

Our Father

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[0:00] But it's Father's Day, Father's Day. And people make a big fuss about such, you know, special days. But really, sometimes I think we over-focus on making days and seasons, such a thing.

But I know my dad's here, so I've got to honour him today. And of course, we've got various families here this morning too. We think of dads, and some think of dads that have passed away, of course. And I know there is sadness when we think of that. But yet we know our loved ones who know the Lord are with him. And that's a comfort.

Our Father. One little boy was asked to explain about Father's Day. And he explained it like this. He said, it's just like Mother's Day, only you don't spend as much on the present.

So, Father's Day is how one little child put it. But we're talking here about a passage that talks about God our Father. God our Father.

[1:04] And it's in 2 Corinthians 1. And we'll talk about the truths that come out of this little passage here. From 2 Corinthians 1, from verse 1.

2 Corinthians 1, from verse 1 through 5. Let's just pray.

Lord, we thank you that you are our Father. And we can yield to you. We can know you. We that have trusted in you. We are your adopted sons and daughters here today. And Lord, we cry out, Abba, Father.

We cry out, Lord, that you would minister to your children here today. Work by your Holy Spirit's power. Lord, give us a word that we can take to heart and act upon.

May it be an encouragement to all. Lift us up, Lord, and help us to find your embrace and your love in a deeper way.

[2:04] In Jesus' name. Amen. Here is a passage that tells us about God our Father. 2 Corinthians 1, verse 1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God.

And Timothy, our brother, unto the church of God, which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia. Grace be to you and peace.

From God our Father. God our Father. And from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God.

even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father of mercies. And the God of all comfort. We're going to look shortly at those, especially those two things.

The Father of mercies. And the God of all comfort. For comforts us in all our tribulation. That we may be able to comfort them, which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

[3:15] For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

Verse 3. Blessed be God. Blessed be God. Even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's saying, blessed be God.

Praise God. Bless the Lord. Oh my soul. Praise our Father. Praise God. Our Father. As David praised. How did David praise?

I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Psalm 34.1 I will bless the Lord at all times.

His praise shall continually be in my mouth. What a confession. He said, I will do this. Now, I know elsewhere he says, oh my soul, bless the Lord.

[4:14] He tells himself, I'm going to bless the Lord. I will. And Paul calls this God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.

We've got reason to praise him. Amen. We've got reason to bless God. Because he is the Father of mercies. He is the Father of mercies. Mercies.

Mercies it tells of his compassion. It tells of his kindness. Of his consideration. And notice it's plural. Mercies. God does not show mercy just once.

As we know he showed mercy at the cross. He still extends that mercy. Day by day. Moment by moment. Not just here and there. But always. He continually showers his mercies upon his children. He keeps on pouring out his mercies. And his mercies go on and on and on and on. They don't run out. He is the Father of mercies. Every time we need his mercy, he gives it to us.

[5:17] He extends it to us. He shows mercy. He is the Father. He produces what he is. He is the source of mercy. He helps us have mercy when we need it.

He is the starting place of mercy. The Father. The one who makes it happen. He makes mercy happen. Psalm 103 tells us more about his mercy.

It tells us Psalm 103 from verse 8. There's numbers of references to mercy in Psalm 103. Here's to Psalm. Verse 8.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. Praise him for that. Amen. Praise him that he's merciful.

Praise him he's slow to anger. Praise him he's plenteous in mercy. Don't we need his mercy? I know I do. I need God's mercy. Think of the two that went to the temple to pray and the one said, oh, I thank you God that I'm not like that.

[6:23] And the other, God be merciful unto me, the sinner, a sinner. God have mercy upon me.

And he received his mercy. He received the covering grace of God. God is rich in mercy. He's abounding in it. He's plenteous in it.

He doesn't hold back. He pours it out and he keeps on pouring it. It goes on in verse 11. Psalm 103 verse 11. For as the heavens, as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

God's mercy is great. We can't measure it. It's beyond our imagination, beyond our comprehension. It's as high as the heaven. It's as high as the heaven. So great is his mercy.

Praise the Lord. Blessed be God. Amen. Bless God. He's the father of mercy. His mercy is great. It's awesome.

[7:25] It's huge. It's massive. It's great. It's as high as the heaven. It is above the earth. And verse 17 of Psalm 103.

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. You can't get more than that, can you? From everlasting in eternity past to everlasting.

Everlasting. Eternity future. That's how much his mercy extends from the beginning to the end. The alpha and the omega.

