

ARE GOD'S CONSOLATIONS TOO SMALL?

By Keith Greer

"Are the consolations of God too small for you, and the word spoken gently with you?" {Job 15:11} Job underwent many physical trials, and these led him to ask numerous questions. One of Job's friends, Eliphaz, while accusing him of sin, asked a question. God was rebuking Job, and why was he not listening? In Job's case, Eliphaz was wrong, but God does give many consolations. The word consolation is defined as, "to allay sorrow or grief." Consider some of God's **consolations** in which He's promised to:

Pardon the obedient. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." {Hebrews 8:12} God does not forgive our sins because we are worthy or deserving of such consideration. He willingly forgives our sins because of how much He loves us. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." {Isaiah 55:7} We serve a wonderful God who is always willing to receive sinners back into His fold, if they are willing to repent and acknowledge their sins. {1 John 1:9; James 5:16; 2 Peter 3:9}

Be present. "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we may boldly say: The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" {Hebrews 13:5,6} What a comfort it is to know that God is with me and nearby whenever I may need to call on Him! No matter where I am, no matter what I'm struggling with, and no matter how many times I call, He will never turn a deaf ear! It's wonderful to have friends, but friends are limited in what they can do. God is the most trusted and dependable friend you'll ever have!

Protect. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." {1 Peter 5:7} Who offers better protection than God? That does not mean that nothing bad or evil will ever happen to us. Regardless of what happens, we won't have to face it alone. God protects us by way of the teachings contained in His word. It gives us direction, warns us of impending danger, and declares the way to avoid the traps that Satan sets for us. Only by taking God's word, following it, keeping it in our hearts, and properly applying it in our lives can we have the full protection He affords us. Sadly, too many of God's children try to make it alone without bothering to consult His word for guidance. Such behavior overthrows His protection.

Provide. "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." {Ephesians 3:20} "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." {Romans 8:28} Who knows us better than God? Who knows the things most needed in our lives? The Scriptures teach us that God knows what we need even before we ask Him. {Matthew 6:8} He never gives us bad information or tells us things that harm us. Following His will provides nothing but good things for us in life. Who could better provide for us than our Creator?

We have not even discussed the wonderful promises that God affords His faithful children. The only way to truly appreciate and evaluate God's consolations is to accept His wonderful invitation and obey Him! Have you obeyed Him? ***