



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

2 Corinthians 1: 3-7

Winter 2025

"Comfort"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth, and good morning. It is good to be back in the pulpit with you, and we are continuing our study in 2 Corinthians. We've had one lesson, an introductory lesson, verses 1 and 2. So this morning we're continuing with verses 3 through 7.

2 Corinthians 1, verses 3-7;

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. ⁶ But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; ⁷ and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are *sharers* of our comfort.

2 Corinthians 1: 3-7

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word, and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, what a privilege it is to be with Your people this morning, a privilege to read the Scriptures, (as we just did), read this great text of Scripture. All of them, of course, are great; they're inspired by You and there is a message, a lesson, an application for us in every text of Scripture. But this one stands out, as so many do, and we think of the great encouragement that's contained here—this message of *comfort—divine comfort*. Thank You for that; we have that. At times we don't sense it, and I pray to be sensitive to that as I preach this, because sometimes we're not aware of the comfort that You give, as we should be aware of it. But it's there always, constantly; and Paul indicates that in our text. It's so important that we understand Your nature, Your goodness, Your love for us—that it never ceases and that You are holding us up, and You will continue to hold us up through the most difficult of times.

And I know there are some of our congregation that are going through very difficult times, without naming names, You know them and the struggles they're having right now—and with treatments, and the consideration of treatment, and consideration of surgeons and all that goes with some very difficult afflictions that some of our members have. We pray that You'd bless them, and encourage them—give healing. May they be drawn to You, and may this be a time of glorious experience of Your comfort and encouragement.

We all need that, Father, whatever our circumstances may be. And so we pray for that, and pray that we'd understand that more thoroughly, and certainly in that, understand You more thoroughly. You're, the "God of all comfort." You're the God, our Savior. And we thank You for that most importantly, for the salvation we have in Your Son. And it's in His name we pray. Amen.

(Message) The author of Ecclesiastes, (1:1), "The Preacher", as he calls himself, (Solomon), observed what he called, "life under the sun"—everyday life, the human experience in a fallen world. In chapter 4 he saw something that troubled him greatly, the kind of thing that keeps you awake at night. He saw oppression, and the tears of the oppressed—people under the heel of the powerful. And what troubled him was they

had no one to comfort them. What a dismal, dreary, hopeless existence—crushing. And it's played out everywhere, in every generation across the globe.

Then we turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 3, and we read of the, “God of all comfort”. Now He is “a consuming fire”, the author of Hebrews makes that clear to us. (Heb 12:29). He is just, and He will right all wrongs. —But for His people today in times of distress, in times of oppression, He is “the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.” (vs3).

Comfort is the product of mercy, (or compassion). And that's the subject of 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verses 3 through 7. The word, “*comfort*”, as either a noun or a verb, occurs 10 time in these 5 verses. It was especially important to Paul; he needed it, (and he knew we need it, too). His lesson can be put simply in two points: ‘God comforts us—and we are to comfort others.’ That's the lesson of this great passage of Scripture.

But Paul didn't randomly introduce this subject of compassion and comfort. He had recently experienced that very thing in Asia, (and he describes that in the next passage we'll consider in verses 8 through 11). It was very difficult. "We had the sentence of death within ourselves..." he said, "...but God delivered us." (vs9). And so out of a sense of great gratitude for this recent deliverance, Paul bursts forth in praise: "Blessed *be* God," (vs3), he said, which is an expression of both gratitude and veneration. "Adored be God," is how Charles Hodge translated it.

But He's not merely God, He is, “...the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”, (vs3)—a statement that, if you reflect on it, may seem a little surprising at first. How can God be both “God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ”? What we understand: ‘Christ is the Son of God’. We don't understand all of that, all the theology of it—that He is the second Person of the Trinity, we understand that. And that He is the eternal Father of the eternal Son; and so God is His Father. But in view of the Son's deity, how can His Father be called His God?

Well the reason is very important. The reason is, He became His Son when He, the eternal Son of God, became a man, a genuine man with a true body and a

reasonable soul—and thereby became our Savior because He became the God-man. Only a perfect man could be a substitute for sinful men and women, to suffer the penalty in their place—and so humanity was necessary. Humanity was joined to deity; and in His humanity He lived in complete dependence on God—and in complete obedience to Him.