From everlasting unto everlasting. Unto them that fear him. And his righteousness unto the children of children.

His mercy is everlasting. Now you see some people wearing shirts that say everlasting. But those shirts will, the moth will corrupt them and they won't be everlasting.

[8:28] As much as people want them to be. But his mercy is everlasting. Not only is he the father of mercies. He is also the God of all comfort.

Bless God for that. Amen. Can't we say bless the Lord? Bless the Lord. Bless the Lord. Bless the Lord.

The God of all comfort. We've got reason to bless the Lord. Oh my soul, bless the Lord. He is the father of mercies. And he is the father of mercies. And he is also the God of all comfort.

Blessed be God. Blessed be God. He will comfort you in the hospital. He will comfort you at the passing of a loved one.

He will comfort you at the grief of affliction, of stress, of troubles. He can comfort you where you're at, in any place, at any time.

[9:29] And he is the God of all comfort. The God of all comfort. His comfort is real. It's not pretend. It's not a make-up kind of pretense.

His comfort is real. It's not superficial. It's deep. It's profound. It's personal. It's his relationship with you.

The God of all comfort. I know there's folk going through some really tough times this morning. And God is your comforter. God is your comforter.

You might think, oh, he's talking about me. No, I'm talking about somebody else, actually. Because there's lots of people here this morning that need the comfort of God. I need his comfort. But all of us truly, don't we, need his comfort, whatever your situation, whatever your burden today. He is the comforter. The comforter truly he is. And some people like a drink of whiskey called southern comfort. But that is not comfort.

[10:36] That is not comfort. That will ruin a home. It will destroy lives. But this comforter, he is certain and sure.

And he is one you can depend upon. Others will turn to drugs for comfort. But there is no comfort there. It will just leave you a hangover with a downer.

But his comfort extends. It's from everlasting to everlasting. And he will come near to you. You that fear him. You that search for him. You that seek his face.

He will come near and he will comfort you. And his comfort will extend from everlasting to everlasting. He is the God of all comfort. He will come near. He will bring relief.

He will bring support. He will bring his embrace. His tender compassions. His comfort. Because he is the God of all comfort. His comfort is complete.

[11:32] It's full. It's wide. It's lasting. God our Father cares. Because he is the Father of mercies. And the God of all comfort. Our God is the God of all comfort.

In other words, he can comfort us in all of our troubles. And I know there's some in our number who spend moments of time, who spend solid time with people.

When they're at the most fragile place in their lives. Vulnerable people. People that are shut-ins. People that are in hospital.

In their dying days. In their dying moments. And we can be comforters to them. You can be a comfort. You might think, oh, I'm not really much of a Christian.

I know I've got many faults. But we can pass on his comfort. We can be a comforter too. And I'll get more on that. But in our time of trouble.

[12:31] He supplies our need of comfort. And in the time when we most need him. When we need his assurance. When we need his presence. In our loneliness. In our hurting times.

In our times of loss. In times of tragedy. God's love. God's love. Is here for us. And we're talking Father's Day. Now this is kind of slightly talking about fathers.

But it's talking about the ultimate father. That we can know, isn't it? God our Father. God our Father. And we that love him. That know him. If you received his salvation gift.

By trusting in the blood of Jesus. For us shed for you. In trusting in. His dying in your place. And rising to be your living saviour. That you trust him personally.

As your Lord and Master. He for you is the God of all comfort. He is your comforter. And you can know his presence. Is always there. Not just at holy times.

[13:30] As it were. Of gathering times. Of Sunday times. Of church meetings. But from everlasting to everlasting. He is that God. Who comforts us.

In trouble. In time of grief. Or loss. The Father heart of God. That's what it is. Isn't it? The Father heart of God. And more.

Much much more than any earthly father. Whilst he wants that for earthly fathers too. And we know. In sad times. In some sad situations.

The earthly father falls far short. Far, far short. And does a woeful job sometimes. And that brings grief and hurt. When we know. That our earthly father.

Is a poor example. But this. Father. This. God. Our Father. He is the perfect model. He isn't he? He is the perfect model.

[14:30] Of who. We as dads here. Want to be like him. Want to be like our God. God our Father. Because his. Love.

Extends so wide. And so free. The Father heart of God. He is the Father of mercies. And the God of all comfort. We read in the word. He's numbered the very hairs of our head. You know.

I usually say a joke about that. When I say something like that. Because he's got less to count. In my case. But. He knows the numbers. The hairs of our head. He knows the infinite. Minutest.

