

Reflection for 5th January 2022

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

New International Version

Praise to the God of All Comfort

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

I have taken a break from writing reflections since I began my Sabbatical last year. It is time to start again and where better to start than with a phrase such as “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,”

Paul gives a reason to give praise to God, in this instance, for God is the God who gives comfort to us in all our troubles.

There was a conversation on the radio a few days ago about the passing on of gifts received at Christmas, and at other times of the year, that we ourselves do not have need for or perhaps do not like – “re-gifting” I think is the phrase used.

It can be a problem if we do not pay attention to who gave the gift and to whom we pass it on to. One person spoke of a wedding present they had received from a couple, it had the names of the donating couple and the date of their wedding engraved upon it.

What we receive from God is always worth passing on to others. Paul writes that we receive comfort from God “so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.” Re-gifting in a positive way.

The help of the Spirit of God, promised by Jesus, in John 14:16, “Paraclete” is translated in various ways such as the advocate, counsellor, or comforter. To give comfort is to give strength and support. Paul speaks as though there is one sitting alongside him in his troubles always there encouraging, strengthening, guiding and sustaining.

Paul does not just suggest “re-gifting” he says we need to pass on that which we have received from God, but in the passing on we do not lose what we have received..

There are always people who need strengthening and support. Sometimes that strengthening and support entails simply the sitting alongside someone with no words needed, just the being there matters and helps.

There are many other reasons to offer praise to God for the many ways in which he helps and sustains us throughout our lives. In a time of quiet think of those things you wish to praise God for, thank God for, and perhaps realise what you can pass on to another in their life and journey of faith.