Now that explains the cry of dereliction, the cry of neglect from the cross, "My GOD, My GOD, why have You forsaken Me?" (Mar 15:34). It was a cry in His humanity. GOD didn't forsake Christ in His deity, it was a forsaking in His humanity, because at that moment, at that time, He was bearing the sins of His people and under the full judgment of God for our sins...and it was in the Lord's humanity that His eternal Father delivered Him from death and the grave in the resurrection, and the ascension, Christ's ascension into heaven where He was seated at the Father's right hand.

It was, (as I've often stated this, and it's very important to understand), that exaltation, that deliverance from the grave, and that exaltation to heaven, is the *proof* that God accepted His Son's sacrifice for us. And in doing that, it showed the same mercy that Paul experienced and praised here, in his description of Him as "...the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...". (vs3b). Just as God delivered the Lord from the grave, He delivered Paul from death.

Well, this statement, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ", (vs3), is an important statement. It is because the Son became a man, (and it indicates that), and in becoming a man, He suffered in our place...and throughout His life He experienced our trials as well. And so as a man, He can understand us and sympathize with us in our difficulties, and in our misery. He is able, now, at the Father's right hand, to intercede for us with understanding, and wisdom, and compassion as our great high priest. —And the Father hears His prayers, *always*—and His Father *always* responds to them.

That is our God. He's not some distant, indifferent deity uninvolved in the affairs of the world and of man. Not like Aristotle's, "Unmoved Mover", He is intimately involved in everything. And because of His eternal Son's work of salvation and suffering in our place, He has made His eternal Father our Father, too; when at the moment of

faith in Jesus Christ we are adopted in His family—at that moment we are ‘children of God’, ‘sons of God.’ Now, God Almighty treats us as His children, as His son, as His daughter, with all of the filial affection, all of the love a parent has for his family, his children.

That's the basis for all of the praise that Paul gives here—and his thanksgiving for what he had received. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is, “the Father of mercies” to us. (vs3). It is from Him that compassions flow to His children when they are being tested, and tried, and put through affliction. He's not indifferent to that; He's not inactive—He is the ‘fountain of mercy’.

Paul may have had Psalm 103, verses 13 and 14, in mind when he wrote this: David said,

¹³ Just as a father has compassion on *his* children,
So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.

¹⁴ For He Himself knows ^lour frame;
He is mindful that we are *but* dust.

Now that should foster faith in the LORD, because He knows us completely. He knows that we're weak, in and of ourselves, prone to fail and wander. Yet He doesn't disown us. What good father would turn out his son or daughter, his child, for being weak and sickly? He becomes much more caring and concerning for the child that needs help. Now, not all children have a father like that. Some fathers are not understanding; they're not compassionate; they are hard and they are severe; and worse than that, they're neglectful—and all of that leaves scars.

God's not like that to His children. He gives us the model of real fatherhood: Moses said that “underneath” us are His “everlasting arms”. He says that, (wrote that), in a sermon in Deuteronomy 33. (vs27). But back in chapter 1, (verse 31), of Deuteronomy he told Israel that, "...in the wilderness...the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son...all the way..."

Now, think of that—He's God Almighty. 'The greatest of men...', as Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 40, (verse 22), '...are just "grasshoppers" in His sight'; and yet He is infinitely concerned about us, (who are His children), and He carries us, always, with compassion.

He is always carrying us, and He does so with compassion. He bears our failures; He doesn't turn us out. He is patient with us and helpful. He never overloads us, He never fails to give us strength equal to the need of the moment. He cares deeply for us: He is, "the Father of compassion", and He is, "the God of all comfort." (vs3).

Well, what a great description of God that is; "The God of all comfort" —all comfort, (so that excludes any other source of comfort). Now in a moment, in verse 4, Paul will encourage us to be the agents of comfort to one another; but our comfort can only be real comfort if it is based on the LORD and His promises. And when we give comfort, it's really Him giving comfort through us, using us, for that great end and that great purpose—that He alone is the source of comfort, which means He is adequate for every circumstance of life that may arise, (and sometimes those circumstances are very difficult).

