

Mike Balko - Our Comforter

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As was announced, our subject for this time is our comforter and our theme text is going to be from John 14:16-18. This is from the King James and I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter that she may abide with you and also that we realize that the Spirit whom the world cannot give or take away shall be with him. I will not leave you comfortless, but will come to you I'll also be using Scripture text from Ephesians 1:3-23. Now why pick a subject such as our comforter? I know we've had lessons in the past oh dear brethren, I think our thoughts today are centered around our need for fellowship, for blessing, for love from the Heavenly Father.

Again, all that we have been going through the past several years, stressful conditions in the world, not knowing what comes next but and also there's loss of jobs and loss of family members and of course loss of our brethren in Christ Jesus whom we rejoice that their trials and experiences are over. But we miss them dearly and many aren't here today that just finished the course recently. So I'm centering around the thought of our comforter because I need the comforter of Heavenly Father in my daily life's matters and I know you do too. So as we go on in our comments, we're thankful for God calling us out of darkness in his marvelous light first Peter 2:9 and also he has given us the ability to understand the deep things of God which we'll talk about in a little while, lord willing from 1st Peter 2, 10, 11 which leads us to our thoughts today in our study that we're going to begin with and highlight the importance of love.

So God is love. As we know, he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him. We love him because he first loved us. Again, there's no fear in love because what perfect love casts out that fear. So when the world was trembling in fear, in doubt and discouragement, we should not have been in that same condition.

We trust in the Heavenly Father. He's called us and he blesses us as we cast our care upon him, and so again, some other scriptures we're going to touch on. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. Walking in the Lord's footsteps, praising God, thanking Him for comfort and understanding and help in time of need.

And now these three remain faith, hope and love. But the greatest of These is love, and that's from the NIV 1 Corinthians 13:13, and also, since the heart is the center of our affections, as we know and as we've studied, it must be full of love, full of compassion for all, full of love for the Heavenly Father, his dear Son, love for our brethren, and we demonstrate that not only in words, but in actions and deeds and loving kindness and consideration, and also for the world of mankind, our fellow man, in desperate times in which we're living, we all know it's our purpose to have this world present, evil world, done away with, and the kingdom of joy, peace and love that will abide forever established by the Heavenly Father and his plans and purposes.

So we are to strive to develop the fruits and grace of the Holy Spirit as we know the flowers of sweet odor which belong to the garden of the lord. That's reprint 4688. Instead of miraculously received gifts, we now grow these fruits and again by cultivation, through a strong faith, by studying the Word, applying the Word, having our fruits watered till they're ripe, and we know that Heavenly Father is a judge of our progress and development. But we have to again put forth that effort to grow fruit and to please him, and that strong faith, that love and devotion to Heavenly Father.

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It's so important each day that we are privileged to awake what can I do today to serve you, Father? How can I help my brethren? How can I develop my character? How can I have this Holy Spirit dwell within me? Galatians 2 Excuse me, Galatians 5:22 and 23 now, as we all know, there are some sources of comfort.

I just want to highlight these Comfort, as we all know, in the Greek word, comes from Parakletos, a comforting influence, a guide, an instructor, a helper in the Lord's people along the narrow way. So we need that help and guidance because this is a narrow way. It's hard to follow that way because you're giving of yourself your interest that you have to press on to that mark set before you. As we've had expressed already today, I know you will future days this week. So we have that blessing of being conformed and comforted by the Heavenly Father, our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.

Also, if we look at 2 Corinthians 1, 3, 4, blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who manifested himself, and he comforted us in all our afflictions so that we will be able to comfort those who are in Difficult conditions, and we can think of many just sitting here today. I'm sure you can think of Brother Nart with us today. They're going through difficult trials throughout the world, and we know we want to be with them in this unity of the Spirit, comfort them, uplift them, as we mentioned. So we have this guide, this direction to follow.

And blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus. Again, the Father of mercies. I just want to repeat that because it's so true, isn't it? He's the merciful God of loving God, who provides us with all we need to again go on in a way pleasing to Him. So comfort those, help them also.

We realize that as we're comforted by God, we have the importance of being one body, as we mentioned, one body. Many members rightly fit together, and each body member is important. These are truths we've heard all of our lives. So when something happens to one body member, the whole body suffers. They feel a loss.

But again they have a renewed devotion to the Heavenly Father to go on and do the best that they can each day. So encouragement in verse 5 tells us, for just as the sufferings of Jesus Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. Now, Paul uses the word comfort five times in these Scriptures. How important is it to think about comfort? It's not going to come from ourselves.

