

Will You?

As I sought the Lord for a word to the Church, a familiar scene plays out. In 2021 the Lord gave me a scripture before giving me the word, and this year it was no different. The scripture, II Corinthians 1:3-4, 8-9 NLT, is the same scripture read during the Homegoing Service for our dear Sis. Patricia Williams.

This passage of scripture is under the heading, '**God Offers Comfort to All;**'

3. *All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. 4. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.*

8. *We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. 9. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead.*

Matthew Henry Commentary says, "The basic concept for comfort in both the Old and New Testaments is encouragement, whether by words or the presence of another to help in time of need." This word will focus on the presence of another to help in time of need.

The definition of comfort from Merriam Webster Dictionary is:

to give strength and hope to; to ease grief or trouble; a person or thing that helps to alleviate a difficult situation.

The definition of comfort from Oxford Dictionary is:

A person or thing that helps you when you are suffering, worried or unhappy.

So, who is or can be a comforter? II Corinthians 1: 8-9 tells us it's someone who has been comforted by God, gone through trouble, been crushed, overwhelmed beyond their own ability to endure, and thought they were going to die. But most importantly, a comforter is someone who no longer relies on themselves but learns to rely only on God. So, I ask ...**DO YOU QUALIFY AS A COMFORTER?**

Apostle Leander Robinson recently compared those that have been trained, and willing to answer the call saying, "Here am I, send me to Delta Force members!" Delta Forces are made up of highly trained individuals who remain extremely flexible and can engage in direct-action missions, hostage rescues, and covert missions. The Lord says that Christians need to become

'Delta Force'-type comforters, that rescue. Again, the focus of this word is *'the presence of another to help in time of need.'*

God is now calling for what He put in each of us. Here is what I hear the Lord saying about 'Delta Force'-type comforters. Let me paint a picture of the type of rescuer God is calling us to be. There is a scene in the movie "Rambo First Blood Part 2" where Rambo is recruited for a rescue mission. Because of his training and previous experience as a prisoner of war, He is sent/launched to rescue other prisoners of war. As a result of our 2022 Theme "**Mentoring and Launching**," I see this scene in an entirely new light. The people he is sent to rescue, like himself, have been tortured, crushed, overwhelmed beyond their own ability to endure, and thought they were going to die.

While attempting to rescue these prisoners of war and escape their captors, Rambo gives them instructions, direction, and guidance. What really blew my mind is that he gave these broken down, wounded, starving men weapons to aide in their own escape. Even in their condition, they were expected to assist in their own rescue or risk being recaptured. This is not a 'there-there now' type of comfort. Oh yes! We have compassion, but we can't afford to spend a lot of time coddling when the enemy wants to suck us back into a place of despair, depression, confusion, and apathy. JP Morgan said, and I quote, "*The first step towards getting somewhere, is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are.*"

Now let me share another scene. Sunday January 16, 2022, at Covenant Warriors Christian Center, two severely wounded members of the praise and worship team are instructed to lead others into the presence of the Lord, and comfort them in song, all while bleeding themselves. They provided **us** with weapons to aide in our deliverance, and God used those same weapons to minister to **them**. How did they do it? They didn't rely on themselves but continue learning to rely on God. Brothers and Sisters, the Lord says we are without excuse.

WILL YOU BE COMFORTED AND LAUNCHED AS A COMFORTER? WILL YOU BE A MENTEE AND THEN LAUNCHED AS A MENTOR?