This is solid ground for comfort; He is sufficient for every situation. No suffering, (no matter how severe), can separate us from Him; in fact, that is when God's power is really magnified in our lives. That's one of Paul's main subjects in this book; how suffering and hardship in the circumstances of life, the difficulties of life, is where God reveals His care for us most effectively.

"My grace is sufficient for you..." He told Paul, "...for power is perfected in weakness." We read that later in chapter 12, verse 8. This idea of *comfort* is all through 2 Corinthians. And that statement, "My grace is sufficient for you", is great comfort—gives us great comfort knowing that God's grace is always working for us—He's always with us; and in those difficulties, can and will, magnify that great compassion that He has for us and help that He gives to us.

In fact, the word, *comfort*, indicates that. The sense of the Greek word is, 'to call to one's side', 'to stand beside a person and encourage', him or her when he or she is undergoing testing.

This is really the work of the Trinity, the Godhead. The Father is, 'the fount of all consolations, all comforts'. He pours them out to us in the Son and through the Holy Spirit—so that when we are joined to Christ in faith, we are joined to all that fount of compassion, and grace, and mercy that the Holy Spirit applies to us.

He comforts us in various ways. He delivers us from evil, He orders our circumstances in His providence; but perhaps mainly here, He exerts an inward influence on the mind that gives assurance, and calm, and joy. Now as I think about it, or as I thought about this, I believe that statement.—But it may seem a bit trite; it may seem a bit simplistic because perhaps some of you are going through this, a difficult, protracted period of trial and testing that just seems to grind on. But, and this is what Paul is assuring them of, (and us), is that He is with us in all of that. Whether we sense it or not, He is. And Paul knew it from his own experience, and what he would experience.

Well, we see it in chapter 11—but later in his life, he experienced it to the end. Paul told Timothy, in his last letter, 2 Timothy chapter 4, verse 16, that at his trial before Caesar, "...no one supported me...all deserted me..." Can you imagine that?...Deserting the apostle Paul, who perhaps brought you the Gospel, or gave you encouragement, taught you about the Lord God...and yet in this great crisis of his life, he's deserted by all there in Rome. "But..." he adds, "...the LORD stood with me and strengthened me." (ibid. vs17). He's "the Good Shepherd". (Jn 10:14). He doesn't abandon His sheep. Regardless of what we may sense at the time, in the moment, He's there—He doesn't abandon His sheep. He's with us through *the valley of the shadow of death*—at our side and in control.

And He does that consistently. That's indicated in verse 4 where it is stated in the present tense, "who comforts us", meaning, 'comforts us *constantly* and without

interruption.' And He does it in all our afflictions—not just certain kinds. Paul spoke from experience; he knew first hand God's faithfulness to His people in times of severe trials.

Later, in chapter 11, which I've referred to, he goes down a list of his afflictions: The imprisonments, beatings, shipwrecks, exposure to the elements, days and nights without food and sleep...and on it goes. In the midst of all of that, God gave Paul comfort. In danger, in loneliness, in fear, Paul found Him faithful in every situation. He may have gone through that fear for a while, but he came to realize God was with him, and comforting him, and faithful to him in that, and every, situation.

Well that could raise the question, if you've got some theology: 'Why then would God allow these things to happen in the first place? After all, He's all knowing, and He's all powerful, He could have prevented the hardship Paul experienced.'

And that's true—but God had a purpose for them, for all of those trials, all of those hardships. They were not what the poet called "the bludgeonings of chance", or *fate*, or, 'just bad luck'. God had a design, a purpose in all of this. As Paul explains, it was to enable him to minister more effectively. God, he says, "...comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction..." (vs4a).

We can't always know the reasons for the tragedies of life. In fact, I suspect that most of the tragedies that come to us are beyond our explanation. 'Why did this happen!?' Often they make no sense; and we have to simply, in the midst of that, trust God and know that He is wise and good. —That's the life of faith.