It's going to come again from feeding on the Word, developing a new mind, a new heart, a new attitude each day, and so these words that we speak are not just words. They're our way of life. They're part of our laying down our lives in service to Heavenly Father, the Truth, and the brethren. So we have this supply of comfort.

He tells us about our need for and supplying of it in these Scriptures, and also remember Paul's words. He said, when I am weak, then I am strong. Because he's relying on the Lord, not on his fallen flesh, the flesh of resistance, of sacrifice. No, we realize that the Heavenly Father is there with His Son, strengthening us.

He strengthens us. He gives us vitality, because we're what we're drinking, that pure water of the Word, and it revitalizes us and it helps us to go on each day.

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So we realize that as we strive in our lives to do this, we realize that the Father of Lights and every good and perfect gift comes down from him from above, and with whom is no variable. It's neither shadow of turning of his own will. He begat us with that word of truth that we should be A kind of first fruits of all creatures, and know God is a fountain from which flows every good and perfect gift. The greatest of these, again is the gift of his only begotten Son.

Just some words to come back to your mind. I know we know these things, but again, we have a dear brother in our Ecclesia in Orlando. Grasp these things, make them your own, rely on them, and you will never be disappointed. We're going to have ups and downs. We realize that we've heard discourses.

All of our experiences are not mountaintop experiences. Some are valley and some are longer valleys, wider valleys that we have to go through. But we're always looking to that top of the mountain where we know if we go, we'll be blessed, and we're using everything in our disposition, our power, our might through the heavenly Father to reach that goal. So from the time of our Lord Jesus, baptism again shown to be our comforter and dwell in him in a peculiar manner.

The apostle John says of the church, God dwelleth in us and we in God. First John 4:16. Desiring to meet his father, Jesus then traveled back to his hometown in Nazareth, and also he read in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as recorded in Luke 4:18, and Jesus read from this wonderful Old Testament verse, Isaiah 61:1 2.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison house to them that are bound to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance again against sin and degradation. Any of that in the world today? Every single day there's some kind of a new horror that's revealed in this world, and it's sinking deeper and deeper into despair.

And he'll comfort those all that mourn. Everyone will have an opportunity to hear the voice of the Lord and accept him as their Savior. So whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. That we, through patience and comfort. So here's another part of it.

Patience and comfort are blended together because we wait on the Lord and we realize that all of the things we pray are not going to be easily answered and said, yeah, this is the way to go. But you must be continuing in prayer to show what path to follow, that thy will be done. Not my will, Father, but let me dwell in this light. The enlightenment, as we mentioned, of our new mind, our disposition, our desire that we may have hope through the Scriptures, Romans 15:4. So the word of God is the channel of truth to comfort us in proportion as the Holy Spirit guides us into an understanding of the Scriptures through that medium through which we have knowledge of God's grace and comfort and all knowledge.

And they reach us each day. So you pray for guidance and help. You pray to have more faith, and what's going to happen? It's going to be put to the test.

All of us pretty much finished at school, whatever level it was, and you know, as they present material in school, there's going to be a test. Did you learn it? Do you know what you've been studying? And our test is daily.

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And again with that, as we know, we're not just examining ourselves. What are our motives? What are intentions? What is the level of our love? No, each day we're searching our heart and our mind.

Use me in thy service. Show me the way, and he'll show you the way. Because we have that patience on the Lord. Wait on Him.

You'll never be disappointed. You trust in him in all things, and there's a couple dark times this year when we couldn't meet like this. Did you think about that comfort from above and what you have from the Father? The blessings, the wonderful opportunities to study the Word.

And so I know we want to do that each day as we're privileged to dwell in the shadow of his wing and the hollow of his hand. So along that line, though, we realize there's another comforter that was promised, and our Lord Jesus told his disciples, the comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things. So to the new creature who seeks to know the Father's will, these are very important because they're going to show that comfort and peace. Are you going to find it out there in the world?

No, you're not.

Where do you go to church? They'll say, well, we meet, you know, maybe at someone's home. You can't have the truth. We have more in our chorus than you have in your whole church. I had that told to me a couple of times.

Does that deter us from going on? Does that deter us from having comfort from the Heavenly Father? No, because again, he's called you. He wants to bless you. He wants to help you no matter what persecutions and trials and words are spoken against you.

What did our Lord say?