Part of us. He knows us. Inside out. Doesn't he? He knows. The real you. Beyond any mask. That we might put up. He knows deep within. The real you.

And he loves you. He is faithful. The word for comfort. It means to call alongside of. You know. I think I might have preferred this of late. But.

[15:25] That sense of coming alongside of. When. At times through life. We feel like we're on our lonesome. We feel like we're. We're struggling. And we don't have.

Too much. Assistance. With whatever it be. In our situation of life. And we're feeling. Like it's too hard. He's the one who comes alongside us.

Doesn't he? Brother Jimmy. Come here. I know you can call on Jimmy. Come alongside me.

Yeah. That's. That's what God does. Amen. Doesn't he? Amen. Amen. That's what God does to us. Comes alongside us. To help. Thanks Jimmy.

I like embarrassing people now and again. In this church. That's just. It's just that graphic picture isn't it? He comes alongside us. To help. He comes by our side.

[16:24] To relieve. To support. To give assurance. To console. To uplift. To uplift. To encourage. And this underlying meaning here. Has the sense of the idea of strength.

It's not just a patting on the back. It's not just some token thing. There's a coming alongside to help. To be strength. To give an enablement. To give confidence.

His comfort. It brings relief. And assistance. And lifting. And uplifting. He strengthens us at the same time. As he comes alongside us.

Of course we know. The word of God tells us. Of the Holy Spirit. He is the comforter. The comforter. And how we need. The comforter. God the Holy Spirit.

To enable us. To come alongside. To help. And when we try to counsel someone. Encourage someone. How we need God's grace. To fill us. To. In God's thinking. God's. Spirit.

[17:21] To equip us. And help us to say. The right things. Because. Humanly. For me. I'm inadequate. Completely.

I'm totally dependent. Really. On his. Enablement. And he comes. As a comforter. To stand beside. To comfort. To help. To guide. And there's a sense.

Where there's comfort. It's immeasurable. It's. It's. It's. It's not contained. It's not. Confined. It's. It's. It's. It's. It's got this spreading.

Immeasurable. Extent to it. There's no limit. To his comfort. There's nothing. That can happen to us. That God cannot see us through. We might think in life. Oh God's left me.

Or God's. Far. Far away. No. He is as close. As a prayer away. He's. He's. Always there. He's a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

[18:20] That's how close he is. There's no limit. Paul says. Who comforts us in all. Our tribulation. We'll get there.

Who. Who. Who comforts us in all of our tribulation. And tribulation. It speaks of being weighed down. Exceedingly. Being pressed down. Crushed. God.

Comforts us in all our tribulation. And this is very real here this morning. I'm very conscious there's people crushed here.

And you might think. Oh he's talking about me. Well actually no. There's. There's numbers of people here. Crushed for lots of reasons. Heartache. Losing a loved one.

A grieving. A. A separation. There's. There's situations here. That are hard. For people. And I don't want to just give you token words here.

[19:25] Or human. Knowledge. Or. Human. Advice. But. God's. Advice. God's word to you. That he is. The God of all comfort.

He truly is. He truly is. And. What's more. He comforts us in. All. Our. Tribulation. So.

When you're in. That. Tribulation. Then his comfort is there. In it. He's in it with you. And. This.

Tribulation. As I say. It speaks of being weighed down.

Crushed. Hurting. Burdened. A crushing load. It says he comforts us in all. Our tribulation.

Not just a few of our trials. And sufferings. But all of them. We. We don't have to bear a single trial.

On our own. For a moment. Our father.

[20:21] He's the father. He controls. All. And he's not far away. He's right. With us. He's not far. Far away. He is with us. God with us.

Emmanuel. I love that name. Emmanuel. Praise the Lord. What a name. Just to think of Emmanuel. God with us. He is with us.

We are in relationship with him. Personally adopted into his. Family. The family of God. And I just love it. I know. Sometimes it almost sounds a bit stilted. When I say.

Brother David. Brother Bobby. And it almost sounds. Oh you kind of. You sound a bit like you're Catholics. Or something. Or you know. But it's a scriptural term. Isn't it? And it's. And it's a godly term.

It's a term of endearment. My brother. My sister. There's that closeness here. We have. As brothers and sisters together. We're not just saying it. Because it's the dumb thing to do.

[21:16] In our circle of churches. But. Because it means something. It's precious. Brotherly love. We want to be the church of Philadelphia. The church of brotherly love.

