

**Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church**  
**2080 West Grand Boulevard**  
**Detroit, Michigan 48208**  
**Nathan Johnson, *Senior Pastor***

***“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another...” Part Two***

**SCRIPTURE LESSON: I Thessalonians 5: 11**

“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” (King James Version)

“Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. (New King James Version)

“So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you’ll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. I know you’re already doing this; just keep on doing it.” (The Message)

**GOAL:** To understand spiritual encouragement as it relates to believers.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explore the comfort believers have in Christ.
2. List examples of spiritual encouragement.
3. Clarify the type of support, edification, and encouragement the church ought to be able to offer.

Last month, we looked at why we ought to comfort and edify one another. This month, we will explore how we can comfort and edify others. In the process, we will discover how we can find personal comfort and edification for ourselves.

**How Can Believers Comfort Each Other?**

*[Proverbs 3: 5-6, Acts 9:31-32, James 5: 15-16, Colossians 3: 15- 17, II Cor. 1:4.]*

How do we support and encouragement each other? How do we build each other up? What resources does God provide for our ministry of comfort?

God has built in some resources for the church. He has not left us to falter or struggle helplessly on our own. He has given us His living Word that has been constant and powerful throughout the generations. Not only that, His Holy Spirit indwells us; teaching, guiding, and empowering us to do the will of God. God has ordained that prayer would be a means for relationship and communication with Him, and a means for His intervention in our lives. Moreover, the Holy Spirit enables us to be obedient to the Word of God so that our faith can be actively expressed for good in the lives of others. It is difficult to comfort others when we ourselves are heavily burdened and cast down. God has a remedy for that; a great exchange takes place when we cast our cares upon the Lord. He said to come unto Him all you who

labor and are heavy laden. We are summoned to take up His yoke and learn of Him. We will find rest for our souls for His yoke is easy and His burden is light. [Matthew 11:28-30] We exchange our anxieties for His peace trusting in His character and relying on the truth and certainty of His promises. As we gather for cooperate worship among our brothers and sisters in Christ, we are encouraged, strengthened, inspired, revitalized, and energized to support and encourage others by what we have gained from worship. In addition, the teaching and preaching of God's Word edifies and encourages us very often, despite our circumstances. Then, when we reach out in compassion to encourage others, it is amazing how we can find more comfort and strength in the process.

1. **God's Word.** The Word of God is our means or blueprint for encouraging one another. It is the revealed truth of God upon which we build our hope and faith and in turn the hope and faith of our brothers and sisters. Within the Word of God, we can find comfort for every one of life's dilemmas. Without hesitation, we can trust the Word of God. (Prov. 3: 5-6).
2. **God's Holy Spirit.** Jesus told us that God would send another comforter when He went away (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit (the '*Parakletos*') indwells, teaches, empowers, illuminates, intercedes, and walks alongside each of us. The early church was edified and multiplied as they relied on the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9: 31-32). We are commanded to comfort each other with the comfort God has given us (II Cor. 1:4). As we yield to the Holy Spirit, we become instruments of comfort and encouragement to each other. We are edified as we recognize the power of God flowing through the heart, mind, body and spirit of another believer, especially when the Holy Spirit moves within us at the same time.
3. **The Prayer of Faith.** James 5: 13-16 cites yet another resource. "*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*" How many times have we been healed and comforted in times of grief, confusion, and disaster through the prayers of saints? Both the Old and New Testament are replete with illustrations of the power of prayer!
4. **Faith Expressed in Action.** Another method of comfort rests in the provisions we make when someone is in need. Although we are saved by faith alone, genuine faith produces good deeds. What good is it, if someone comes in need of food and clothing and we send them away with nothing? We comfort, encourage, build each other up by supplying basic need such as food, clothing, and shelter (James 2:14-17).
5. **Teaching, Preaching and Corporate Worship.** Colossians 3: 15-17 states, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*" The 'Word of Christ' refers to His teachings. We have a responsibility to teach and support the application of God's Word. God has provided '*apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to prepare us for works of service to build up the body of Christ*' (Eph. 4: 11-12). Likewise, participation in corporate worship

encourages, edifies and builds up our fellowship. How many times has powerful preaching quickened our faith, comforted and convicted our hearts, and drawn souls to Christ. Singing hymns, especially where important Christian doctrines are expressed, and songs which recount and praise God for His mighty acts, serve as a witness to quicken our faith. There is great comfort to be found in the words of hymns and songs that vividly portray God's love for us!