Do not despair. I have overcome the world. He planted that seed for us to go and faithfully follow in his footsteps, a joyful giver, no matter how hard the trials are, and to the flesh they're extremely hard.

But the Lord loves us. He sees our attitude. The words of the Lord are pure words. As silver tried in a furnace of the earth. Purified seven times.

There's that perfect number. Purified seven times. So these are the words of the Heavenly Father. We had it mentioned today already, promises of God. I'm sure most of us have a promise that's exceptionally precious to us.

Maybe that's your motivation for comfort. You know, think on these things. We had that mentioned today. Again, truth is the word which our Lord Jesus uses to describe the Holy Spirit. As his earthly ministry was ending, Jesus was keenly aware of the uncertainty of the minds of his disciples, promising to send the Holy Spirit and give comfort to their disappointment.

They didn't understand, of course. They didn't have that Holy Spirit, and some of the thoughts of our Lord are recorded in our thinking theme text from today. This is that other comfort, the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit. Your eyes are understanding, being open.

Blessed are your eyes, for they see. That's not enough. Blessed are your ears, for they hear. So there's a difference between understanding, though, and hearing. You hear it, but you understand

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it.

The Holy Spirit opens that phase of our knowledge, our understanding, that we can develop it, and it doesn't become stagnant. It must become what? A growing and developing attitude of heart and mind. So that word was truth.

Again, all truth will show you the things to come. John 15:26. So we also mention our theme text. Pray the Father, and this shows that the Holy Spirit comes to us because of this request, not because of something we do.

And we don't know why we're picked by the Heavenly Father. Respond that call, my son. Give me thy heart. But you know, we're thankful for it. We've heard it expressed before.

He saw something in each one of you brethren that can be used in his servant. You all have a talent to use in his service, whatever it may be. Witnessing, consoling the brethren, spreading the gospel message of truth, having good comments in a study, having a discourse.

And then again, it's all application, application, application. So it's part of really unmerited favor that the Heavenly Father gives to us, and we're so thankful that our eyes of understanding are open, that we can withstand these darts and arrows of the adversary. Powerful arrows, powerful darts that can really weaken us. But for looking above and have that whole arm of God on, we can withstand those.

Remember, our Lord said, without me you can do nothing, but with me you can be more than overcomer, more than an overcomer in all of our life's experiences and realize that lifeline for that is our prayerful consideration to the Heavenly Father. So let's go on with enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. So after Jesus resurrection, the disciples did not have long to wait for the fullness of this fulfillment of it, as promised. So 50 days later, at Pentecost, the Spirit, as we know truth, came and made manifest to them what had been previously described, and they did not understand, even though certain accompanying signs were evident as speaking in tongues.

Miraculous ability of the apostles to speak in foreign languages. Nevertheless, the principle of these things that heard was it spoke as Jesus had said it would spoke by way of opening the to the minds of the apostles and understanding certain pictures, types, shadows, as we know, not fulfillment then, but pointing out to the things to come. What did our Lord say? He did say, suffer to be so for now, suffer to be so for now. But then you're going to get this comfort.

These things are going to go into place and you'll understand them. What a beautiful concept the Heavenly Father has in opening up the eyes of his children, and it said he spoke by ways of opening those minds, as we mentioned, and prior to that, there was a mystery to each of them. But one of these scriptures was Joel 2:28-32.

Joel 2:28-32, newly endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit, came to a sudden awareness that the scriptures that he had been hearing about were beginning to have a fulfillment. He realized that the recorded prophecies, visions, and also the dreams which God had visited upon the people of old, shrouded in mysteries and lack of understanding for ages and generations now, had they become able to be understood again, Understood for the purpose of giving what that spiritual vision think about. Do you have spiritual vision? Not that you're predicting something, but are you reading something? And spiritual vision opens up your eyes of a saying, oh yes, or a comment from somebody in a meeting, in a discourse.

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And what do you do? Your heart is burning to know more, to understand more, and then along that line, we realize you're seeking first the kingdom of God, being joint heirs with our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. So he heard it again when it spoke. Jesus said it spoke in a way of opening up these ways of understanding that were a mystery to them.

So one of the prophecies, as we mentioned, was that endowed with the Holy Spirit is that they had that message of the prophets of truth, calling forth a new age of his beginning, an understanding age. But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. Again, and it shall come to pass in that last day afterward. Joel 2:28 With God I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.