I think we often think of, 'the life of faith', as exemplified in someone like George Müller, who just stepped out without the funds to do what he needed to do—simply trusting God, walking by faith, and seeing God's hand of provision at every moment. And that is the life of faith.

But it's not just that. Sometimes it is, 'resting in the LORD in spite of the circumstances' and, (like Job), refusing to deny Him, refusing to curse Him, and suffer knowing that He is good. Now that's the life of faith—and Paul assures us God will comfort us in it. And there's a purpose in it all: To make us empathetic and to stir up

compassion in us for the afflicted, so that we can give them comfort in their time of need. The comfort God gives to us is never intended by Him to terminate in us but to go out to others.

Back in verse 2, Paul described God as "our Father." We are united to Him through Christ. That means we are united to one another in Christ; we are united as the parts of a body are united; we are united to each one as members of His family... there are all kinds of ways in which we can understand our relationship to Him, and our relationship to one another. We're family members—and so we are to have mutual concern for one another. That's a clear application here.

The church is a place of learning—it is a place of worship where we learn the great doctrines of the faith, the character of God, the person and work of the Lord God, and grow in our knowledge of Him. And in growing of our knowledge of Him, (and a correct understanding of Him), we grow in our love for Him. Now that's the function and the purpose of a church. If a church is not doing that, then they're not doing what God intended.

But it's not just that. It is a place of fellowship, (and I don't mean a place where on a Sunday morning we share a doughnut with someone). It is a place of family fellowship in which we know each other as brothers and sisters, take an interest in each other, and "Bear one another's burdens", as Paul told the Galatians in Galatians 6, verse 2.

So you see, the apostle Paul was not some cold logician. He was a man deeply concerned about others and told those Galatians, 'You need to bear one another's burdens', that's part of the Christian life—that's, inevitably, part of the Christian life. And you see that in the early chapters of the Book of Acts. It sets apart the world; the love for one another; they were bound together. You see that in chapter 2, and on.

Now that's a healthy church. You can't know everybody here, but you can know somebody; and you can try to know a few people. God would have us all to do that. But it can't be forced, (that's artificial, I think). But as we walk by the Spirit, as we live in

obedience to God, seeking to please Him and honor Him, God will introduce us to people; He will make known needs to us—and we're to act on that. We do it in a variety of ways, but one way is by being able to give good counsel to people, by setting forth principles, the principles of God's Word, and giving them perspective on life and on their particular situation with God's promises.

Sometimes, oftentimes, we don't have specific answers for people. (I know that feeling of inadequacy, and it's very difficult.) We can't always explain, as I've said, 'The *whys* of life'; 'Why does this happen?' And so we may feel that we can't be of much help or comfort; so we may back away from that. But the right response is not to avoid people in need because we feel inadequate; rather it is to go to them and stand beside them and be with them and let them know we care, and be willing to listen to them and pray for them.

And you can always comfort them with this very text: That God, 'always stands with us', and He will give us comfort and resolution in His time, and in His way. But, 'He's always with us.' That's the assurance we have in Christ; He never leaves us nor forsakes us.

But those who have passed through the trials and seen God's faithful, powerful hand are especially able to give that assurance and encouragement to those who are in need. Jeanette and I knew, (and know), a lady in another state who lost her son in a terrible tragedy. It took a great toll on her and her husband. But she became a great comfort to a young woman in her church who lost her son. It makes all the difference to have someone there, 'Who has been down that road', and can offer the comfort and support of Christ. —So we need to do that.

Paul did. And the reason is, he says in verse 5, because, 'God comforted him much'. 'Suffering abounded', but they were always more than matched by God's comfort. Now the suffering he speaks of here is what he calls the "sufferings of Christ...", they, "...are ours in abundance...", he said. (vs5a). Well, what are they?

They're not the sufferings of life in general, I don't think. These are the sufferings of a specific kind—the sufferings of a faithful man or woman who has stood for Christ,

given his or her profession...and if we do that, the difficulties will follow. We know that because Christ warned His disciples of that in John 15, verse 20, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." So if we're living in obedience, and we're living a vital, Christian life, there will be opposition to that.

