

# The consolations of the Gospel to sorrowing sinners (Quality: Good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Again, seeking divine help and your attention, I would again turn to the epistle of Paul to Titus, chapter 3, and read again verses 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Chapter 3 of the epistle of Paul to Titus, read in verses 3, 4, 5 and 6. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another, and after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord, our Saviour.

We read Ephesians 2 because of its similarity. Those first three verses are akin to what we have read in verse 3 here, followed as it is by those words, by those words, but God.

And so we have those again here, but after that, the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.

I do find something which is solemnly missing today.

[ 2 : 17 ] It is in my heart, and I would suppose two times it's in yours. It's a word that some would find fault with, as though it was strange language to a child of God.

But what I find, for the most part, is not so evident, is the comfort of the gospel.

I wonder how many times, before the Lord, you could honestly say that the gospel has been your comfort. And there again, how long is it that you've dwelt in the sense of that comfort?

But if you know what this four verses here has to show, then you have a comfort which is eternal. You may describe it as transient.

You may say, but oh, it's a brief moment when a little wolf feels, is felt within. You might say in effect, well, and pray again, and we often do, more frequently, let thy visits be, and let them longer last, because we know that when his visits come, they are spiritual comforts to our soul.

[ 3 : 45 ] I'm not talking about those characters in religion that always seem to be buoyed up by one thing and another. Speaking about the real children of God, whose comforts come from God, and on the revelation and the felt sense of that comfort are lifted up for a measure and for a season away from the doubts and fears and the distresses that Satan and self itself would bring us into.

Well, my friends, these verses are applicable to every child of God. we ourselves also are sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers' lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

I want to say something here. May it not shock you, but may you have patience with the preacher this night. don't look on this third verse as though it be in past history only.

Don't look on this third verse and say, well, now that was it was, but it isn't any longer because that wouldn't be true. Although the apostle said we ourselves also were.

If you know your own heart and the Holy Ghost will teach you in a measure your fallen state constantly unless you and I ride upon some false hope and some false consolation and at times too the child of God can be brought here or sadly can be found here brought here by his own self.

[ 5 : 48 ] you know, even the blessings and the mercies of the gospel if it was left to self you know it would lift us up in spiritual pride.

This seed of sin which is in the third verse hasn't died yet has it? Hasn't died yet. It will die.

It's thankful if grace subdues it thankfully my friends be thankful to God if it does I've often thought you know the ways of man are past finding out God knows the besetting sins of our hearts and God knows also in the days of unregeneracy how those things of the world occupy the mind and occupy the endeavours and we spent time and energy on them and we had to say with the first hymn such were some of you but you know if you know your own heart you'll have to guard against this business of getting better as you get older and you'll have to prove this that the old man is still well alive and you'll have to prove this and it will be to your sorrow and distress that you'll sometimes say could ever

God dwell here we ourselves also are sometimes foolish you know I did say that the Lord in his mercy in every child of grace brings them to the place where he commences the work of grace but I never said that this past pathway of which thou calls to mourn over is something that they can lay aside now what did the psalmist say remember not against me the sins of my youth oh my friends if you've got a tender conscience it's not that sin itself has not been blotted out the precious blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin and the Lord grant that blessing to us all but on the other hand and solemn it is to say my friends what is written here is still in our heart it's still in our heart and oh don't ever try to consider that they are now no longer that they haven't got any power or any part or lot in a child of God's walk and pathway if it was so and it isn't but for a moment if it was so what then shall be your prayers and your supplications where is the pleading for forgiveness why is there a need of it why is it that you and I have to come and I do say this in a general sense of the word my friends but the

Lord knows every heart why is it that you and I have to come and plead the blood that did for Sinato because and I say it very carefully and very I hope reverently too my friends there's a resurrection of these things in our old nature we ourselves also were sometimes foolish are you not now are you not now disobedient are you not now sometimes as the Lord showed you what you've got to do and you shrink from it disobedient deceived serving divers lusts and pleasures living in malice and envy the Lord prevented but the seed of every sin is in your heart and whilst you live in this body of sin and death it will be so and when death brings an end to life it brings an end to sin but oh the comfort that follows you know

