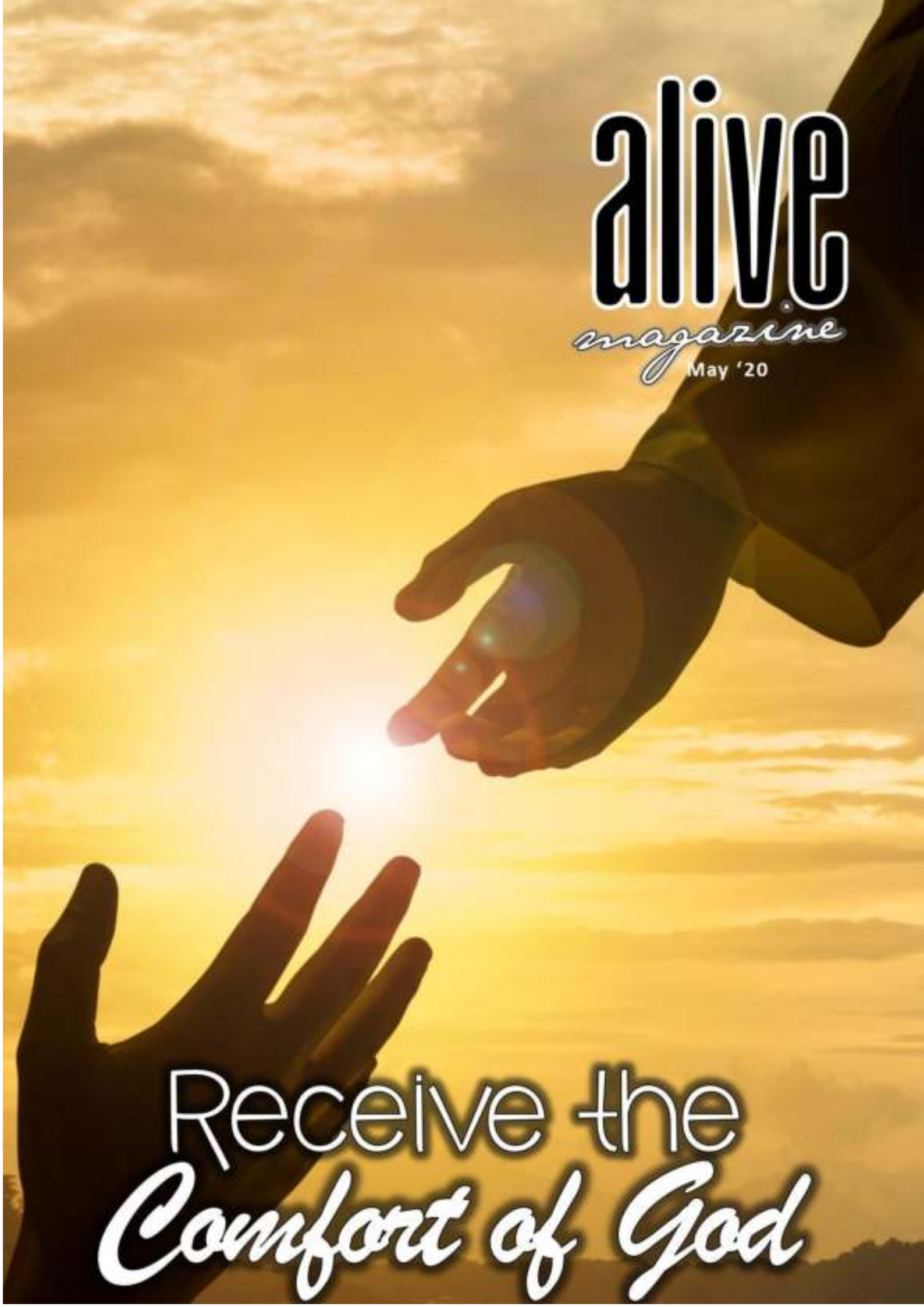
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a light for all the world to see

The 1st of May is a special day in Germany. A light was lit in the Altenberg Cathedral (Built: 1259), the night before the 1st of May.

The light is then sent to all the churches in Germany. I got the light today, the 1st of May in Köln, from our Cathedral, the Kölner Cathedral.

I am passing the light on to you, your family and friends, and your country. May God protect you all and bless you in this Pandemic.



