

## **When the Comforter Discomforts You**

*“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.” Luke 4:1-2*

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As believers, some of the most difficult things we encounter during our journey through life are the apparent “contradictions of God.” On one hand, we can easily admit that we are not in heaven yet; but on the other, when hellish situations of the other extreme arise it rattles our understanding. When circumstances get out of our control, the purposes and even the character of God seem to conflict with what we expect. We resign to think things like, “If God is good, why am I going through such a bad time?” It is a place of challenge, discomfort and questions; leaving us hurting and hungering for real needs, true righteousness and empathy.

At first glance we might ask, “Who is in control here – the devil or God?” Remember, the devil is setting up traps. Just as he did with Jesus, the enemy is moving things around and asking interesting questions that appear legitimate, but be careful: The questions are coming from the wrong source. Though the enemy may be allowed to influence us in twisting the truth and turning up the heat of our circumstances for a season – if we will believe and obey God – the season will pass. Like Jesus—who was led by the Spirit of God *into* the trial—the same Spirit who led us there will give us inner comfort, discernment, the right response, and a way out in due time. Jesus, our example, was destined to come out ahead during that wilderness trial. God’s Word applied by God’s Spirit will prevail. When you and I apply this lesson in the midst of our hellish attacks, we will get the victory and be transformed for the better. Stay strong and keep standing (Ephesians 6:13). We will enjoy the provisions and green pastures of Psalm 23!

Jesus, the forerunner of the Church, demonstrated to the heavenly realm (both good and bad angels) that - a “new Kid” was in town. He was the representative of a kingdom that would withstand the best hell could offer and crash the devil’s gates. A new dawn was beginning for the sons and daughters of God. As “new creations” in Christ, we are called to do the same. Does that mean we always feel strong? No way. Sometimes we feel weak and vulnerable. There is often suffering and humiliation involved, and a sense of “this is killing me.” These are real deaths to some plans we had, hopes and our emotional support systems.

We are never abandoned or orphaned. It is a trial of our faith; a Father-allowed test. God is transforming us into the image of His Son. You are not necessarily graded on how good you are, but did you keep your eyes on Jesus and fight to hang on to what you believe to the very end.

Many years ago, I royally dishonored God by not standing for His name in a big business transaction. During a crucial meeting in a restaurant, I allowed a blasphemous client to go unchecked when the Holy Spirit said, “Speak up.” But I wanted the multi-million dollar deal very badly and did not speak up. By handling it my way instead of God’s way, I lost the deal when I shouldn’t have. God lifted His blessing. I repented, but it was too late for that situation. In the last few weeks of the year I was seriously under quota, and God gave me another test. He said, “Will you just rejoice in Me, and show it before men?” Against my emotions and circumstances, I obeyed.

Suddenly, various old clients began calling for rush orders before year-end. It was wild! These were high dollar deals that had been dead, stalled or abandoned long ago. I worked hard and fast. In three weeks, I did a year’s worth of sales. It was a resurrection for me. It was a testimony!

There is a peace that passes understanding that comes upon us when we obey. People try to persecute us but we leap for joy. The well runs dry but we tap into an underground river. A day of darkness is about us but we have this flickering candle in our hearts. Times may be uncomfortable, but the Comforter has not failed. He is with us.

This doesn’t mean that you deny the problems—simply that you tap into a higher realm. It means spending more time and effort agreeing with God than we spend in affirming the apparent hopelessness of life’s trials. What you speak and do makes a difference. It is life or death to the atmosphere, the demonic oppression, the people around you and your ability to draw strength from the Lord. Lean not on your understanding of the situation, and dial-up your acknowledgment of God and His faithfulness. Trust Him. God packages His resolutions and answers to this life with eternity in mind. He still has good plans for your future.

The Father and the Son have sent us the Comforter to come alongside and bring His Kingdom into our earthen vessels first, and then let it spill over into the world. Do what you know will please the Lord. Ask the Holy Spirit for help. Pray with one another. Get heavenly wisdom. Release the situation into His hands and leave it there. God is in control and you will see His goodness prevail. Abide in Him, fruit will come and your joy will be full.

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