

1. Comfort from God

- V. 1 Why was the Spirit of God on the Suffering Servant?
 1. V. 1 because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; (Matthew 5:3, Revelation 3:17)
 2. V. 1 to bind up the brokenhearted,
 3. V. 1 to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
 4. V. 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God;
 5. V. 2 to comfort all who mourn;
 6. V. 3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion—
 - to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes,
 - the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
 - the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit;
- To what end?
 1. V. 3 that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,
 2. V. 3 that he may be glorified.
- What will the happy poor, the healed of heart, the prisoners set free, the joyful mourners do?
 1. V. 4 They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

2. Comfort for each other

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Recommended resource: God's Grace in Your Suffering by David Powlison

Three "Don'ts" when giving comfort

1. Don't double the hardship

"Doubled hardship is a common experience. A young woman is bereaved of her father, whom she dearly loves. Her friends are initially very supportive, but they get tired of her grief long before her grief is over. They give up on her as a friend. Or parents of a severely disabled child face lifelong hardships of many sorts. They also face how they are treated by others. Friends and family distance themselves, or feel awkward and don't know what to say, or offer woefully

Part IV Walking with God Through Pain and Suffering.

inappropriate help, or don't want to be bothered, or offer a thousand suggestions and fixes that reveal utter incomprehension of the realities. Disability is compounded by isolation.

— God's Grace in Your Suffering by David Powlison

2. Don't try to fix the unfixable

Here's another way this happens. People who love you often focus exclusively on "the problem"—the hardship you are facing. They ask about the problem. They pray that God would solve the problem. They offer advice for solving the problem. Though they care for you and make well-meaning attempts to help, the effect can become quite unkind. They are missing you—the person facing the problem."

— God's Grace in Your Suffering by David Powlison

"You can't fix people, but people change." Andy Farmer

3. Don't be shocked if the sufferer loses a grasp on God's goodness and the truth of Scripture.

Four "Dos" when giving comfort

1. Do serve them in practical ways
2. Do help them with their souls

Questions to help them with their souls inspired by David Powlison:

- How are you doing?
- What are you learning?
- Where are you failing?
- Where do you need encouragement?
- How are you learning to live well and wisely within your pain, limitation, weakness, and loss?
- Do you feel like suffering is beginning to define you?
- Do you feel like your faith and love are growing, or do you feel like you are shriveling up?

3. Do draw them into community

Hebrews 10:24-25, Hebrews 3:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 5:11

4. Do remind them of the Gospel