As the evil virus got passed on from one to the other person, I ask you, in your country, to pass the light on to others.

May the light spread, may we be blessed, protected, and ready like the wise virgins in the Bible, having enough oil for their lamps as they waited.

May God send healing and miracles with His light of Jesus Christ all over the world.

Light overcomes darkness, and darkness has to move for each light that is lit up!

The more lights that are shinning, the more brightness there will be.

I pray God will keep you safe, as well as your family and friends.

God bless you all from Köln, Germany: Martina Riding



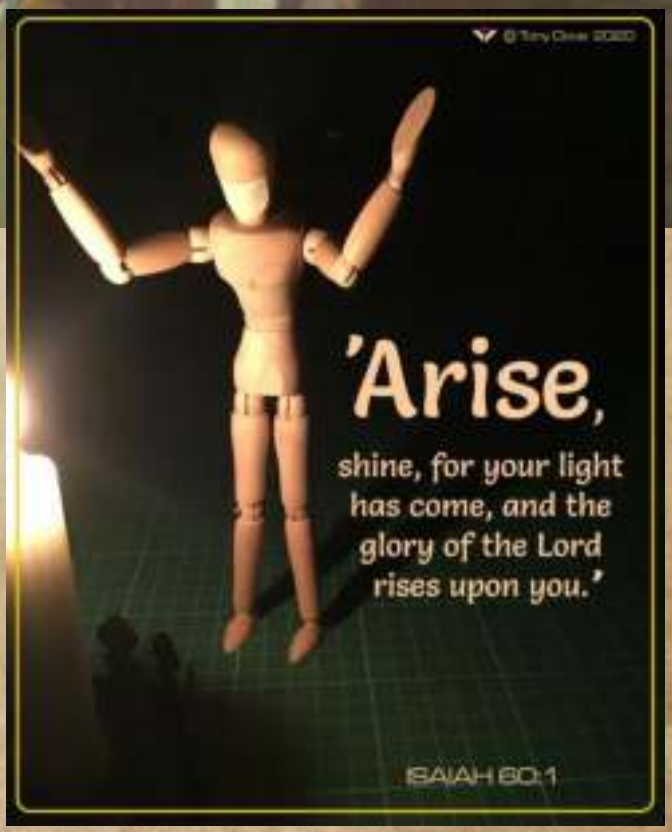


Image: Tony Dove 2020

Receive the comfort of God

By: Andrew Roebert

At times in our lives we need comfort. We all go through those really low moments in life when we need someone to come alongside us and to comfort and console us. When my wife passed away in 2018, people came and comforted me. Some just stood with me at her graveside, some prayed for me, some brought physical help in the form of food or assistance. Still others comforted me by their kindness, their words, their actions, their very presence, and even by their physical touch. I was comforted and I believe it was ultimately God who was comforting me. At this time in history we are facing a global challenge. Things are hard, and tough times seem to have become a living reality for so many people. There is fear and uncertainty on the one side, and hunger and sickness on the other. People, all around the world, are caught between the physical reality of challenges and the emotional toll of what appears to be something that is out of control. In the midst of all this, I am here to comfort you today. Today, the Lord wants to come and comfort you. As His representative, I am here to extend His hand of comfort to you today. Receive the comfort that comes from the Lord, right now.

MY PEOPLE

In verse 1 we see an interesting verse. In the verse, The Lord tells the prophet to comfort the people of God.

Isaiah 40:1
'Comfort, comfort MY people…'

The nation had been in captivity and with the captivity came all sorts of challenges and struggles. Now, things were about to change. God was about to step into their world and situation, and bring about changes that would have seemed unlikely and almost impossible.

The Lord was telling them that things would change, and this change was a hope they had given up on seeing take place. In the instruction the Lord says: 'Comfort, comfort MY people!' As Children of God, we have the wonderful privilege of belonging to the Lord. Let me remind you that you are HIS, you are HIS child.

You are valuable and precious to the Lord and He loves you. In His love, He is reaching out to each one of us to remind us that we are HIS. We belong to the Lord. Our worth comes from the wonderful fact that we belong to God. Maybe, today, you feel like you are under 'lock and key'. You do not belong to the 'locks and keys' around you, you belong to God.