That we care for one another. As brothers. As sisters. We're not just using it as a title. Of. Reverence. But. Because we mean it. You're my brother Paul.

And I love you. That's my brother. Brother Jimmy. Dear brother. Dear sister. A pony. My dear sister. I love you in the Lord. You're very dear and precious to me. I want to. I want to treat you as a sister. That I love. That's how we should be as a church. Isn't that?

How we want to be. Have that relationship. God our father. We're brothers and sisters together. What a blessing. Adopted into his family. How we can have that heart for one another.

[22:11] That you are his child. And as his child. I love you. As my brother. My sister. And we should love one another. Love as brethren. Brotherly love.

Let brotherly love continue. That's a great memory verse. Four words. You can remember that can't you? Four words. Let brotherly love continue.

May we care for him. May we know his care for us. May we know his care for one another. And look out for one another. And if God can speak the universe into existence.

He can take care of you. He is our father. What does a father do? He provides. He sustains. If he's doing what he ought to do. And thank God for fathers like that.

Godly fathers. If he can keep Noah safe through the flood. If he can feed Elijah with the ravens.

[23:08] If he can put the meal in the barrel. The oil in the cruise. And life in the boy for the widow. If he can keep the three Hebrew boys safe in the furnace. If he can secure Daniel in the lion's den.

If he can feed Israel's people with manna. And quail in the wilderness. For 40 years. If he can slay Goliath for David.

If he can take care of those disciples in the storm. If he can part the Red Sea for Moses. If he can raise Lazarus from the dead. If he can walk on water.

If he can feed the 5,000. If he can do countless other things. Too numerous to mention. I know he is able to care for you. He is able to care for you.

You that are grieving. You that are suffering. Tragedy. Heartache. He is able to care for you. He is able. He is able to deliver you. And he is able to comfort you.

[24:05] In other words. God encourages us. The word comfort. Really it is. Also. The word encourage. It is encouragement. We want to be a church that encourages people.

I want to be a person who encourages people. I want you to be such a people. And I know you are. Encourage one another. Exhort one another. As you see the day approaching.

God encourages us. He is filled with encouragement. You could put it. He is the God of all encouragement. He is the God who encourages us. God encourages Moses at the burning bush.

When he told him to deliver the nation of Israel. He encouraged Joshua. As he stepped out into. Conquering the promised land.

And he encouraged him with these words. He encouraged him with his words. With his presence. With his help. Have not I commanded thee? Joshua 1 verse 9.

[25:08] Have not I commanded thee? Be strong. And of good courage. Be not afraid. Neither be thou dismayed. For the Lord thy God is with thee.

He is with thee. Thy God is with thee. Whithersoever. Wherever. Thou goest. Wherever you go. He is with you. And verse 4 tells us that he is.

The one who comforts us. In all our tribulation. When you're in tribulation. He is in there with you. Amen. He is very close to you. You know. You know. How does it go? He is a very present help. In time of trouble. Psalm 46.1. Yeah. Thanks brother. No. David's got. He's got a frame. Bigger than mine. No.

[26:08] He's made an effort to. To hide the word of God in his heart. And that's a blessing. Amen. He's a very present help. In trouble. So.

He is with us. And he's comforting us. In our tribulation. And he encourages us so much. With such words. Of comfort. God comforts us. It's got the sense that he comforts us.

Forever. It's. As I say. There's a sense where this is. Unlimited. Comfort. All. Comfort. The God of all comfort. He comforts us in all.

Our tribulation. He gives us compassion. He knows pain. He's not a God that cannot be moved. God gets moved. With the feelings of our infirmities.

He's not some. Impersonal. Hollow. Insensitive. God. He's not some.

[27:04] Lump of wood. Or stone. Or. Metal. He's not. Inanimate. He's living. He's the living God. And he's our father.

And he has compassion. He has a heart. And he knows pain. So he can be moved. With the feelings of our infirmities. And. Brothers and sisters. Suffering is universal.

We know. Just because we're a believer. Doesn't mean it's all going to be. Rosy. And easy. You know. Suffering is universal. It tells us Romans 8. 22. For we know the whole creation.

Groans. And travails. In pain. There's a groaning. There's a travailing. There's. There's. Pain. And. Suffering. All around us.

Yet there is hope for the hurting. Hope. In Christ. There is hope. Who comforts us. Does in all our tribulation. That we may be able to comfort them. Which are in any trouble.