And your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy. Acts 2:17, 18 Taking words from Joel, the second chapter, verses 28 to 32 we realize also that in these scriptures we have the young men in Hebrew select men selected to interpret past visions. They were also old men, Hebrews elders, and also they could interpret dream dreams. In Hebrews bind dreams together again.

God does not reveal things in random order. He's a God of order, of discipline, of thought, wisdom, justice, love, power. He's going to show it. In that progression you have to realize that many in the world say this Bible is just a book, and you know what they're doing?

They're taking Bibles out of schools. They're throwing them away. You can't even have ones that can't even mention God. Satan's trying to do everything he can to delay full establishment of this kingdom, and as we know, he'll never have a victory over that.

Out of every kindred, every tongue and people and nation shall this message flow. Of course we know it's to the Jews first. Revelation 5:9. The new and broader aspect of God's dealings to be accomplished. The pouring out of the Spirit was again included in Peter's sermon in the words.

For the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are far off, even as many as the Lord God shall call no brother. You've heard these words from brother Russell and one of the reapers. You are a people for a purpose. Your life has meaning. Dedicated to the Lord and we know the faithful.

You help to bring blessings to all the kinds of the earth through Christ you are. Epistle known and known and read of men written our heart not ending with ink, but again, but again. That fleshly table of your heart, which is again the center of our questions. So it's you, it's you, brethren, it's you, it's you. Go on, look for comfort.

Come Heavenly Father and understanding, and we realize that he'll help us in all sinful things. Other Father fathers became God came to unfold apostles in the scriptures and took a new meaning. Meaning everyone understand Psalm 16:10 10 not as I applied to David, but our Lord, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. His prophetic statement pointing to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

So Peter's in that day included a quotation from Psalm 110, verse 1, Psalms 110, verse 1 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. He applied this verse of Scriptures to mean that Jesus kingdom was future would be a headling of a spiritual government. A truth which at the time was written. However, it was not understood.

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It confirmed that Jesus was inspired many times. Again, he implied that many times to them, my kingdom is not of this world, but I go to prepare a place for you. Does that give you comfort to think that the Lord is going to prepare a place for you, that you dwell in heaven forever?

It just fills your whole being with compassion and understanding and thankfulness to the Lord again. So based on this new understanding, Peter, a spokesman for the apostles, appeal to his listeners and joined with him in accepting the call to join heirship, to join heirship in the Heavenly Father's kingdom. So now you are a living, breathing, walking letter of God's glory, of his purpose, of his grace, and again of his goodness, and that's what I've been talking about again, is a living epistle, a letter known and read of men. Not for any glory for you, but glory to the Heavenly Father, to his Son, thankfulness and all these things that he has provided for us.

What a wonderful blessing that is. Now let's look briefly at the deep things of God. We have an association of the Holy Spirit again with those deep things, the word of truth, as expressed by Paul in his letter to Corinthian brethren, and he wrote, but we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God declared before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would never have crucified our dear Lord Jesus, the Lord of Glory, First Corinthians 2, 7, 8.

But no one came forward, not even his own disciples, to help him. But we realize he was dedicated to completing that course that was set before him. The willingness, the obedience, the dedication. We must have that too. So really the deep things of God are, in a sense, they're basic truths.

But you have to have that understanding, as we mentioned, through the enlightened mind of the Holy Spirit and the various features of his plan necessary for justification and sanctification, and then what glorification James 1:18 these deep things were a mystery. But you have the keys, you have the word of God, you have the helps, you have the reprints, you have all these study tools that you can go to and again prove it for yourselves.

Spiritual things Comparing spiritual things with spiritual first Corinthians 2:11 to 13 and also so we have essential elements of the truth. The Apostle Paul said to us in first chapter of Ephesians 1:3 to 23, as I mentioned earlier, systematically outlines the truth declared to us through God's Word, which again, it's a foundation of knowledge necessary to intelligently yield yourselves to the counsel of God and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, the earnest evidence of our inheritance. So beginning with the verse, he writes, blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings again in heavenly places in Christ, according as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. So why to give praise and glory to God. Each thing we do in fulfillment of our consecration brings glory to God, glory to his Son also, and through his grace, being accepted in the Beloved.

So what are some of these? Again we'll briefly go over them. You know these but I gained comfort from this study. The first of these important truths, inseparably linked to the Word of the Holy Spirit is the high calling of God through Christ Jesus.

