

The Life of Faith

Lesson 14: Comforts Belonging to a Strong Faith

- When our faith is strong in the Lord such that we live upon Him alone and look to Him to fully and faithfully provide for all our needs according to all His offices as our Reconciler, Redeemer, Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King, then our life will reflect the comforts that flow from such a self-renouncing, Jesus-dependent faith. What are some of these comforts?
- I. Knowing that Christ has all authority and power in heaven and on earth, and that He rules over all created beings and things, we have the comfort of knowing that whatever He sees to be best for us, He is fully able to bestow it upon us, Rev 1.8
 - A. There's nothing we could possibly need that He can't supply (Phil 4.19), nothing we could possibly suffer from which He can't deliver (Isa 43.1-3), and not a single promised good that He can't give (2Cor 1.20; Num 23.19).
 - B. This means, further, that there's nothing evil in our outward condition over which He is not Lord. Pain, sickness, suffering, disappointments, heartaches, griefs—all of these hinder us, stop us in our tracks, and cut us off from our pursuits; but none of them stand in the way of our Jesus doing us good and doing for us what He pleases, what He's promised, and what we need.
 - 1. Because He's taken all these things under His government and in infinite love and wisdom manages them for the good of His people in order that we might know joy both in this life and in the life to come.
 - 2. He's faithful to keep the promises He's made to us: to satisfy our earthly needs, to sanctify our sufferings to us, and make all work together under His governance for our good.
 - 3. In other words, *nothing* was left out of the covenant of grace! What our outward condition should be, whether rich or poor, healthy or sick, what trials we should have, how great they should be, how long they should last, and the good they should accomplish in our lives—it's all been secured by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus for us. *Nothing* has been left to chance. The very hairs of our head are numbered!
 - C. What a continual source of comfort this is to Christians! Our present happiness and peace as well as our eternal happiness and glory are both provided for by Christ in the covenant.
 - 1. Because He knows our frame, how apt we are to be discouraged under long and hard trials, He's made many precious promises to us for our support, Isa 41.10; Heb 13.5; Jn 14.16.
 - 2. And lest we grow weary and impatiently faint under trial, He's promised that He's engaged Himself to deliver us from all evil, Ps 34.19. Which means He'll either graciously deliver us out of it or give us grace to reap good out of it.
 - 3. Thus, God delivers us in one of two ways: by entirely removing the affliction or by changing its nature. When He changes its nature, He takes the curse out of it and turns it into a blessing. He makes it the means of increasing our faith and patience and sweetens it with a sense of His presence, showing us that it comes from His love by increasing our love

for Him. In fact, *this* is the greatest deliverance—when He delivers us from the evil that is in us and causing us to bring forth the fruits of righteousness in the day of trial.

4. In either case, *nothing* evil can harm us because *even evil itself* is under the government of our Saviour, who's covenanted to do us good and to work all things together for our good.
- D. Christ has also engaged Himself to bestow upon His people all the good they need, Ps 34.10; 84.11; Js 1.17; Mt 6.25-33
1. With promises like these, this is what God says to His people, "I give you my word: trust me, and you'll never lack what you need to do you good."
 2. What a powerful motive this is for the strengthening of our faith, that no matter how great our needs may be, no matter how many, no matter how difficult to supply, our God has engaged Himself to supply them *all*, Phil 4.19!
 3. And how bold can we be to cast all our cares on Him, since He cares for us! 1Pet 5.6-7
 4. And how assured can we be that He is able to manage our whole outward estate better than we could do for ourselves! Phil 4.6-7
 5. Just think of the burdens that are lifted off the shoulder... think of the anxieties that dissipate like the dew under the morning sun... think of the peace of mind that fills the heart... think of the restful sleep each night... think of the joy that fills the heart... knowing that we can give up all our temporal concerns into the Lord's hands and by faith see all of them managed by His infinite wisdom and almighty love for our good! Blessed, indeed, is the man who makes the Lord his trust, Ps 40.4; 34.8; 33.12; Jer 17.7. The man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord:
 - a) He's delivered from the anxious care of getting what he needs, because Jesus will supply it.
 - b) He's delivered from the fear of losing what he has, because Jesus keeps it safe.
 - c) He's not worried about the present, because Jesus is in charge of it.
 - d) He's not worried about the future, because Jesus will take care of it.
 - e) He's not worried about eternity, because Jesus has already secured it.
 - f) He's free from covetousness, because he's content with the Lord's management.
 - g) He's not anxious about his soul, because Jesus promised never to leave or forsake him.
 - h) He's not afraid of trials, because Jesus has promised to turn all things, however painful to his body, into real blessings for his soul.
 - i) He's not afraid of his own weaknesses and frailty, or of what man may do to him, because Jesus promised to be his Helper.
 - j) Let the world persecute him, let his trade fail him, let poverty pinch him, sickness pain him, friends leave him, family forsake him, and all outward comforts fail him, he remains a happy man:
 - (1) because Jesus is his all-sufficient portion still,
 - (2) because Jesus is more than enough,
 - (3) and because since Jesus manages all these things in his life, then it's all happened for the best.
 - k) Whatever losses or crosses he faces, it's Jesus'

way of:

- (1) weaning him from the world,
- (2) mortifying his flesh,
- (3) bringing him into more intimate fellowship with Him,
- (4) and bringing more of His goodness into his soul—all which enables him to trust all things, for time and eternity, into the hands of Him who has said to him: “I am your God, I will be with you, I will uphold you, I will care for you, and I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

E. Is this your comfort today? Do you know this peace and assurance and comfort? If you don't, then either you don't know Jesus or your faith in Him is weak. Either way, these are the comforts which flow from a self-renouncing, Jesus-dependent faith. Make it yours today! Mt 11.28-30