And it can be very difficult. We may lose something as a consequence of that—a job, certainly friends. I remember Mike Black saying, (more than once I've heard him say this), 'When he became a Christian he lost all of his friends...but he gained a whole bunch of new ones.'

God will more than make up for all of that. He will never leave us and He will never be in our debt...Never forget that. God will never be in your debt, He will take care of you. He takes care of us, and we can count on that.

But Paul does give us a sober look at reality in this passage. [It is not, as some preachers tell us, (I think they still do this), and it's hard to believe people would still listen to this kind of preaching and ideas, but people telling people that God wants His children to enjoy 'Health and Prosperity'. It's an intriguing, seductive thought—but it's foolish, absolutely foolish.] The Christian life is simply not like that. Look at the lives of the apostles; consider the lives of many of the great saints in history—they had hard lives. In Hebrews chapter 11, we read about them, and all of them had difficult lives. And then he speaks of them, in a general sense, living in "caves and holes in the ground", and that these are the people, "of whom the world is unworthy." (Heb 11:38).

Life is full of trials for the faithful; and not always a life of immediate healing and success. Affliction is the Christian way of life. It's not an easy thing to accept, but that's true. Again, Paul is proof of that, but through it all, God promises *comfort*.

The world doesn't have that. Unbelievers, those outside of Christ, those alienated from God don't experience the sufferings of Christ, they don't face rejection due to their faith—but that doesn't mean they don't suffer...they do. The world is full of suffering; it is, 'a veil of tears', from sickness, jealousy, grief, pain of all kind, war... The world is restless; it doesn't have peace, and it has no one to comfort it. So, people of

this world don't escape suffering. They suffer—but not as people with hope, not as we do, because they are separated from Christ and cut off from all consolation.

Believers in Jesus Christ are blessed. God loves us, and has compassion on us so that we have consolation, we have comfort in suffering. How do we know that? How can we be assured of that? We know it, and we have assurance of it from the Scriptures—from the Word of God. He has revealed it here and in His promises throughout the Bible—and we believe it. It's that simple. That's the Christian life. It's the life of faith, faith in God's Word—and we walk according to it. Whether we sense it or feel it, it is true because God has declared it; and He's declared it here through His apostle.

But there are reinforcements of that in the experiences of others. And Paul reinforces this promise of comfort in verses 6 and 7, and tells the Corinthians how his suffering worked for their blessing: "But if we are afflicted ... [and they were, the apostles all were; and all those in Paul's company were, (but particularly Paul was afflicted), he says, 'If that is so' (and it is so)], "...it was for your comfort and salvation." (vs6).

Paul suffered in coming to them originally. He suffered all along his missionary journey, that second missionary journey in coming to them, in coming to this pagan, materialistic city. He suffered beatings, imprisonment, rejection, but he came. And by enduring all that suffering and bringing the Gospel to Corinth, every believer among them was blessed with the *comfort* of their sins being forgiven—and with the salvation of eternal life. If we suffer because of obedience, and we endure it, there will be good results for others. Good comes out of suffering when we endure it faithfully—persevere through it.

Now suffering, itself, is not good; pain doesn't produce holiness. It is suffering, 'in Christ received patiently, endured to Christ's glory', that leads to personal holiness and blessing. Blessing for us, blessing for others.

One blessing is the example that it gives others when they suffer, and they see in us the comfort that God has given in the midst of it. And that's encouragement; they are

encouraged by that. So Paul says, "...if we are comforted, it is for your comfort..." (vs6b). It was to help them in their suffering; and evidently, they were going through trials. Some of them had to deal with rebellion in the church; some had to confront the false teachers that were there; some had to live, (we know from 1 Corinthians), had to live with unbelieving spouses and maintain a good testimony in the midst of that ongoing situation. They were to look to the LORD for comfort and they were to expect it.

There were a variety of challenges the Corinthians faced. Life in a pagan city, (and a very pagan city), was full of challenges, dangers, temptations, and situations that called for being Light and suffering the consequences of that, (of being **bold** in their testimony).