No matter what you are struggling with today, you do not belong to that thing, you belong to God. Let me remind you and comfort you with the knowledge that you belong to God and you are HIS.' This truth is something Lord speaks over you and your situation: 'Thus, says your God!

YOUR GOD

Continuing in verse 1, we see another interesting detail.

Isaiah 40:1 'Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.'

The phrase at the end of the sentence says: 'says YOUR God!' Here we see how the Lord confirms to His people that He is their God. He does not simply say: 'Says God!' He adds the word 'YOUR' to the equation. So now, not only do we know that we belong to Him, but in a wonderful way, He is ours. We can know an even greater sense of belonging in the fact that God is our God, He is YOUR Lord and God. Let me remind you that HE is the Lord YOUR God.

Isaiah 43:3 'Because I am God, your personal God!' (The Message Translation)

Your God is still in control of all things and your God knows what you are facing and going through, and He will be with you!



Image: Tony Dove 2020

GOD WILL INTERVENE

This is an amazing story, as God intersects the lives of the people, and begins to speak hope.

Isaiah 40:2 'Speak tenderly to her, 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.'

The Lord tenderly speaks to His people giving them a hope and a future. It is not a booming voice out of the heavens like a trumpet or a bolt of thunder with lightning. Notice that He speaks tenderly to His people. He gently steps in and speaks words of comfort and reassurance. The Lord consoles His people. He wants to do the same for you, He wants to step into your 'world' and your situation, and console you, and comfort you with the hope that only He can bring. The Lord actually identifies the fact that there has been a struggle and there has been suffering, but it is about to end.

The promise of restoration is given and that promise includes a double blessing for the future.

Isaiah 40:2 'she has received from the LORD's hand double…'

The Lord is here, right now, to comfort and encourage you. The end is in sight and the future looks promising because He is the Lord your God.

THE NEW

Part of what the Lord has in store for His people is something new. His promise to them is a return of the people from captivity. The captivity, the bondage and the lockdown would end, and they would know freedom, release and joy. The promise was that the sad days would be over and gone.

Isaiah 40:2 'Her sad days are gone…' (Living Bible)

All this would be made possible by the merciful intervention (the favour) of God. It would be more than just restoration to normality, but a restoration to a wonderful new normal.

The new normal would be freedom and joy. The new normal would be double blessing. The new normal would also be a glorious and everlasting kingdom. Be encouraged, the Lord your God is working in the situation you are facing, and, although things looks dark, He will bring about restoration and bring new and wonderful things into your life. Do not just long to 'get back' to normal, expect and 'look forward' to a new normal that will be different and better.

THE BATTLE WILL PASS

When we go through things that are difficult and challenging it may sometimes feel as if the circumstances or situation will never change. Perhaps, when you look at the situation, you think it could never change or get better? But with God in the equation of our lives, things can and will change. If the battles goes on long enough, we can even sink down into discouragement. The Nation of Israel were in this exact position. In the very moment, the Lord came to comfort and encourage them. He delivered a comforting message, from Himself to His people, so that they would not sink under their burdens. The Lord wants to do the same for you today. He comes to you, as only He can, to comfort and remind you that things will change, things will be better, and the battle will pass. We are living in a battle, it is a war, but the struggle will not last. Take hold of the hope that He is giving you today!

MAKE SPACE FOR MORE OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

During this time in our lives, we must not waste the opportunity we have been given. We have an opportunity, during all that is going on, to develop our relationship with the Lord our God.

Do not make space for fear and doubt in your heart, make more space for the Lord.

Isaiah 40:3 Listen! It's the voice of someone shouting, 'Clear the way through the wilderness for the LORD! Make a straight highway through the wasteland for our God!'

Often our lives can become cluttered and consumed with all the 'issues of life'. We have an opportunity to declutter and rid our lives of things that would disturb our relationship with the Lord. We have this wonderful opportunity to deal with the obstacles and make a way, and build a straight highway, for the Lord to become the dominant player in our lives. Perhaps your relationship with the Lord has become a bit of a wilderness or a wasteland. Anywhere where God is not, is a wilderness and wasteland. We need the Lord in our lives, we cannot do without Him. So, let us deal with the hindrances and let us make right with Him, so that He can turn our wilderness into a well-watered garden and our wasteland into a fruitful field.

Isaiah 40:4 'Fill in the valleys, and level the mountains and hills. Straighten the curves, and smooth out the rough places.'