[ 10 : 25 ] I'm not one for applying comfort where there isn't any sorrow but if you know verse 3 you'll know sorrow and you'll bless God for the scriptures of truth and the instruction of it and you'll thank the Lord that the dear apostle ever said if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and I'm still doing it and I believe I will to the day I die we ourselves also are sometimes foolish but after that the kindness and love of God our saviour toward man appeared some of us can say and not in a boasting way of course God forbid that we are brought to see sometimes in the light that

God shines the sin of our unregeneracy and we have to mourn over it and say that oh may it be put away sins by birth and sins by practice but then child of grace what are the sins since then what are the sins you that have a hope in a call by divine grace what are the sins since then and some of us have had have made a public profession of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and what are the sins since then oh my friends read the word it will read you and it will dwell in your heart and you mourn over it but oh may the word of his gospel now come with sweetness and power to your soul and bring a little comfort because and this is the comfort of the

Lord's people though I have him off for God his love and kindness changes not you know when the Lord Jesus Christ said I give unto my sheep eternal life and they shall never perish he didn't say they were going to walk and live out their days in complete holiness their body of the body of sin and death is as active now as it was 40 years ago my friends you have this word before you today and only God can make it a word of comfort because though you may mourn what is written here in verse 3 it's found in your heart it's certainly found in mine yet there is something here which is such a blessing to the people of God because it is a revelation of mercy it is a season and time of blessing and it's a comfort to your poor soul as you struggle with the powers of hell sometimes think of those words when you hear of someone taken to glory and the hymn writer says and we are left below to struggle with the powers of hell that's not extravagant language is it and we are left below to wrestle with the powers of hell till Jesus bids us go but after that the kindness and love of God our saviour toward man appeared and oh hear me too in this appeared without being asked no child of God ever commenced with God

God commenced with him no child of God in an unregenerate state prayed for mercy till the life of God was in his soul because that brought a light and it brought a knowledge and it brought a cry put a cry in his heart and on his lips for mercy but after that the kindness and love of God our saviour toward man appeared and it appeared in the triune Jehovah it appeared in that glorious truth of sovereign grace it appeared in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as born as a babe in Bethlehem wonderful you know you can tie scripture with scripture excuse that expression you go back again to something I said was it last Sunday I think it was but you go back to the second chapter of the gospel of Luke and there you have the appearance of Jesus

Christ in human form there he was for all to see a helpless babe in the arms of Mary but you just stand beside that blessed character in chapter two of Luke Simeon now let us thou thy servant depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy salvation but after that the kindness and love of God our saviour toward man appeared and he appeared in the person of Christ oh that's where the love and kindness of God is found but not in him only oh not in him only that blessed trinity of persons those three distinct offices and yet one eternal God and what my friends can it be more blessedly described as we would try to speak for a moment on the person of the

[16:51] Holy Ghost equal with the Father and with the Son and it appeared and the Holy Spirit's work appears in a sovereign way unasked for and I say it again my friends when Saul of Tarsus left Jerusalem with instruction in his possession to hail men and women to prison and possibly to death that was the instruction of the high priest but there was another instruction and there was another decree not from the high priest but from the glories of heaven arrest that man and you look my friends of that situation and circumstance again unlooked for unasked for and the mercy of heaven fell in the person of

Christ and the glory of Christ which exceeded the brightness of the noonday sun brought Saul of Tarsus to a halt it was as though in a fact the word from heaven rang out thus far and no further and it certainly was from that moment onwards he was a servant of Jesus Christ he was humble in the dust he was obedient to the rule and reign and decree and appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ and the kingdom of his grace after that the kindness and love of God our saviour towards man appeared has it has it appeared he saw me ruined in the fall yet love me notwithstanding all he saved me from my lost estate his love and kindness oh how great what a wonderful thing you know you go back to is it the 17th of the acts where this same apostle walked down the streets of Athens and saw that inscription to an unknown god so they worshipped someone who they hadn't appeared to them he was a mystery to them he was a stranger to them there was no relationship between them and this god whom they so called worshipped to an unknown god not so christian not so believer not so poor sinner under the evidences of sin within now to sorrow the love and kindness of god our saviour towards man appeared and oh i want to say something which i don't want you to take the wrong way it never disappears it never disappears the lord doesn't take it away it's never removed it's eternally in the possession of the believer in jesus oh you'll say what are the withdrawing what are the withholding oh i grieve over it my friends but it never is removed it cannot be so it's contrary to the covenant of divine grace that he should love one day and reject another and but after that the kindness and love of god our saviour toward man appeared and even to oh sin sex souls even there the love and kindness of god our saviour towards man appeared in that solemn work of convincing a sinner of his sin it's the appearance of god our saviour oh you say don't feel like love and kindness well just stand still for a minute just pause in your mornings and grievings and sorrows and consider and consider your lot and then i'll read to you what it's like to be without it for we are his workmanship created in christ jesus unto good works which god hath before ordained that we should walk in them wherefore remember the chief being in time past gentiles in the flesh who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands that at that time you were without christ being aliens from the commonwealth of israel and strangers from the covenants of promise having