[27:59] By the comfort we're with. We ourselves are comforted. Of God. So notice here. There's hope for the hurting. His. Comforts us. In our tribulation.

In all our tribulation. Every bit of our tribulation. And. Why? So we can. Comfort others. Sometimes we can get selfish.

And think. Of just ourselves. And not of others. But God gives comfort to us. And. God gives comfort.

Through us. That's what he wants for us. God's comfort always abounds. Towards us. He puts strength into our hearts.

He helps us to face trials. And triumph over them. And. It's interesting. The English word comfort. I'm told comes from two Latin words. Meaning. With strength.

[28:56] Comfort. With strength. I'm not any great scholar. Of English or Greek. But. The Greek one is. To come alongside to help. As we talked about. There's that. Encouragement.

That comfort. The. With strength. The English word. The Greek. Come alongside and help. May we see God's comfort. God's purpose in everything. Even. Our trials.

He's not left us. He's still. He's still working. His work in us. And. The whole. Creation. Travails and groans. The rain falls on the just and the unjust.

We have human tragedies. Just like. Everybody does. But. The difference is. God is in. Our situation. And he will. Deliver.

He will. Enable. He will lift up. And we can rely on him. And he will continue to deliver you. He comforts us in our troubles. Our comfort knowing.

[29:50] Comes from knowing. Not only he is on our side. But he is by our side. Not only is God. With us. He's on our side. But he is by our side.

Comes alongside to help. God's comfort is ours. In our tribulation. And there is a reason here. Again. The reason. So that we can.

Comfort. Others. We can comfort. Those who are in trouble. With the comfort. That we ourselves have received. From the Lord.

Isn't that a. A wonderful truth. And. That what we. Enjoy. In life. Sometimes. Is so we can bless someone else.

Is doing. Doing that. Tough. As well. I know. There's. There's loved ones. In my life. That are going through. That have gone through. Great. Tragedy.

[30:47] And trauma. And. God has given them. A sweet. Heart. To help others. And what a blessing. That is. The hurt.

The heart. The heartache. The grief. The loss. Was for God's purpose. For him to use you. In a greater dimension. With others. So God can.

Comfort. He can. Use you. As the channel. Of his comfort. To others. But just as the sufferings. Of Christ. Abound in us. They come into our lives.

So his comfort. Comes out of our lives. It flows out. And God understands. Our God. Is. There when we call him. When we need him.

And. His purpose. Here is that we may comfort. Those who are in trouble. As we go through trials.

[31:43] He will. He's shaping us. He's making us. It's the making of us. I know some of you have been through. An incredible life. Of. Much testing.

In military. Backgrounds. And stuff like that. Seeing things. And. Coping with things. I would never have. Really.

Couldn't grasp it. What it means. What you've been through. That God has. Seen you through that. And you're stronger for it. And God is going to use you mightily.

Because of what you've been through. And he is using you. I know that. Brothers and sisters. It tells us. 1 Peter 4. That. We should think it not strange. Beloved. Concerning the fiery trial.

Which is. To try you. As though some strange thing. Happened unto you. This is 1 Peter 4. Then verse 13. But rejoice in. As much as ye are partakers of.

[32:43] Christ's offerings. But when his glory may be revealed. Shall be revealed. He may be glad. Also. With exceeding joy. Now our brother said. In his exhortation before.

Rejoice. Rejoice. Sometimes we only rejoice. When it's. When we feel like. Don't we?

But let's not limit our rejoicing. To just the good times. Rejoice. Even in the trial of your faith. Rejoice even then. Peter and John.

After they were persecuted. They rejoiced. That they were counted worthy. To suffer. For Christ. For the name of Christ. You know. Think how.

They rejoiced. Paul and Silas. At midnight. They sang songs of praise. In the prison. God is part of trials. And he'll. Use those trials. To make us.

[33:39] His. His stronger people. For it. And we can have exceeding joy. Even in trials. Because trials are part of being a Christian.

The good news is that. For as the sufferings of Christ. Abound in us. So. Our consolation. Also abounded by Christ. What it's saying there.

As. Sufferings abound. As you suffer. For being a Christian. And some of you will be mocked. Now when I first became a Christian. I was very much mocked. And my friends abandoned me.

And I was hated for Christ. And that happens. When you stand for Christ. There's a loss. There's a. There's a.

Suffering. But yet. There is a gain. There is a blessing. There is a rejoicing. And there's a consolation. Which is. Again. It's the same word. Comfort.