Barnabas, a great encourager, is a role model for us. He was named the '*Son of Encouragement*' because he encouraged Christians to remain true in the Lord with all their hearts (*Acts 11:23*) and true to their faith (*Acts 14: 21-22*). Remaining 'true to the Lord' refers to how we live what we believe; while remaining 'true to the faith' relates specifically to what we believe.<sup>4</sup>

All Christians ought to be encouragers and comforters. We need to reach out and be available to do so. Think of someone you can encourage; someone who might be spiritually confused, discouraged, bereaved, afraid, ill, lonely, under pressure, or in failure. What will you say? How would you do it? Will it be in person, by telephone, by a card, letter, or religious tape? <sup>5</sup> Does your knowledge of God's Word enable you to speak comfort with the power and blessings that come from the Word of God?

<sup>1</sup> Keathley, J. Hampton, III, Th.M. "*The Comfort and Challenge Concerning the Day of the Lord.*" (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11). Internet Source: [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)

<sup>2</sup> Keathley, J. Hampton, III, Th.M. "*The Comfort and Challenge Concerning the Day of the Lord.*" (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11). Internet Source: [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)

<sup>3</sup> Keathley, J. Hampton, III, Th.M. "*The Comfort and Challenge Concerning the Day of the Lord.*" (1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11). Internet Source: [www.Bible.org](http://www.Bible.org)

<sup>4</sup> Getz, Gene A., *Encouraging One Another*, 1989, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187 <sup>5</sup> Getz, Gene A., *Encouraging One Another*, 1989, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187

## **SUMMARY/REVIEW/CLOSURE:**

As long as we are connected to Jesus, we have an inexhaustible source for comfort. (*John 15:5*). How often have you tried to comfort or encourage someone during a difficult experience only to find that God supplied an ideal solution for their problem in a sermon? The Word of God not only brings comfort and reassurance, it is the way that God draws us to Himself. The *power* of God's Word fulfills its purpose for those who need Him. Nothing is too hard for God!

You may have noticed that a spiritual calmness falls over the congregation when a minister recites the Scriptures as he prays for church family members. Haven't we witnessed the love God places in the heart of a pastor, which absolutely compels him to expound on the Scriptures so that souls are drawn to commit their lives to Christ? God grants unique gifts to pastors that empower them to evangelize, disciple, and comfort weary souls.

Bible Study, along with the gifting of the Holy Spirit, empowers us to comfort and encourage one another. As we grow in the knowledge and use of the Word of God, our faith will be increased, our prayer lives enriched, and our personal relationship with the Lord strengthened. God's Word is comprehensive and can be applied to any situation in life. He has assured us that His Word will not return void (*Isaiah 55*).

## DISCUSSION/APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

- 1. In what ways has our church been effective in providing comfort and support for its members?**
- 2. Are there some ways we might improve our ability to comfort one another?**
- 3. What might be some ways our church can help members increase their knowledge and effective use of the Word of God?**
- 4. Reflect on a time when you felt encouraged, comforted, and built up by a sister or brother in Christ. What were some of the methods they used?**

## GLOSSARY

**Comfort: *Parakaleo*** (par-ak-al-eh'-o) Word origin: Greek, Verb. Strong #3879

1. To call to one's side, call for, summon
2. To address, speak to (call to, call upon) which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.
  - a. To admonish, exhort
  - b. To beg, entreat, beseech
  - c. To console to encourage and strengthen by consolidation, to comfort

**Edify: *Oikodomeo*** (oy-kod-om-eh-o); Word Origin: Greek, Verb, Strong #3618

1. To build a house, erect a building
  - a. to build (up from the foundation)
  - b. to restore by building, to rebuild, repair
2. Metaphor.
  - a. To promote growth in Christian wisdom, affection, grace, virtue, holiness, blessedness

**Do: *Poieo*** (poy-eh-o); Verb, Strong #4160

1. to make
  - a. With the names of things made, to produce, construct, form, fashion, etc.
  - b. to the authors of, the cause
  - c. to make ready, to prepare
  - d. to produce, bear, shoot forth
  - e. to acquire, to provide a thing for one's self
2. to do
  - a. to act rightly, do well carry out, to execute
  - b. to do a thing unto one
  - c. with designation of time; to pass, spend
  - d. to celebrate, keep
  - e. to perform: to a promise