no hope and without god in the world well you'll say i can hear you i've no hope who told you you've got no hope those that live under this sacred divine instruction often have no hope hopeless is their condition hopeless is their case and so it shall be but for grace oh but this appearance but after that the kindness and love of god our saviour towards man appeared and what did it what did it appear for we take the whole trinity one eternal unchangeable god in all its blessedness it appeared for the salvation of your soul oh if you are in this word and i trust and believe you are after that the kindness and love of god our saviour toward man appeared a word to those too who have been in the way a few years remember too you know my mind goes to this dear apostle on his last letter that he wrote to

Timothy and he spoke of his willingness to die for the lord jesus christ i am now ready to be offered and my departure is at hand i fought a good fight i have kept finished my course i've kept the faith henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness of which the lord the righteous judge shall give unto me at that day and not to me only but to all them also that love his appearance oh you that have been travelling along the way his appearance but after that the kindness and love of god our saviour toward man appeared oh remember too there's a people therefore that love his appearance and remember the promise i will see you again you know therefore sorrow but i will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you i venture to say this i believe there's only one person that has died in well let's put it this way in the knowledge that we have of the holy scriptures and that we might use this word carefully that when the lord in his mercy and goodness begins to teach his children their sinnership and shows them his mercy in and through the person of christ you won't find many souls if any apart from one comes to mind that has only had one appearance of jesus christ and that's the dying thief and i don't want to use this carelessly but i was going to say in the general or normal means and ways of blessing the souls that are in christ there will be those times when you will look for his appearance and unto them that look for his appearance will he come the second time without sin unto salvation i know it refers to his second coming into the world or coming and taking his people to their glorious rest oh the appearance after that the kindness and love of god our saviour towards man appeared and whether it is by his sovereign act of mercy in the person of christ in dying in the place room instead of his people ruin sinners they are or whether it is that blessed and glorious holy spirit who shall teach you all things it is this appearance and you know i was going to use this word in all these dealings with your precious soul it's kindness and love kindness and love i said this morning i know a place i wouldn't dream of telling you where it is where i thought if god came he would be just and destroyed me would be just my friends but this is not so it is not so with a believer after that when the lord begins to deal with it it is dealings in mercy it's dealings in love can you ever consider this the lord help you to try and meditate on it what is it that is so incompatible there's nothing compatible between a sinner

and a holy god one who is in holiness righteousness and justice eternally pure and lives eternally beyond our understanding on the other side a wretch of the earth made from the dust completely destitute of comfort life and hope in and of himself a sinner base and vile capable of any sin capable of any transgression if the lord should so allow it and let it happen can you see anything more incompatible between the two but there's two things that have brought it together kindness and love kindness and love oh you that fear the fall and i don't mean the adam fall but the slips and falls that your own old nature's capable of oh and may you be preserved and may i be preserved from falling the psalmist david comes to mind when he said though he fall not if he does david could speak by sad experience though he fall and yet you know what a mercy it is that there's this appearance and what does this appearance bring restoration restoration we must go on the lord grant us a little light on the rest of this word not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy ghost well my friends it doesn't matter where you look at a triune jehovah and a poor sinner under a gracious teaching now you can see surely you can feel it you will feel it what mercy there is in it what patience he bears with us what patience he bears with us if we offended our friends as we offend him we wouldn't have any friends but my friends this is the truth then not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us and that really is the seal of all that he does according to his mercy that you shall ever know his kindness of love is because of his mercy that you should ever have a cry in your soul for the person of christ to be revealed and that the washing of your sin sinful conscience through the precious blood of the lord jesus being applied is nothing more than mercy let's get a little closer if you pray for mercy it's mercy my friends it's mercy oh let me tell you what that dear old minister said when i was very young if you want the lord to bless you he already has and oh the truth of that simplicity the truth of it not by works of righteousness which we have done now my friends a child of god has got nothing to boast of nothing to boast of not really don't ever boast of the