[34:34] There's a comfort that abounds. By Christ. A comfort. A time of suffering. Yet. He gives more grace. A time. That is terrible. Yet.

He showers his comfort. Upon us. A time of. Struggling. To find strength. And he grants it. For you to carry on. To trust him. To allow him to use you.

May we offer ourselves. To God. It's for your consolation. Paul says. It's for your consolation. He says it's for your comfort. It's so you can.

In turn. Comfort. Others. So you can encourage others. And it's part of that. The fellowship. Of his suffering. It's the sharing. In that. It's the. Communion.

The common experience. That we have. That through life. We can. Come alongside. To help. Our brother. Our sister. We can come alongside. To help. Oswald Chambers.

[35:31] A. A well-known. Man of God. Said. If you are going to be used by God. He will take you through a multitude of experiences. That are not meant for you at all. They are meant to make you useful in his hands.

He'll take you through a multitude of experiences. That are not meant for you at all. They are meant to make you useful in his hands. You know. How. Much. A better help.

To counsel someone. Is someone who's been there and done that. You know. Wow. That's. That's his training. That's what he's. What he's doing.

He's training me. Amen. That's what he's doing. What he's done. And what he will continue to do.

As we face adversity. He will comfort us.

So we can help others. In such. Times. Of life. To comfort. Other suffering. He is the father. Of mercies.

[36:28] The God of all comfort. He is the father of mercies. The God of all comfort. In other words. He is the source. Of all comfort. Or.

Likewise you could put it. Of all encouragement.

He. Helps us to encourage others. Now it's all too easy to. Discourage others. Isn't it? I know.

At times. I have. To bite my tongue. And not say something. I think. What can I say? How can I have.

A greater ability. To encourage others. That's not to discount. As times. To bring needful correction. And loving discipline. We're not saying. It's all warm and fuzzy.

And you only say good things. But. It's about. Thinking. What would Jesus. Want me to say? What would he want? When someone is.

[37:35] Really down. And hurting. What would he want me to do? What would he want me to do? Having that ability. To encourage others. To think outside of our own. Little.

Kind of. Our own. Little. Four walls. Of our mind. And of our own. Dimension of living. To think about others. And can we always look.

For the best in people. I like to do that. I know. As much as I don't go along. With the. Salvation Army. I think that their. Employment arm. Had a. A bit of a slogan.

We don't give up on anybody. You know. I think it's probably. You know. Something along that theme. We don't give up on it. We don't give up on people. We don't give up on anybody.

I think. There's potential. While someone's breathing. That. That they will get right. With God. And. And God will get a hold of them. And he'll. Make. Move them. And. And make them who he wants them to be.

[38:32] And we're all part of that process. Because. I know I was hearing a dear sister. Talking about her mother passing away. And. And. That. She only had. She received the Lord two days.

Before she passed away. And. You know. It's. Persistent prayer. Isn't it. It's. It's persevering prayer. It's persevering faith. It's persevering love. That we can.

Restore. We can encourage. We can lift up. And. Encourage people. So. Can we always look for the best in people? Having that. That mindset. There's a funny story about an old man.

Who lived in a small town. And he was known around the town. He had a bit of a reputation. But he never said. Any. Any unkind words to anyone. So.

You could say. He put into practice. There's a couple of scriptures. I believe. I know. There's a dear brother of mine here. He loves to. Recite these words.

[39:31] Speak evil. Of no man. Speak evil. Of no man. And that's. That's a good. That's a good philosophy to have. Isn't it? We don't go gossiping. Jabbering. And putting.

Pulling others down. We try to. Hold back. From. Such things. But rather. Not speak evil. Of any man. Now that's not to say.

There's false teachers out there. Will say. That's false doctrine. And we'll. We'll condemn that. And we'll stand against falsehood. We'll stand against. For example.

What the Pope in Rome stands for. Because it's error. And. Falsehood. And lies. But this man. He had this heart. Of. Speak evil. Of no man.

And. He had this reputation. He never said an unkind word. To anyone. And every word. That came out of his mouth. Was positive. Was uplifting. Was gracious.

[40:24] And the people in the town. Couldn't stand it. Because they liked to talk about other people. You know. Did you hear about Mrs Smith. What you've been up to. Or did you hear about this. This is the latest hot goss.

You know. There's that. There's that. Thinking. And. Oh yeah. Tell me more. You know. There's that. People love it. Don't they? Humanly. We can be drawn to that.

