

POWER OF PRAISE

by: Liz Wahl Andre

“The God of All Comfort”

Jesus prepared His disciples for His departure to Heaven by consoling them with a promise from His Father: “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive; because it does not see Him, neither knows Him: but you know Him for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you”

(John 14: 16-18). Another translation reads: “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” Father God made provision for us to be closer to Him than when His Son Jesus physically walked the earth. Every born again believer has the Holy Spirit indwelling their spirit as a guarantee or “down payment” of the eternal life to come: “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3: 16) The Holy Spirit leads us into all truth, guides us, bears witness that we are the children of God, testifies of Jesus, revealing Him to us, and empowers us for Christian service.

The Holy Spirit, who comforts us in our afflictions, reaches out through us to hurting people, comforting them with the love of God. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; Who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Corinthians 1: 3-4). In our fallen, sin-laden world, there are many kinds of sufferings: the loss of children, divorce, loss of jobs, betrayal by friends, disease and catastrophe. Christians who have survived and overcome tragedy by God’s healing grace can effectively comfort those who are walking through a similar fiery trial. Christians are the Body of Christ. Jesus uses our arms to wrap around the heartbroken, our tongue to speak a word of kindness and encouragement to the despairing,

and our material goods to help someone going through a season of financial difficulty and loss.

Nothing pleases the Father more than to see His children imitating Jesus, spreading the good news of the gospel and bringing hope, joy and life to a dying world. We all need each other. Dr. Wes Stafford, the president of Compassion International, said, “The poor need the rich so they don’t die in their need; the rich need the poor so they don’t die in their greed.” Ask the Lord to open your eyes to the hurting and needful around you. Loving the one in front of us, one person at a time, can start a chain reaction of the love God that will flow like a mighty river. A smile, a kind word, a pat on the back can even thwart a suicide and save a life. Jesus is near to the brokenhearted and came to bind up their wounded hearts (Luke 4:19). Let’s follow in the Master’s footsteps.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God...In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him...Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4: 7,9,11).

“For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in time of need” (Hebrews 4: 15-16).