[ 31 : 23 ] depths of the fall don't have to put shame on your heart and spirit my friends nothing to boast of there but if by them and when by the mercy of god he reveals his only begotten son to you in the way of salvation for your soul that he that he as it were sprinkles your sinful conscience with his precious blood that he communicates through his holy word and through his spirit words of divine comfort to your soul that he lifts you up out of this dying world in which we see we are so earthbound and see the comforts of our soul laid up in the glories of heaven for us I go to prepare a place for you my friends you'll trace it back to mercy trace it back to mercy and mercy I'm so poor in this but mercy is so unexplained indescribable indescribable and it is inexhaustible there never was a beginning there never is an end it can never be fathomed it's got neither depth or shore but according to his mercy he saved us what a blessed salvation this is it puts away forever all this inspiration of man all this giving one's heart to

Jesus Christ it puts away forever this filth of the flesh trying to put something to the salvation of the soul it's grace and grace alone sovereign grace or sin abounding not by works of righteousness which we have done that according to his mercy he saved us you know when when a child of grace joins that eternal choir in glory what will he sing of unto him that has loved us and has washed us from our sin in his blood mercy to a wretch that is bound by the chains of unregeneracy to a poor sinner under a broken law that is bound to the taskmaster to the one whose bondage is held fast by the satan from the pit this is my friends it's the good news of the gospel mercy according to his mercy he saved us and further more eternally saved us oh none can touch this salvation you know you might send your comfort away but it won't touch this salvation this saving according to his mercy he saved us a wretch of sinful dust a fallen child of Adam one whose sin if it was not subdued would ruin him eternally according to his mercy he saved us it's beyond description you can't put words to it

I remember I've said this before I remember when I was young I met an old lady at the door of the chapel and she said to me I'm 70 today and it's been all mercy all mercy and I thought what a wonderful thing it was looking back on it what a wonderful thing it was to ascribe to God all the glory I believe she was a real character but she looked in her life over those years and providence and grace and she summed it up with that one word it's all mercy but according to his mercy he saved us what did he save you from sinner you know when when when the child of grace is the subject of salvation examine what he saved you from well very simply because the time flies tonight my friends but very simply from yourself from yourself oh where would you be tonight if it was if self was in control if your wretched self was first and foremost where would you be where would you be you wouldn't be in the

Lord's house you know this business of salvation by choice it is my friends a blasphemous lie from the pit when someone tells a sinner he can be saved if he wishes there can't be anything can't be a greater lie than that as if he could say well I think about it and I'll let you know at another date and there was one wasn't there in the Acts of the Apostles who when Paul reasoned with him of judgment to come he said I'll hear you again on this subject it got too close for comfort according to his mercy he saved us and blessed be God he saved us from our own sinful nature and also he saved us from a just hell I'll tell you something else he saved his people from and perhaps we might not so often come to this conclusion as we ought to but you know there's only one real work and that's the Lord's work and you that are subject to the

Lord's work you bless God on your knees that he saved you from a false religion what did the man say of himself deceived in his old nature and so he was he was absolutely deceived he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees as touching the law blameless he was deceived but he wasn't left to die deceived and neither will any vessel of mercy either oh saved from a false religion it's not for me to stand in judgment on any religion but on any religion that hasn't got Christ and him crucified as the foundation of salvation and that any religion that has got not the Holy Spirit's operation so essentially made known within it my friends is a false religion and it doesn't matter how far up the religious ladder you climb whatever dignitary you might or office of a dignitary you might come into whatever robes you might wear in that office it matters nothing it will all be burnt up in the fire my friends if your religion is without the operation of grace in the soul according to his mercy he saved us well it might be a little means of comfort to your soul if you just sat down for a while and the

