

“Divine Comfort”

Isaiah 40:1-11 (Bible p. 599-600)

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God is zealous that undeserving people like us receive comfort even in our self-inflicted and rebellious trials. This is how Jesus comes to a people who chose slavery and exile and are invited back home.

Quotes from the Cutting Room Floor

"Jesus went without comfort so that you might have it. He postponed joy so that you might share in it. He willingly chose isolation so that you might never be alone in your hurt and sorrow. He had no real fellowship so that fellowship might be yours, this moment. This alone is enough cause for great gratitude!" — **Joni Eareckson Tada**

"Never once did Jesus scan the room for the best example of holy living and send that person out to tell others about him. He always sent stumblers and sinners. I find that comforting." — **Nadia Bolz-Weber**

"The ragamuffin gospel reveals that Jesus forgives sins, including the sins of the flesh; that He is comfortable with sinners who remember how to show compassion; but that He cannot and will not have a relationship with pretenders in the Spirit." — **Brennan Manning**

"There is nothing that can replace the absence of someone dear to us, and one should not even attempt to do so. One must simply hold out and endure it. At first that sounds very hard, but at the same time it is also a great comfort. For to the extent the emptiness truly remains unfilled one remains connected to the other person through it. It is wrong to say that God fills the emptiness. God in no way fills it but much more leaves it precisely unfilled and thus helps us preserve -- even in pain -- the authentic relationship. Further more, the more beautiful and full the remembrances, the more difficult the separation. But gratitude transforms the torment of memory into silent joy. One bears what was lovely in the past not as a thorn but as a precious gift deep within, a hidden treasure of which one can always be certain." — **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**