

Comfort Even With Troubles

March 26, 2023

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. This week's message is titled "Comfort Even with Troubles" and focuses on Second Corinthians. Thank you to Rhonda, Jon, Gloria, and Don for being part of the video. The scripture reading is Second Corinthians 1:8-11.

Welcome, Announcements & Prayer

[...] Good morning, everyone. There is a verse in Psalm 16 three three that I like. It says, How excellent are the Lord's faithful people? My greatest pleasure is to be with them. And somebody said to me this morning in the car, you know, you can believe in God and not go to church. And yes, you can believe in God and not go to church. But how excellent are the Lord's faithful people? And my greatest pleasure is to be with them. Announcements. Heather and Paul, who aren't here, are celebrating an anniversary this week and let us pray. Thank you, God. So much for for the beautiful people that are in this room and for for the inspiration that that they are to me and hopefully the inspiration that I can be to them and that we can be to each other in. And we pray that we will that you will give us faith and that we will be a people of faith and and be a people who who rely and trust and cling to you in all conditions. And we pray that this morning that that our souls and our hearts will be filled with your love. And that we will that we will go away more inspired to do your will in Jesus name. Amen.

Communion

Watching cowboy movies that go way, way, way back where we watch cowboy movies. And I remember one but some person saying times are changing and you think back to cowboy days to where we are today. It's a lot of changes that have happened. Those reflecting on my life for a while. Born just after the war ended or right around the time it ended, and I roll into the fifties knows what eight years old maybe at that time. And I remember after school we used to go home, didn't sit at a computer. We played road hockey, baseball. The girls used to skip rope and hopscotch. You see much of that today? Not very likely. Also, the music was as changed over the years. I remember I got my first little radio. It was one of those transistor radios. And you know what it sounded like? [radio crackle, laughter] And I used to listen. I was just getting into Elvis Presley was coming out and I used to like to listen to it, but get on that little radio and listen to WKBW, The Danny Never Show. And that's what you heard Elvis going love me [radio crackle] tender. Well, look at where it's changed today. Music is just unbelievable. The quality of the music just so much. Amazing changes have taken place just in what, seventy-something years

Then, the church. Gloria and I became Christians back 1971. And boy, we were busy. We had gospel meetings, we had church three times a week. We used to go to Bible teacher's workshops. We had we just whenever our anniversary, the one time. Gloria said, so what do we do tonight? So we went to St Catharine's to hear Lynn Anderson preaching in a gospel meeting. Oh, that was kind of a long time ago that those things happen. And I, I just think about our opportunities today. Gospel meetings. No. Bible teachers' workshop. No. We do get together here, which is great, but we don't do it three times a week anymore. We used to do it Wednesday, twice on Sunday, and sometimes a small Bible talk on Monday. It was good. We learned a lot. Then I look at society and I think What's changed there? Well, when I

was young, you had the beer store and the LCBO. That was it. If you didn't get your beer by 6:00 on Saturday, you're out of luck for Sunday and now I can go to Walmart and buy one can of beer. Now that's changed. I remember signing petitions, no beer in the corner stores. Our little Avondale store in Vineland. You can buy all the beer you want, which is amazing, the changes that have taken place and a lot of other things I wrote down. But for gambling is another one. Back when I was young, you had the Fort Erie racetrack. You had to go there on certain days. You could bet there that was it. That I remember the Irish sweepstakes. You had to buy them on the side. I didn't buy them. I was too young to remember. My dad got on what it had to be done secretly by these Irish sweepstakes tickets. And I. Where can you gamble today? You could sit right where you are now and bet on today's hockey game. No end to it. Television just bombing you in all these new gambling sites.

So that's change. Not necessarily for good, but it's changes that have constantly and times are changing some things for good and some things not so good. But I got to thinking about that. What could we find in this life that brings us peace and joy, happiness, contentment, whether it's passage, Hebrews 13:8, remember what it says "yesterday, today and forever. Jesus is the same. So the Jesus we came to know in 1971 is the same today, and it's going to be the same tomorrow, and so on and so forth. So our contentment is not found in changes, but it's found in Jesus who is the way, the truth in the life. And that's why we have come together this morning to remember that constant. He is always there. He'll never leave you, nor for take you. So we remember him now as we partake of the low and the bread. Sorry, I'm running out of breath up here for some reason anyway. So let's have a word of prayer. Okay?

Father, we thank you so much for Jesus, who is our constant in our life, who never changes. He's always there. And he said he'd never leave us nor forsake us. Father, we pray for the day when he shall come again. We will be with you forever. We thank you for your promises. We thank you for the church family where we can encourage each other. And we just pray, Father, that as our life changes, in some ways we'll know that the constant is always there, for we pray in his name. Amen.