And it's not good. It's not good for them. Not good for us. You know. For gossip to stop. Just. Tell them you don't want to hear it. Don't tell me. Sometimes we need to be like that.

Don't we? Don't encourage it. Don't. Don't. And this man. Nothing negative came out of his mouth. And the people in town. They couldn't stand it. He was just too positive. He just liked to talk good things about other people.

And one day there was a vicious dog. That had terrorized the town. For years and years. This horrible dog. It was just. You know. Bite people. And chase people. And a mangy dog.

[41:21] That just. It was a horrible dog. And the people in the town. They'd been terrorized for years and years. And the dog died. And so the townspeople got together.

And they began to say all kinds of bad things. About that dog. Thank goodness that dog's dead. You know. And after a while. The people went over to this kind man's house. To see what he would say about the dog.

And they surely thought he would have something to say. Something bad. Something bad to say about the dog. And so when the townspeople asked him. What he thought about the dog. The man paused a moment.

And said. That dog sure did have pretty teeth. He found something good to say. Nevertheless.

And you know. We need to find the good in others. Don't we at times. To find the good in every person. Even that one. That we really have trouble with. We can think. Well. Something good.

[42:22] I like to kind of. Say. We can even say something good about the devil. You know. Because. He's always on the prowl.

He doesn't stop. He's persistent. The devil. You know. Not praising him. But I'm just saying. You can find something good. Even about. The worst of people.

In a sense. And find something to encourage. To uplift. To draw. Out strength. To. Encourage. To uplift. And when we find someone. Doing something right.

Give them a word of encouragement. You know. When someone. Might. Get it half right. Encourage them still. When someone's doing something good.

Tell them. You're doing something right. That's a blessing. It's easy to get discouraged. Isn't it?

Because we can all live. With discouragement. And. If we all. We get is discouragement. You know.

[43:19] Just get flatter and flatter. Don't we? And. If we're getting picked on. Constantly. That's not to say. We shouldn't lift our game. You know. Make. Some.

Strides forward. Try to. Aspire. To excel. To be. Strong. As a believer. And. Do our utmost for God. But we're doing that. Because we want to.

Because he. He's lifting us to that. He's encouraging us. Himself. And. There's many. Encouraging. Scriptures we can cite. As the word tells us. For whatsoever.

Things were written. A fourth time. Were written for our learning. That we through. Patience and. Comfort. Of the scriptures. Might have hope. That we through patience.

And comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. There's comfort here. If you're looking for comfort. Turn to these pages. Comfort of the scriptures.

[44:14] And here's just some. Just to wrap up here. What. What.

Comforting scriptures. Can we think of. I can. Do all things. Through Christ. Which strengtheneth me.

Philippians 4. 13. Romans 8. 28. And we know that. All things work together. For good. For them. To them. That love God. To them. Who are the call. According to his purpose.

What about. John 3. 16. For God. So loved the world. That he gave his only begotten son. That whosoever believeth in him. Should not perish. But have everlasting life.

So many scriptures. The psalmist cried out. Psalm 139. Whither shall I go. From thy spirit. Whither shall I flee. From thy presence. If I ascend up into heaven. Thou art there.

And if I make my bed in hell. Thou art there. God is with you. Wherever we are. Whatever our situation. God is with us. He's constant. And we're rejoicing in his presence.

[45:12] He is there. When we're in the hospital. He's there. When we're in the home. When we're struggling. With circumstance.

He is there. When the sun is shining. Or whether it's raining. He is there. God never changes. He says I am God. I change not. He's the same yesterday. Today. And forever. And he never takes his eyes off us. He is a father. He's constantly watching us. You know. When little ones are little. And they've got no road sense. You know. Mums and dads have got to keep their eyes peeled. That's what God's like with us. Isn't it? Amen. He doesn't let us out of his sight. And he's. We're never alone. Because he never leaves us. Nor forsakes us. He's constantly taking care of us. Can we be constantly there for others too? Can we have the heart. The father heart of God.

[46:07] The tender heart of God. That we look out for others too. That we have that caring for our brother, our sister in Christ. The Bible often talks about being of good cheer.

Being of good cheer. And so I know I've mentioned this a few times. But for some who've heard it may not be so funny now. But as a new dad.

And Julie was having her caesarean to bring forth our child. And I went into the hospital room. And they were preparing for the operation. And they started to apply some red antiseptic lotion to where the cut would happen.

And I said to Julie, have courage dear. I've got to go now. I'm going to faint. Because I just couldn't cope. Just the red colouring was enough.