HE WILL DO IT

The Lord is the One who will step into our lives and bring about the change we so desperately need and long for. We live in a world where there is not much that we as individuals can do to bring about change, except to call out to God for help - pray. But God can and God will. Look what it says in verse

Isaiah 40:6 A voice said, "Shout!" I asked, "What should I shout?"

It is time for us to focus on the Lord and on what God has said. We cannot keep on singing the song of despair that the world is singing. Let us change our confession and begin to confess something different. Let us begin to proclaim in His name, that the time of struggle, captivity, and misery, is finished. Let us start to declare that a double blessing, or a double portion of His blessings, are ours and will be ours. Speak it out, shout it out, and let that be your reality.

THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL BE REVEALED

Nothing ever happens in this world or in our lives that God will not use to bring Him glory. He can even take situations that seem hopeless and turn them into something for His glory. In the middle of this whole story we see the purpose and intention of the Lord.

Isaiah 40:5 'And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

I believe that, somehow, through all that is going on, God's glory will be revealed, and it will be something that no man can take credit for. He is using what the world is going through and what you are facing as an opportunity for His glory to be revealed. Your situation, and our situation as a global community, is a wonderful opportunity to see what God will do.

So, be comforted and be encouraged. The Lord has wonderful plans for each one of us.

Jeremiah 29:11 "I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

The Comfort Of God

By: Andrew Roebert

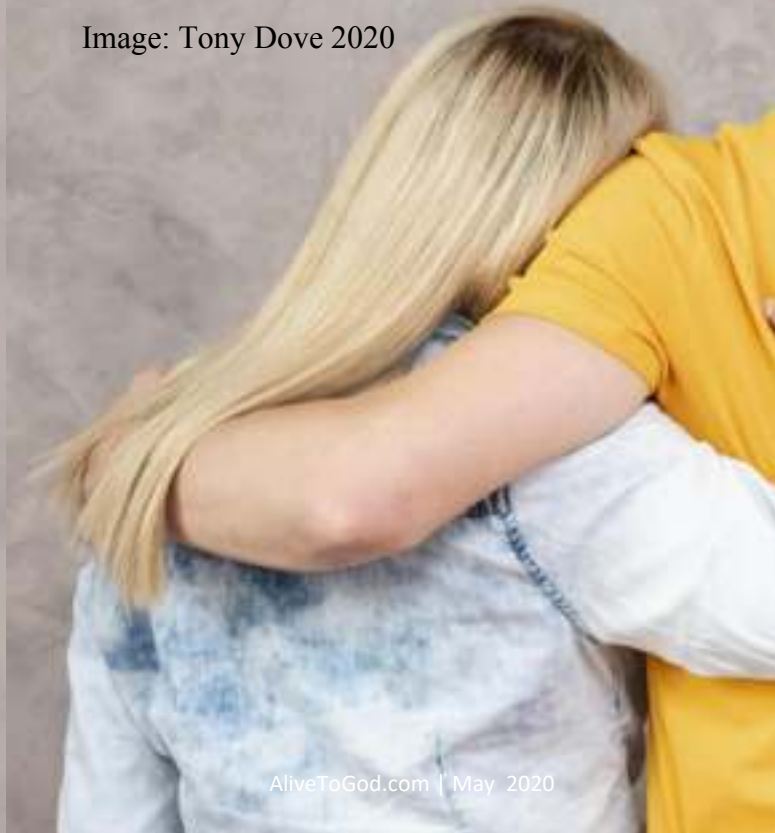
Have you ever needed to know the comfort of God in your life? Perhaps you went through a difficult time or a difficult season and God carried you and comforted you. Perhaps you are facing challenges or hardship and you need the comfort that only God can give. One of the names that is given to God is the 'God of all comfort'. He wants to comfort and carry us as we face the things that life brings our way. Allow Him to comfort you today!

THE MEANING OF COMFORT

If we understand what 'comfort' is we can understand what God is offering. Comfort is to give strength and bring hope to ease the grief or trouble that someone is facing and to consol. It can also mean to alleviate the grief or sense of loss, or trouble of circumstances and situations. The definition, which I really like, is to strengthen greatly. This is what God wants to do for us. He wants to come and strengthen us. But He wants to do even more than this. He wants to relieve, refresh, renew, restore and reassure. Perhaps the greatest thing that God wants to do as He comforts us is simply to help us.