Scripture Reading

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 (NIV)

The reading this morning is from second Corinthians chapter one verses eight through 11. We do not want you to be uninformed brothers and sisters about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril and he will deliver us again. On him, we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us. As you help us by your prayers, then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

Sermon

Good morning to all. Glad you're with us today. So I've been preaching for 45 years and today may be a first. I just may have to blow my nose during the sermon. [laughter] I apologize if that happens, but it just might. So we've been looking at the epistles in the New Testament. Now, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the Gospels. Acts and revelation are a separate point. Last week we looked in First Corinthians, and today we're going to look in Second Corinthians. And I have 13 points I want to share with you. And

the reason I have 13 is because there are 13 chapters and I'm just going to make a couple of comments on each of these chapters. And if you are doing this sermon, you may choose other scriptures as well, but we'll go ahead with this. So Paul writes to the church at Corinth, and he begins by talking about comfort that God is the God of all comfort. And here's what he says in verse three. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives. So also through Christ, our comfort overflows. So whenever you have a situation in your life, as we all do, some not so tragic, some very tragic. Remember, God said, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. And I give you my comfort. And then in chapter two, he talks about forgiveness and what a blessing it is to receive forgiveness and what a blessing it is to give forgiveness. And here talks about people in Corinth who had a lifestyle that was very, very sinful, but they didn't think it was sinful. And when they were introduced to Christ, the teachings of Christ, their lives changed. And so he talks about forgiveness. If anyone has caused grief, he has not. So much grieved me as he's grieved all to some extent, not to put it too severely. The punishment inflicted on a person by the majority is sufficient. Now instead, you ought to forgive and to comfort. And to me, that's a beautiful passage of Scripture. Everybody needs a hug. Everybody needs a hug. There are times when you can see people and you don't even have to ask you to look at their face and say, you need a hug.

And some would back away and some would say, absolutely right. And to me, that's the comfort of Christians coming together as one a group hug, if you will, remembering that God loves us and he has promised us a future glory. This is in chapter three of Second Corinthians. And just listen to what he says. This is our. Now the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory. Transitory, though it was will not the Ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious if the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious? How much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness for what was glorious, has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts? So that's kind of an awkward sentence, but he's basically saying Our future glory is cemented in Jesus Christ, and if we belong to Christ, that salvation for us is there. And then He calls us this. And I don't know if anybody's ever called you this. Some people have called us names, but this is what the Bible calls us. You are a jar of clay. But I didn't read that right. You are treasures in a jar of clay. You are treasures. I have made you a treasure. God sees each one of us as this child, loved and precious. And then he says in chapter four and verse one, since through God, God's mercy, we have a ministry. We don't lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways. We do not use deception, nor do we just start the Word of God. And then in verse four, he says, The God of this age, he's talking about Satan himself. He's talking about Satan himself. The God of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so they can't see the light of the gospel or the glory of Christ. And then He says in verse eight, and maybe some of you here today have experienced this, we are hard pressed on every side, but we're not crushed. We're perplexed, but we're not in despair. And then he says, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not destroyed. Then he talks about We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus. So that life of Jesus may also be revealed in our glory. Now, that doesn't sound very optimistic, does it? But he's talking about the glory that we have in Christ that as Christ died in Rome again, we too will too. It'll be our day one day when we pass. But the glory is still coming. That one day God will renew all things and heaven and earth coming together as one. So don't despair. Our life is not ended. And even when you

close your eyes for the very last time, it's not over. God's life comes together as one. And then the fifth point that we make is talking about eternity.

In Chapter 16 of of four, he says, Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away. Listen. Yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. Is there ever a moment in your day where God isn't with you now is with us? Every day is ever a moment in your day when Jesus isn't in all He's always in this. Is there ever a moment, even when you're sleeping at night, that the Holy Spirit isn't with us? No, no. God, the father God, the son. God, the Holy Spirit, all living coming together in us. So it's profound because of that. In chapter five, in verse 16, he says, So from now on, we regard no one from a worldly point of view, though we once regarded Christ that way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation. The old has gone. The new has come. And then listen. All this is from God who has reconciled to Himself through Christ and gave us the Ministry of Reconciliation. Meaning let's come together as one. And then in Chapter six, we all face hardships. Maybe you're here today and you're facing a very difficult wall placed in front of you. How do you get past all this? Well, we've all been there. And so he says this in chapter six and verse three, we put no stumbling block in anyone's path so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God, we commended ourselves in every way. Listen in great endurance in troubles, hardships and distresses, even in beatings, imprisonments and riots. In hard work. In sleepless nights and hunger.

