to be right in the sight of God? (14:20) That's the whole thing, isn't it? What must we do in order to be right in the sight of God? (14:25) And God provides them with the comfort.

It's God's product. God is the one who produced (14:32) the sacrifice for you and me. God is the one who graciously provided and worked it out so that we (14:39) could be forgiven.

And he's saying, I forgive you. Isn't that what Jesus said on the cross? (14:45) Forgive them, for they know not what they do. And God is saying, I know that, and I want to give (14:54) them the opportunity to be right.

I want them to know that I forgive them, but they must come to me (15:02) through the avenue in which I have provided. And what is that avenue that God has provided for us? (15:12) Being baptized for the remission of our sins, the right to walk in the midst of life. (15:19) And in so doing, God then credits us with Jesus' righteousness.

And we can come before God. (15:28) But what is that comfort? That comfort means that, and it's applied and implied, that the comfort is (15:38) we're uncomfortable in the presence of God. If God were to come to today and you're not in Christ, (15:47) what do you suppose would happen to you? (15:51) According to the book of Revelation, we'd be saying, let's hide.

He can't find us. Let's crawl (15:56) into caves and last the mountains to collapse on us so we can escape him. But we know that that's (16:04) not going to do it, because Revelation says that all those who are in the grave will come forward.

(16:10) And that means those who drowned in the oceans, those who were buried in the sand and (16:15) deserts and all the various other places, the earth is going to give forth its treasure. (16:24) So what is our relationship with God? That's the comfort that we are seeking. That is the comfort (16:31) that Paul needed himself, wasn't it? Because what do we know about Paul? We know that he (16:40) was crucifying the first-century Christians.

He would commit them to prisons. He would be (16:46) welcoming anything that would deal with them. We know he was present with the stoning of Stephen.

(16:55) He was consenting to them. Paul said, I'm the chiefest of all sinners, (17:00) and who's going to be most concerned about his relationship with God? (17:07) Paul is. What about the people in Corinth? What about our people here in Cleveland and (17:15) in Lakewood and the various other places where we live and people are? Are there (17:20) not individuals who are concerned about their relationship with God? (17:25) Many aren't because they're not seeking it.

But there are many who do want to find (17:32) the relationship with God. They want that relationship and be assured (17:36) that when they die, they will be with God eternally in heaven. (17:41) So how can we comfort them? How can we provide them with the comfort that they need? (17:46) It's only through the gospel.

(17:49) It's only the gospel that's going to provide them with that comfort that they need. (17:55) Individuals fret constantly about their relationship with God. (18:00) And so let's reread this statement here about Paul.

(18:06) He says, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion (18:11) and the God of all comfort. He's compassionate because he gave his only begotten son to die (18:19) for us. And he sent his son not to condemn the world, but to give us the opportunity to repent.

(18:28) And so he says, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion (18:35) and the God of all comfort. Paul knows firsthand that God is compassionate and that he is the (18:46) source of comfort. And it's through his grace that he works this all out and he

comforts us (18:53) in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have (19:03) received from God.

Well, what have we received from God? The gospel and the ability to respond to it. (19:13) And so we can comfort other individuals with the same comfort that we receive. (19:21) It's the gospel that provides this comfort that we're after.

It's the gospel that gives us the (19:29) peace of mind to be able to say, if I were to die today, I would be with God eternally in heaven. (19:34) Why? Because we respond to the gospel. We're relying on the gospel.

(19:45) And so what is Paul concerned about here? Paul is concerned about the individuals who (19:49) have taken hold of this promise, taken hold of it, and he's concerned about them remaining (19:55) faithful to the gospel, remaining faithful to God, remaining faithful to their faith. (20:01) What is their faith? Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is our high priest and he is interceding (20:08) for us in heaven.

And it is through Jesus that we have the forgiveness of our sins. (20:13) Don't forget that. We have a tendency to forget it.

We have a tendency to forget it (20:22) because all the things that happen in this world, all the things that go on around us, (20:30) and we are oftentimes asking ourselves, why? Why? We're not to ask that question. We're to trust (20:43) that God is providing us with the answer and he's comforting us. (20:52) But yet, we will allow the pressures and the trials and the tribulations of this world and (20:58) how they interfere with us to affect our faith.

And we're saying, is it worth it? (21:05) And Paul wants you to know, if you let up on it and your answer is no, you are recrucifying the (21:15) Christ, the answer is yes, it's worth it. Stick it out. Stick it out.

Don't forget the hope that (21:28) you have. That's the passage that was read in the Hebrew letter, the 10th chapter that was just read (21:34) in your hearing. Don't give up on that faith.

Remain faithful to the faith and stick to it (21:41) and to hold on to it. And how do we comfort one another? By reminding them (21:51) to stay faithful to God and to remember that God is providing us with the righteousness that we (22:00) need to be able to stand before him. Remember that.

So how do we encourage one another? (22:09) That's what the Hebrew writer points out. The Hebrew writer in the 10th chapter in the (22:14) last passage that we had read in our hearing was basically calling us, he says in verse 35 of the (22:23) 10th chapter, do not throw away your confidence. You will be richly rewarded.

You need to persevere (22:29) so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a (22:36) very little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay, but my righteous one will live by (22:43) faith. And if he shirks back, I will not be pleased with him.

But we are not of those who shrink back (22:50) and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved. That is the thing. We are to encourage (23:07) one another as the day is long.

Encourage each other to be faithful, to love one another, (23:13) to be patient and kind with one

another. That is the challenge. Have you grasped hold of the hope, (23:28) the hope of being with God eternally in heaven? Because you see, that's the comfort we have.

(23:35) When we go to bed at night, what is that little children's prayer? If I should (23:40) die before I wake, I pray that my soul can take it. They know that. Where are you? (23:56) Are you secure in the hope? Are you secure in that comfort that God wants to provide for you? (24:03) God wants you to know the comfort of being his child.

God wants you to know the comfort that (24:10) he has not abandoned you, will not abandon you. God wants you to know the comfort (24:18) that he will accept you, no matter what your foibles are. God wants you to know (24:26) that he forgives sin.

He forgives sins. That's the new covenant God forgives. (24:36) Where are you? Do you need to respond to the invitation? Do you need to respond to the (24:42) gospel's invitation to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, to confess your faults, (24:49) be willing to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, (24:52) to rise and walk in the newness of life? (24:56) I'd like to extend to you the opportunity to do so while together we stand (24:59) and sing the song of encouragement.