

trail of evidence to support the truth of His resurrection.

Remember that God never leaves His children without comfort. Contrary to popular opinion, the Bible says not everyone is a child of God. John 1:12 says we become a child of God, when we receive Christ or believe on Him. "But as many as received Him to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." You can become a child of God and thus experience His comfort right now. Simply shift your trust from self to Jesus Christ. Rely on Him to pay for your sins and give you eternal life. He longs to come into your life and be your Lord, Savior and friend. He never leaves His children without comfort!

"In Times of Sorrow,"

What God Will Never Leave His Children Without . . .

By Pastor Steve King

What God Will Never Leave His Children Without . . .

In 125 A.D., one Greek was writing to another describing the phenomenal growth of the new religion, Christianity. Here's a sentence from one of his letters. "If a righteous person among the Christians passes from this world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God and they escort his body with songs and thanksgiving, as if he were setting out from one place to another near by." From the first century to today, faith in Jesus Christ, provides fresh hope in the face of death.

In my office there's a beautiful beach scene my architect brother did for me a number of years ago. The blue sky canvas has the following words etched across it; "Oh think to step ashore and find it heaven. To clasp a hand outstretched and find it is God's hand. To breath new air and find that celestial air. To feel refreshed and find it immortality. Ah, think to step from storm and stress to one unbroken calm, to awake and find it home." These words have comforted me many times and they can comfort you if you believe the Bible's positive message.

When death stares us in the face, we desperately need a clear word from God's Word, and God is certainly not silent.

Listen to God's Word, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all of our afflictions, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by

God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ." (2 Corinthians 1:3-5). Did you notice the word comfort mentioned six times? This text has one major theme that runs through it from beginning to end. It can be reduced to one sentence; God never leaves His children without comfort.

God never leaves His children without comfort for two reasons. First because of who God is. Read verse three again, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort."

We do not worship a cold, distant, impersonal God, but one that feels with us in our infirmities. If there is any mercy, He is "Fathered it." If there is any comfort, He is the source of it. He delights in pouring out His mercy and comfort on all who seek Him. As a matter of fact, God took His own medicine. He entered the human race through the sinless person of Jesus Christ and experienced the agonies and sufferings that all human beings do.

Jesus, the God/man, felt grief. He, too, stood by the grave of a loved one and He wept.

The Bible teaches that a teardrop on earth, summons the attention of the King of Heaven. Psalm 56:8 says, "God, you have collected all my tears in your bottle." King David of Israel was referring to an ancient

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custom that the Hebrews practiced. When a person went through a time of grief of sorrow, he would often collect the tears from that experience in a small bottle. The individual would then keep the bottle on a prominent shelf in his home. Each time he saw the bottle, it would bring back to his mind, the experiences of grief. David is saying, “God, You are so personal, that when I go through times of grief, You collect my tears in Your bottle; You are a personal, loving, God.”

The second reason God never leaves children without comfort, is because of how He comforts. 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 tell us that God comforts in three ways;

- First, through the Holy Spirit. The word comfort used six times in the text, is the same word that Jesus used to describe the Holy Spirit. It’s a beautiful word meaning literally, “called alongside to help.” This is a picture of a close friend coming alongside another person in need, hugging them, and letting them know, “I’m here to help you, I feel with you.” If you’re a believer in Christ, you have dwelling within you the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. He is always on duty.
- The second way God comforts, is all around you. It is through people. In verse four, Paul talks about being able to comfort others, with the comfort that we experienced in our own times of grief. Don’t waste

“Which would you rather have run over you, that truck or its shadow?” The little girl responded immediately by saying, “Why the shadow, Dad. That can’t hurt anyone!” Then Dr. Barnhouse said, “I want you to know that the truck of death ran over the Lord Jesus Christ when He hung on the cross dying for your mother’s sins. Therefore, only the shadow of death has passed over your mother. She is very much alive, right now, in the presence of Jesus Christ.”

The Bible says that when a believer in Christ dies they immediately enter into the presence of God. (2 Corinthians 5:8; *Philippians 1:21-23*; *Acts 7:59*; *Hebrews 12:23*).

The Bible declares that in heaven, God’s children are engaged in at least four activities: **Worship** (*Revelation 4:1 and 5:9*); **Instruction** by an infinite, Holy God (1 *Corinthians 13:12*); **Fellowship** with the Lord Jesus and loved ones (John 17:24; 1 *John 3:2*); and finally **Service** (*Revelation 3:21*; 22:5); serving Him with great satisfaction forever and ever.

The New Testament says, for the believer in Christ, death opens the door to a whole new world. For example, Paul said in 2 *Corinthians 5:8*, “We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.” In *Philippians 1:21* and 23, He said, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain . . . I have the desire to depart and be with Christ for that is very much better.”

Consider the claims of the one person who can forgive our sins and give us the assurance of eternal life . . . The Lord Jesus Christ said:

- “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one

comes to the Father, but through Me.” (*John 14:6*)

- “I and the Father are one.” (*John 10:30*)
- “He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God his own Father, making Himself equal with God. (*John 5:18*)

John, chapter five, records that Jesus claimed to be equal with God the Father in several different ways: Jesus was fully God and yet fully man. As God He alone can save our souls. As sinless man He alone can pay for our sins.

When Jesus died on the cross, He took your sins upon Himself and He died in your place. 2 *Corinthians 5:21* says “God (the Father) made Him (Jesus Christ) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf.” *Isaiah 53:5* says, “He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities. The chastening of our well-being fell upon Him. And by His scourging we are healed.”

Three days after His crucifixion, Jesus Christ rose from the dead, therefore, He alone can offer death conquering eternal life to all who put their faith in Him. The Bible records that Jesus predicted His own resurrection seventeen times. He appeared over a period of forty days to more than one hundred fifty eye witnesses. His empty tomb, the changed lives of His followers and the existence of the church leave a solid