

Small Groups – Comforter – myfishbites.com

JESUS THE COMFORTER - Matthew 5.4

I once visited a youth project in Birmingham and the youth worker said to me, 'I don't think people realise what Jesus went through when he died on the cross...'

Jesus was tortured, abused, spat at, laughed at, mocked, kicked, attacked, beaten with a stick, stripped, made fun of publicly, insulted, rejected by his disciples and the people who'd once followed him, he had huge nails driven in through his hands and feet and was put up on a wooden cross on a hill with criminals to die. His garment was stolen and men bid for it. Right at the end, even God his Father (who he had never been apart from) had to turn away from him, because on the cross Jesus became sin so our sins could be forgiven, and our Holy God cannot look at sin.

Take a moment of silence to think about what it must have been like for Jesus. When the Bible says you are blessed when you have pain, Jesus really does know!

Read John 16.5-8. - but now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, "Where are you going?" Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate (comforter) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:

The Holy Spirit is often called the 'Comforter' - one who comforts. Have there been times where you have felt that comfort?

When I went through a difficult time, God gave me this poem. It may be helpful...

I hear you in your darkest hour, I hear you when you cry,
I hear you when you're most in need, I hear when you say why.
I know just what you're going through, I know the pain you feel,
But know that God still loves you, and know his love is real

Read 1 Samuel 1.10-20...

In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. ¹And she made a vow, saying, 'Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give

her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.'

As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk ¹and said to her, 'How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.'

'Not so, my lord,' Hannah replied, 'I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.'

Eli answered, 'Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.'

She said, 'May your servant find favour in your eyes.' Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

Early the next morning they arose and worshipped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, 'Because I asked the Lord for him.'

What was Hannah's problem?

What did she do about it? (We don't mean how did she make a baby!)

a -----

b -----

What happened / what did God do?

Read Isaiah 61.1-3... This is a prophecy about Jesus. How is Jesus going to bring freedom, hope and comfort?

Look through any of the gospels and see how Jesus brought comfort, healing, freedom and miracles to many people. That same Jesus is always there for you. He is always with you, he will never leave you. One day things will be so different!

God comforts us so we can comfort others

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (*2 Corinthians 1.3-4, NIV*)

We all go through bad things in life. Since my brother was killed, my family have been able to bring comfort to many people who have lost their children because we understand. God doesn't want people to die and have terrible things happen but he will use us to help others. Sometimes this helps us as well.

Question - can you think of something you have gone through and been able to help others as a result of it?

Read Revelation 21.1-5 out loud as a group and say thank you to God. He is going to make all things new and get rid of the sin and rubbish for ever. A good day!

Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth,' for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death" or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'

He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'