[47:17] Let alone seeing any blood. But God says, be of good courage. He says, be of good cheer. And he doesn't say, I'm going to go now. I'm going to faint. He's with you there.

He's not going to let you go. He's not going to walk away. Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid.

Our Lord says to the men in the boat. And then Paul says to the captain of the ship.

At this time of great distress. He says, I exhort you to be of good cheer. He says, there's not going to be loss of life. We're going to lose the ship. But be of good cheer. You'll all be saved. And then our Lord says to the man sick of the palsy.

Be of good cheer. Thy sins be forgiven thee. And he healed him. He gave him forgiveness and salvation. We see John 16. Our Lord says, in me you might have peace.

In the world you shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I've overcome the world. Be of good cheer. Be of good cheer. Be of good cheer. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

[48:18] Oh, this is a book filled with comfort. Filled with good cheer. Filled with encouragement. How can we have that heart?

Now, we might find through life where things are tough. You know, there's a woman who people would know her name.

Who wrote the book, The Hiding Place. And she was in a Nazi prison camp. She had harbored Jews in her home. And she was taken to the concentration camp.

And she and her sister, Betsy, were there. The conditions were terrible. Beyond our worst imagination. You know, it was the pits. And however, this woman and her sister began to pray.

And Betsy prayed, Lord, thank you for the fleas. And this woman couldn't understand why her sister was giving God thanks for the fleas. So she stopped her sister and said to Betsy, why are you praying that?

[49:26] And she says, don't you see? The Lord provided the fleas so the guards will leave us alone. And not bother us in the barracks so we can pray. So we can pray and worship freely.

So the sister saw the cheerful side of the situation. The bad situation. We can be of good cheer even when it looks pretty miserable. Because God tells you, be of good cheer.

Find the cheerful way of seeing life. Find the time that you can rejoice, even in suffering.

Find the comfort even in all our tribulation. Every bit of it. The God of all comfort is in all our tribulation. And he doesn't necessarily make all the suffering and pain go away.

We'll still carry some wounds and there'll still be some after effects at times through life's tragic circumstance. But we can find his comfort.

[50:29] We can find his care. He's the father of all mercies. He's the God of all comfort. Even in a world filled with injustice and troubles and suffering and awful situations that people go through, there is still encouragement that we can know.

And there's real joy. There's rejoicing still. There's gladness in God. He is the God of all comfort. And he tells us, comfort one another with these words. The comfort of the scriptures. There's great blessing there. Blessed be God. Blessed be God. Bless God. Blessed be God.

The father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The father of mercies and the God of all comfort. As we think in a human sense of fathers, of various memories, the father, God the father, is the perfect father. The perfect father. Men, let's model ourselves on him. Let's be prayerful. To be the God.

[51:42] To be comforters like him. Let's share that family likeness, as it were. That his comfort will be channels of it.

Amen. Let's pray. Dear Lord, we love and praise your worthy name. Our Lord Jesus Christ, for your precious love. For families here today, mums and dads, as we think of our responsibilities as parents and as children, paying regard to our parents likewise to honour them.

Lord, we especially want to be reminded of who you are. The God of all comfort. The father of mercies. That you extend mercy to those who call on your name.

And pray if there's any here present, they think, well, I don't really know God. I don't know God as my father. I know God maybe as some theological concept or some vague idea that there is a God, but I don't know him.

Pray if there's anyone here that is feeling like that this morning. They've never personally been, as the Bible says, born again. And had that adoption into the family of God.

[53:01] So, to truly know, yes, I want God to be my father. I want to be his son, his daughter.

Lord, we pray for anyone who feels as such this morning, that they can know that your word tells us that if we confess Jesus as our Lord, if we believe in our heart, confessing with our mouth as Lord, if we call on your name, if we put our trust in that sacrifice that you paid, Lord, for our sins at the cross and receive your merciful love gift of salvation, that we can know for sure that we are sons and daughters of the living God.

Pray each one might have that personal revelation this morning. If anyone is in that situation, that they will cry out to it. They'll ask for prayer. They'll ask for another Christian, whether me or another Christian they know today, and say, I want to know how to become a Christian, to make that confession and to know God as my father today.

I want to know that for sure. And you can know that. We pray for everyone, everyone who believes here today, that we might be reassured in our faith, strengthened, encouraged, Lord, help us to be cognizant that in all of life's troubles and trials, even in tribulation, that you are the God of all comfort, the Father of mercies.

In Jesus' name, amen.