Image: Tony Dove 2020



THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT

Perhaps you feel like no one knows what you are going through and no one knows what you need. When we face challenge and difficulty it is easy to feel that no one can identify with what you are facing. It is for this reason that it is so wonderful to know God. The Bible tells us that He is the God of ALL comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort. (NIV)

No matter what you are facing, God knows and understands and He wants to comfort and greatly strengthen you! Nothing you are facing is beyond His ability to comfort you.

GOD WANTS TO COMFORT YOU!

This is exactly what God wants to do for each one of us.

2 Corinthians 1:3 What a wonderful God we have—He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials.

2 Corinthians 1:7 God will tenderly comfort you when you undergo these same sufferings. He will give you the strength to endure.

This verse tells us that God WILL comfort you! It is part of God's very nature and character to reach out and to comfort us as we pass through any form of difficulty. We must take advantage of the comfort that God is offering us.



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HOW DOES GOD COMFORT US?

There are so many ways in which God wants to comfort us. It is interesting to look at some verses from the Bible that explains to us just how God wants to comfort us.



Isaiah 66:13 As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you.

There is something about the way a mother comforts a child that no other individual can do. God wants to comfort you in a way that no one else would ever be able to comfort you.

Psalm 27:10 For if my father and mother should abandon me, You would welcome and comfort me.

It is as though God is ready and waiting to pick us up and make us His own.

Psalm 10:17 Lord, You know the hopes of humble people. Surely You will hear their cries and comfort their hearts by helping them.

God comforts us by stepping into our situations and helping us.

Isaiah 61:1He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted.

God can also comfort us by using other people, who He has called as comforters, to comfort us.

COMFORT IN DIFFICULTY

It is usually when we face difficulty that we need comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:6 But in our trouble God has comforted us.

In those desperate moments in life God wants to come through and comfort us. We face difficulty every day but there are certain times in life when we all face immense trouble. It is in the heat of these times that God wants us to know His comfort in an extra-ordinary way. When this happens we know what it means to be carried by God.

THE RESULT OF KNOWING THE COMFORT OF GOD

When we have known and experienced God's comfort we in turn can show comfort to others.

2 Corinthians 1:4 And why does He do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.

Do you know anyone who needs comfort right now? Perhaps you can be the source of comfort that that person needs. As God's comfort is real in our lives we can pass this comfort on to others.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 Dear brothers, warn those who are lazy, comfort those who are frightened, take tender care of those who are weak, and be patient with everyone.

THE COMFORT OF GOD'S WORD.

I have found God's word, the Bible, to be a great source of comfort in my life. As God has given me His promises, they have been a great source of strength and comfort in my life.

Psalm 119:52 From my earliest youth I have tried to obey You; Your Word has been my comfort.

If God has given you promises, hold onto them. Don't let them go. Let God's word be a source of comfort and strength in your life.

THE PRAYER

Here is my prayer for you.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting comfort and hope, which we don't deserve, comfort your hearts with all comfort, and help you in every good thing you say and do.

Here is a prayer you can pray for yourself.

Psalm 119:76 Now let Your loving-kindness comfort me, just as You promised.

We need to learn to walk, as a lifestyle, in the comfort that God offers.

Acts 9:31 The believers learned how to walk in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

May you know the comfort of God in your life!



Image: Tony Dove 2020

How can I learn to stop blaming others for my problems?

By: gotquestions.org



For many people, blame is a favourite game when something goes wrong. Living as broken people in a broken world, we can easily find someone or something to blame when we are hurt. Sometimes it is true that someone else so violated our lives that the fault is his alone. When that happens, we have steps to take to right the wrong (Matthew 18:15–17). But if we habitually blame others for our problems instead of taking responsibility for the part we may have played, blame can become a way of life.

The following are some steps we can take to stop blaming others for everything that goes wrong:

1. Fully acknowledge the damage that was done. It may seem odd to begin a change by focusing on the problem, but that is the best way to process it so that we don't have to carry it around anymore. Fully recognising the hurt and injustice we experienced prepares our hearts to forgive and move on. Our hearts know a wrong was committed, and in pretending the wrong was less than it was, we do ourselves no favors. Recognising the problem, grieving the loss when appropriate, and then committing to forgive the offender are important in changing the blame game.

