

Growth Group Questions
December 17, 2023
“The Gift of Comfort”

Scripture:

Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, comfort my people,
says your God.

²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and proclaim to her
that her hard service has been completed,
that her sin has been paid for,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

³A voice of one calling:
“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the LORD^[a];
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.^[b]”

⁴Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.

⁵And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

⁶A voice says, “Cry out.”
And I said, “What shall I cry?”
“All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

⁷The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the LORD blows on them.
Surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever.”

⁹You who bring good news to Zion,
go up on a high mountain.
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,^[c]
lift up your voice with a shout,
lift it up, do not be afraid;
say to the towns of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

¹⁰See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.

See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.

¹¹ He tends his flock like a shepherd:

He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
he gently leads those that have young.

John 10:14-18

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

1 Peter 5:4

⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Revelation 7:17

¹⁷ For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd;
'he will lead them to springs of living water.'^[a]
'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'^[b]"

Isaiah 40:28-31

²⁸ Do you not know?
Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.
²⁹ He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.
³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
³¹ but those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Questions:

1. Throughout Pastor Paul's sermon, we were told that God wants to give us the "gift of comfort." What kind of comfort do you think God wants to give to us?
2. Is there a particular Bible verse or verses that brings you this type of comfort from God?
3. Pastor Paul said that we learn in Isaiah 40:1-11, that while God's promises may be forfeited, they are never lost. What does that mean to you? How does this give you comfort?
4. The image of a shepherd can be found throughout Scripture. Why might God have chosen to use this particular image?
5. What does the Bible tell us are the characteristics of a good shepherd?
6. In Isaiah 40:10-11, we read that God will come to His people as both King and Shepherd. What does this mean to you?
7. What did Jesus mean when He said: "I am the good shepherd. . ." (John 10:14)?
8. How can we as followers of Christ embody God's comfort to others in a world longing for hope and healing?