But Paul had confidence in this church. It had caused him a lot of grief; many had rebelled against his authority, and he had to discipline the church during his earlier visit, (that we spoke of a couple of weeks ago—it's mentioned in chapter 2, verse 1, as 'the painful visit'). Still, he had confidence in them, so he concludes in verse 7, "...and our hope for you is firmly grounded..." Grounded in what? If ever there was a worldly church, it was this one in Corinth.

But Paul knew then, he knew the changes that had happened in their lives, changes that brought them out of the Jewish synagogue, and out of pagan temples; he knew their profession of faith. —So even though the Corinthians had largely, as a church, stumbled along the way, (and many of them had been misled about Paul), still Paul was comforted in them in their future. He knew that a work had been done in them—and that it was not a work of man; it was a work of God, and that God always completes the work that He begins. That's the promise of Philippians chapter 1, verse 6. So he had confidence in the Corinthians—and not really so much in the Corinthians as in the *LORD* whose work cannot fail.

Now there is a good lesson for us in Paul's example because oftentimes Christians divide with one another over small issues —nonessential issues. Nonessential to the faith, but maybe important things; politics or whatever, important in and of themselves; but *nonessential* in terms of the eternal things of God and in terms of the

Christian faith. They divide over personal differences; and that seems to have been the problem in the church at Philippi with Euodia and Syntyche.

Again, Paul had good reasons to distance himself from the Corinthians, from the personal offense that they had caused him; but he didn't do that. He expressed love for them, he expressed here, genuine "*hope*" in them. (vs7). And we should do the same. We shouldn't become disillusioned with the service we give in the church or at home. We can't help but get discouraged at times...(things don't go the way we had hoped—there may be setbacks and all)...but we should never despair.

Paul didn't. He had a large heart; he had compassion for the weak. He was patient with the Corinthians because he loved them, and because he knew that God's work doesn't fail. So he encouraged them; He told them, "...as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are *sharers* of our comfort." (vs7b). There is suffering in life. There is particular suffering for the faithful Christian. We will suffer for Christ—but God always gives comfort; Paul assures the Corinthians of that.

That's really the main lesson here, that God is compassionate, and will give help, comfort, in times of testing and distress. That's certain. Therefore, we are to be a help to others; we are to comfort those in distress; we are to reach out to those in need. Every one of us has a ministry like that. You wonder, 'What gift do I have?' Well, I don't know... but I know this, you have an obligation to, "Bear one another's burdens", (Gal 6:2), and be concerned for one another, be a help, and an encouragement.

The English word '*comfort*' is a good illustration of what we are to do. It is from the Latin words, *com* and *forte*, which together, means, '*make strong together*'; and that involves *relationships* to strengthen one another. That's what we're to do, to strengthen believers who are in difficulty. That's the work of the ministry; and it's the work that every Christian is to be involved in.

We all get discouraged. We all have trials in life and we can get beaten down by the circumstances of life. We all need comfort. —So, be involved and ready to console those who are grieving, or those who are in distress. And know God's Word; know the

Word of God so that you may give wise counsel and guidance. He is, "the Father of compassion and God of all comfort." (vs3). That is our God. What a blessing to know Him; what a blessing to have Him as God!

And this God, 'Opens His arms wide to the world and invites men and women to come to Him, to become His children, to be members of His family...', (see that beautiful picture given in Isaiah 65, verse 2), '...open wide to a rebellious people.'

Well that invitation is received through faith alone. Trust in Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became a man, bore our sins, and died in our place. The *moment* you do that, you are forgiven of all your sins and accepted fully by God as His child, and carried always under His everlasting arms. May God help you to do that.

(Closing prayer) Father, we've sung it, we confess it: "Our sins, they are many; Your mercy is more." Your mercy is more than sufficient for every trial and difficulty we go through. Help us to know that, to believe that, particularly in the times of darkness and danger. Help us to know that, to know that Your everlasting arms are beneath us; whether we sense it or not, that is true.

And we know it because we live by faith. And by faith we know that everyone who puts his or her trust in Your Son is saved forever. We thank You for that, thank You that You are the God of all comfort.

The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In Christ's name, Amen.

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