2. Recognise the pride that lurks behind the blame game. Prideful hearts don't want to admit wrong. It's easy to see where someone else is wrong, but it's not so enjoyable to admit our own fault. It helps to ask ourselves, "Did I contribute to this problem in any way?" We can usually find something we could have done better. Instead of focusing on what the offender did, we can redirect our focus to our response. Yes, that person was wrong, but did I respond the way God wants me to? Did I make the situation better or worse? When we recognise pride, we should confess it as sin and humble ourselves before God and before the other person (1 John 1:9; 1 Peter 5:6).

3. Lower lofty expectations. We cause ourselves much grief when we carry too high expectations for ourselves and others. Often those expectations are never communicated, but they are at the root of our bitterness and reflexive blaming of others. We think, "They should have done this," or "They should not have done that." When the word should enters our thoughts about other people's actions, we have set the scene to start blaming them. Should implies an expectation that is going unmet. Surrendering our expectations to God and trusting that He will give us what we need helps calm us when we feel slighted or ignored.



Image: Tony Dove 2020

4. Surrender rights to God. Human beings are rights-fighters. If we made a list of our assumed rights, we would probably be shocked. Common on most people's lists are the right to be treated fairly; the right to never be offended; and the right to be respected, loved, or included. The problem is that God did not give us those rights; we conscripted them for ourselves. Blaming others for our problems often arises from a perceived rights violation. The fight to maintain bogus rights keeps us in emotional turmoil.

If we find ourselves blaming others a lot, it may help to make a list of personal rights we feel are being violated. Then, as an act of surrender, offer that list to God. Tell Him that you give up these rights, and if He thinks you need to be validated, respected, or included by others, He will see to it. James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." Giving our rights to God is one way we humble ourselves. He then lifts us up in ways that have nothing to do with pride or rights-fighting.

5. Turn blame into prayer. When we feel someone else has wronged us, we can tell God about it. The psalms are filled with expressions of the pain, hurt, and betrayal felt by the writers. But they didn't stop with expressing the pain. After we pour out our pain in prayer, we can quiet our hearts and humbly ask the Lord for direction. Rather than blaming others, we can begin praying for them. If they were wrong, they need the healing and restoration of the Lord. Pray that God will change their hearts, convict them of their sin, and restore them to Himself. Every time Satan tempts us to grow bitter, we can use the temptation as a reminder to pray for the person who wronged us.