[ 39 : 31 ] Holy Spirit helped you to meditate on what he saved you from but then this influence of the Holy Ghost by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost well no one ever sought for regeneration my friends it was never a prayer I pray my children might be the subjects of regeneration but I know this that my father prayed that his children might be the subject of regeneration but his children never prayed for it but every soul in regeneration you'll say has a cry put in his heart that's because of regeneration not for it spiritual cries from the soul is the fruit of regeneration not seeking for it oh I know the child of God will cry out and seek for and desire to know that he's amongst the children of

God and my friends if his cry is in sincerity it's because he is amongst the children of God that he is crying out for it when that hymn writer wrote when thou my righteous judge shall come to take thy ransom people home shall I among them stand shall such a worthless worm as I who sometimes am afraid to die be found at God's right hand that wasn't from a dead soul my friends that was from a living soul that's the cry and exercise by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit what an eternal mercy what an eternal blessing because it is eternal and God in his mercy and kindness so decrees from eternity past those blessed characters who shall be regenerated that well known case in John chapter 3 of

Nicodemus he was a master in Israel how far up the religious ladder he was it matters not but he was ignorant he was ignorant of the new birth he got it all mixed up how can a man be born again born the second time from his mother's womb he got it all mixed up such was his ignorance oh but how essential is regeneration there's no life in the soul without it and therefore there's no heaven afterwards and renewing of the Holy Ghost and what child of God here doesn't have to beg for the renewing of the Holy Ghost those revisits those reviving times those lifting up from this veil of tears oh when Paul wrote set your affections on things above my friends you'll only do so by the renewing of the

Holy Ghost the Lord Jesus Christ said where your treasure is there will your heart be also and where is your treasure there's an evidence of what your religion is now where's your treasure that's a sign my friends of whether there's grace in the soul or not and a treasure you know in a certain sense it must be a first time when you find this treasure or it is revealed to you that it is a treasure that parable of the Lord Jesus comes to mind when he when a man found the pearl of great price the pearl of great price what did he do sold everything for it sold everything for it but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy

Ghost I have to come to an end which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour you know in real religion religion in comparison to any other religion there is one glorious truth that divides the two one glorious truth and men can say what they like but there's something in real religion that's not in anything else and I don't care who they are and how far they've got into that religion and what's that essential that essential is life which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour oh every vessel of mercy is saved to eternal life every vessel of mercy has within them a life that can never die every child of God has a life that is a sinless life within them and that's that regeneration that life of God in the soul it can't be contaminated with sin it can never be touched by sin the old man and the new by no means can agree it will suffer adversity it will suffer contradiction it will suffer offences it will suffer all sorts of things but that holy principle cannot sin and cannot be contaminated by sin which he shed on us abundantly well my friends that you might this night glean a little comfort is my petition to the

[ 46 : 11 ] Lord there isn't much comfort about you know in Zion today but there is real comfort when God reveals his real work in a sinner's heart but oh this word abundantly I don't know what the margin says something like richly richly well my friends whatever you may describe it and however you may describe it you think you think of the blessing oh the Lord enable you to think of the meditate honder over the blessing that is in these words this day and it's abundantly not miserly you won't just get to glory you know I've heard that expression oh if I but just get into heaven you will be abundantly in glory we mustn't lose sight of poetic justice poetic license rather where the poet says and loudest of the crowd

I'll sing while heaven's resounding mansions ring with shouts of sovereign grace there'll be no discord none at all but oh the abundant which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our saviour well there's a lot left unsaid oh the Lord bring you all into this word and the Lord grant you a sweet confirmation that you are in these verses you have to be in verse 3 but may you find verse 4 5 and 6 to be the testimony to be the witness within your precious soul of a real religion of the work of God Amen If the

Lord will the prayer meeting this week is to be held on Tuesday evening not Wednesday as usual and our pastor is engaged to preach here again next Lord's Day closing hymn is 750 tune 244 come ye that know and fear the Lord and lift your souls above let every heart and voice are called to sing that God is love the work begun is carried on by power from heaven above and every step from first to last proclaims that God is love hymn 750 day to give

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