Paul is just telling us what his life was like. And then he says in verse 14 of chapter six, So do what's right and avoid wickedness. Don't be in common with these things. Be a spiritual encourager. Now, I'm just wondering if you may want to participate with me in that this week. Be an encourager. There's somebody at your work. There's some friend who needs a hug, who needs a pat on the back, said, You know, you're doing a great job. We get so busy in life that we sometimes just expect everyone to do what they have to do. But encouragement goes such a long way. And I say that because God is encouraging us every moment of every day. He is the greatest encourager. And God gives us his encouragement so we can encourage others, be a spiritual encourager, do what's right, and avoid wickedness. And then in Chapter seven, he talks about a love for God and a love for each other. And he basically just says, This is so cool. Make room for me in your heart. That's cool. Make room for me. Meaning God in your heart. We make room in our heart for people we love. We make we. We change our schedules. We change time. We do anything. We, we, we make time for people whom we love. And so Paul is saying, but there's someone else maybe who never feels loved being encourager to that person. Let them know that they're welcome in the Kingdom of God. Generosity is encouraged in helping people in this life. So genuine generosity is important.

In Chapter nine, Paul says, There is no need for me to write to you about the service of the Saints for I know that your eagerness to help and I have been boasting about your Macedonians, in other words, talking about sending money to different Christians that really need help. So he says in verse three, I am sending the brothers in order that are boasting about you in this matter should not prove hollow. I've been talking you people up here saying I've been encouraging all of you. Now, when they get there, make sure that's the case. This is not just an exaggeration. Make it true. So I thought it was necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for this generous gift that would be given to all the Saints people who are hungry and need his help. And then in Chapter ten, talks about integrity. May the meekness and gentleness of Christ appeal to you? I, Paul, who am timid when face to face with you but bold, are my words. I'm making it clear I expect you to forward. I expect toward some people. They think that our standards are of this world, but they're not of this world.

And so in the 11th point, I'm still in in Chapter ten, Paul talks about there will be people who may criticize and they may question your integrity, but our lifestyle will prove otherwise. So he writes to this church, people who have different personalities and different backgrounds and everything else, and he's encouraged. Don't be sidetracked. Chapter 11, verse three. But I'm afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray by your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For a someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one that you have received, or a different gospel from the one that you accepted, you put up with it easily enough said Don't do that. We have made this perfectly clear to you in every way. Don't give Satan any kind of foothold. And then in Chapter 12, it's interesting. Paul talks about this, and some of us have wondered what this is all of our lives. Paul talks about he has a thorn in his soul. A thorn. Well, what was that thorn? He doesn't tell us.

Listen, he says in Chapter 12, I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. I kind of think he's talking about himself, whether it was in the body or out of the body. I don't know. God knows. And I know that this man, whether in the body or apart from the body, I don't know. But God knows, was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things that man is not permitted to tell. I will boast about a man like that, but I will not boast about myself. Although I think he is talking about himself except about my weakness. I'd rather talk about my weaknesses because I need help. I still need help. I just can't imagine. What if you tonight fell into a deep sleep and God showed you heaven and then you woke up back where you are? If we caught a glimpse, wouldn't our life change? If we caught just a glimpse of what that's like? Wow. We have something weighty for us that cannot really be understood or felt until we do see it. We do experience it and we do feel it. So last point, there's these final check ups. You know, sometimes we have to go to a physician, check our blood pressure and everything else. Paul been talking about it without ever really saying it. This is a spiritual checkup. How are you doing? How you feeling? How's it going? So he says this is chapter 13. Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourself. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? If we could just remind ourselves of that every day. Just once a day. Christ lives in me. That's not hyperbole. God the Father. God the Son. God, the Holy Spirit. Living in us every second of every day. Examine yourselves, he says, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is a new? Unless, of course you fail that test, meaning you haven't even thought about it. And I trust that you will discover that you have not failed the test.

Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong. Not that people will see that we have stood the test of you, have I? I do what's right, Paul said. I do what's right, even though I seem to have failed. So Paul is giving us this personal thing today. Just a quick sermon encouraging us to be encourages happy people sharing happiness. And when you look at the fruit of the spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness is self-control. They aren't just words. They are a lifestyle. Love, joy. Peace. Patience. Kindness. Goodness. Faithfulness and self-control. And he finally ends this letter with these words. Finally, my brothers and sisters. Goodbye. Aim for perfection. Not knowing that will not get there. Listen. Listen to my appeal. Be of one mind. Be in peace in the God of love and peace. Listen. And the God of love and peace will be with you. That is a promise. We have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. I did it without blowing my nose.

Closing Prayer

Let us pray. God, as we leave here today, we pray that we will stand firm in our faith. And as we study your Bible this week, we pray for the ability to understand it and the courage to obey your word in all things. May we love you with all our souls, with all our hearts and our minds. And may we love the people that we come in contact with this ourselves, in Jesus name, amen.

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