Image: Tony Dove 2020

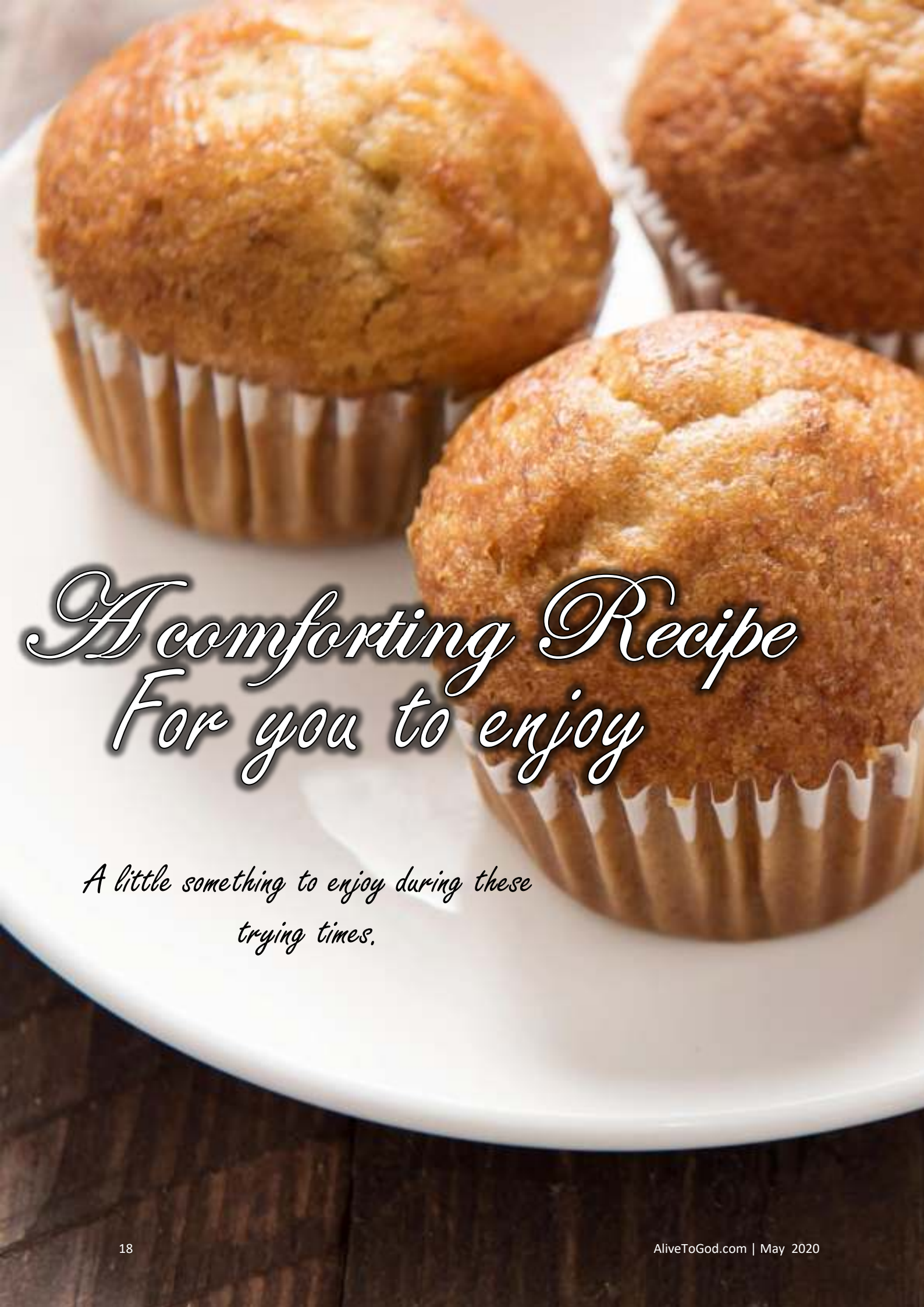
6. Repent of the entitlement attitude. Blamers typically have an attitude of entitlement they are unaware of. Similar to rights-fighters, entitled people believe they are owed something. We may have an entitlement problem if our thoughts sound something like this:

- "It's his fault I didn't get that job."
- "My mom knew I wanted to host the dinner, but she hosted it to spite me."
- "I'm not married because all guys are scum."
- "I don't have a girlfriend because women are shallow and greedy."
- "Everyone else is further ahead than I am because they've had it easier than I have."

Ridding ourselves of entitlement attitudes is like pulling thistles out by the roots. It's difficult, but, once the attitude is gone, it can't grow any more thorns. Those who blame others often blame God indirectly for bequeathing them an inferior life. Such blame of God must be confessed as well. We must admit that God owes us nothing. James 1:7 reminds us that every good and perfect gift comes from God. If we can breathe; if we can work, love, play, laugh, and experience enjoyment, then we are greatly blessed. God did not owe us any of that, but, because He is good, He gave us many things to enjoy. We are commanded to be thankful in every situation (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We cannot be thankful if we feel entitled to more.

7. Find the good in the situation. We tend to blame others when our life situation is not as we wish it to be. However, God says that He is ultimately in charge and will use everything for our good if we trust and love Him (Romans 8:28). You didn't get that job you wanted? Perhaps you can thank God that He protected you from a job that was not right for you. You couldn't finish college? Perhaps you can thank God for showing you that college was not the path for you. When we turn misfortune into an opportunity to give thanks, we rob our enemy, Satan, of a weapon he wants to use against us.

Taking personal responsibility for our lives and refusing to blame others for our problems is a mark of maturity. Blaming others for our problems only keeps us mired in immaturity. We also forfeit opportunities to learn from our mistakes, develop perseverance, and work in harmony with God to produce the character of Jesus in our lives (see Galatians 5:22–23).



A comforting Recipe For you to enjoy

A little something to enjoy during these trying times.



Ingredients

- 2 t Baking Powder
- 1 cup bran
- ½ t Salt
- ½ Cup Sugar
- 1 Cup Flour
- 2 T Oil
- 1 Egg
- ¾ Cup Milk

Instructions

Mix all ingredients together. Spoon into muffin pan. Bake at 180deg for about 20 mins.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