You get comfort from that, knowing that he's chosen these ones children who feed on the milk of the Word and go on to strong meat and understanding the finest of the wheat from his storehouse. You know, as I mentioned as I began my comments, I think one of the one of the hard things is love. It's a love. If you don't have love, you have nothing. If you're not developing love, you have nothing.

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So his storehouse, the deep things of God, and as we mentioned, those are just a couple of the scriptures concerning love. Dwell on that, think about it, apply it. So we want to do that each day and you'll be thoroughly tested and perfected, as we've mentioned in the heart, qualities of faithfulness and holiness, being without blame before him in love.

And also remember our Lord's words in Matthew 11:25 26 I thank you Father, that you had hidden these things from the wise and revealed them unto babes, and then that baby grows as he gets exercise and health and nutrition. That's remarkable, and this heavenly Father ordained these things to be so. So rightly divide the word of truth, the high calling, and lead that life every day pleasing to The Heavenly Father, like Jesus, you too must be made aware of your calling.

Like Jesus, you must find in the volume of book all the Scriptures which taken together reveal that scope of hope and calling, the riches of his glory and of inheritance of the saints, and what they must do to qualify for that great reward. Again, to bring forth fruit, to be faithful only in great matters, as we read, but also in the little things of life. Now realize also that you're the elect again, according to the foreknowledge of God, to a lively hope. So this is a lively hope, because at the end of this you have an opportunity for everlasting life, immortality. It's a lively hope.

It's not a lost hope that the nominal Christendom, the world's going to be destroyed. It's gone to be caught up to heaven. We know those are not the truths as have been revealed to us. So we want to go on and do the Lord's will each day as we're able, and again strive with every breath you have to fulfill the vow of concentration that you have put forth. So the truth, the word of God, the high calling.

These things, as we realize, are so important, and also we share with them in suffering, meaning we also mean partakers of that glory, as we've been alluding to. I think it was brought out just in the last discourse, one of the discourses this afternoon, the suffering again filling up that which is behind the afflictions of Christ, the Church's share in the sin offering from Colossians 1:24. Also we know that there's this time when in verses 10 and 11 of this response in Ephesians 1, first chapter, the sequence of verses speaks of the object of recalling the future work of restitution of all things, the things that were lost to the world of mankind, building from that second essential, necessary truth, an understanding of redemption through the ransom sacrifice of our Lord. There is no question that these things have come to pass through God's ordinances, through his commandments, through his love for his creation. Remember, he saw and said when he created man.

It is good. So let's strive to be able ministers of that new covenant that we want to have a pardon, blessings all the families of the earth, mediated by the Christ, as I mentioned, head and body. So these three foundations of truth, the high calling, the ransom and restitution, so nicely sequenced in this letter from Paul, realize that it really put it all together, so to speak, and remember that Peter said, we're not following cunningly devised fables, but we saw these things firsthand. We don't see them firsthand, but we have that foundation of faith to go on and build on.

So we realize that we have to trust in Him. We heard the word of truth, but we realize, as we mentioned, the application is the hard part. It's an earnest pledge that comes from God. Be faithful again. Enter upon your heritage, which is Christ, in you the hope of glory.

These things will be fulfilled. So how beautifully have in our text that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation and knowledge of him that you can press on to that mark set before you. So, brethren, you have that comfort that

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comes to the Lord's people through their privileges of being used by him, adopted into his family. Now, this is the family here. What do you see when you meet somebody?

Oh, I love you. I haven't seen you for a little while, but I've been thinking of you. You're my brethren. I love you dearly. So let it guide our hearts and minds in our judgments, opening up to the Scriptures, to us, causing our hearts to burn within us for that greater expectation, appreciation of the length, the breadth, the heights, the depths of the Father's glorious plan as brought out in Genesis 28:14.

And as we close, I get my last little page. Thank you. We realize that truly our Lord said, the Holy Spirit always shows you things to come, things that are in the present and things in the past. We don't know what it's going to be like. But remember, you'd be called by a new name you have.

That white stone is a promise from God to go on and develop. So, dear brethren, consider These words from 1st Thessalonians 5:11. 1st Thessalonians 5 11. Comfort yourselves through the Holy Spirit. Edify one another, encouraging one another, building up one another in this most holy faith.

To love and to what? Good works. Good works, and what a beautiful expression that is, because we see this exemplified in our brethren each day. So may you continue to dwell in the secret place of the Most High abiding under the shadow of the Almighty.

Psalms 91:1, and may the Lord bless you all. I love you all dearly. Amen.