

Relationships 101: Comfort and Compassion

By Donna Pyle

Begin with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your study of the Word.

Opening

As His ambassadors on earth, Christians can be vessels of God's comfort and compassion, bearing witness to the compassion we so graciously have received from Him. How do **Deuteronomy 4:29,31** reveal our heavenly Father's compassion?

Looking at the Gospel Accounts

Read **Matthew 14:14**; **Matthew 20:34**; **Mark 6:34**. How did Jesus demonstrate compassion for the physical and spiritual needs here?

What do these references say about demonstrating compassion toward others: **Ephesians 4:32**; **Colossians 3:12**; **1 Peter 3:8**?

Have you ever experienced a time when words were not needed, but simply being in the same room, listening, offering a handkerchief or holding a hand was enough to convey compassion? How have you experienced God's amazing compassion in your life?

The Greek word for comfort is *paraklesis*, which refers to calling to one's side to give or receive refreshment. What does God promise in **Matthew 5:4**? How did Jesus comfort the disciples in **John 14:1**?

Looking at the Psalms

Psalms 94:19 (KJV) says, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul." His comfort is our delight! Take a moment to meditate on these words of the Psalmist.

What promises of God are found in **Psalms 119:50** and **Psalms 119:76**?

Looking at the Epistles

How was the apostle Paul comforted in **2 Corinthians 7:4** and **2 Corinthians 7:6**?

In late 19th century England, John Henry Jowett wrote, "God does not comfort us to make us comfortable, but to make



us comforters." What does **1 Thessalonians 4:18** say about being a comforter? How might **Romans 15:4** be a source of comfort? How has the network of relationships you have developed with other Christians been a comfort to you?

God abundantly pours His compassion and comfort into and through His children. In His Word, the God of all comfort shows us His mercy and love in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. When we comfort others with the comfort we ourselves have received, we are sharing Jesus and His love, showing our heavenly Father's compassion to a dark and hurting world.

Closing

Take a moment now to pray — silently or aloud — that the Holy Spirit will guide you to be His instrument of compassion and comfort in your circle of relationships.

Close by speaking the words of "Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People" (*LSB 347, LW 28; TLH 61*).

*"Comfort, comfort, ye My people,
Speak ye peace," thus saith our God;
"Comfort those who sit in darkness,
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem
Of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover
And her warfare now is over."*

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