

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

The Holy Spirit as Comforter

Acts 9:40-41

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me."

We read today from Acts 9:40-41. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit as Comforter?

In the movie, "the Martian", Mark Watney played by Matt Damon is an astronaut who gets stuck on Mars. Basically, the whole movie describes the rescue mission that NASA and other agencies take up to get Watney back. The movie is 2 hours and 31 minutes long.

The setup of Watney being marooned on Mars takes about half an hour. The resolution at the end takes about 10 minutes. That means that the director and producers of the film take us on a 1 hour and 50-minute journey of building tension to see if Watney, a very likable character, will make it safely back to earth. In building the tension the film makers do a very good job!

Be warned. I am going to spoil the film. They must figure out communication. Thankfully, an old Mars lander fulfills that challenge. They must figure out food. Watney becomes a Mars potato farmer and figures out how to get water in the meantime. They must find him a rescue crew. His returning crewmates disobey orders and take a months long detour to get their guy back. They must do the math to get him launched off the surface. Another lander is available and he makes it a convertible to get the job done. Really, that's what happens.

So when he must be in the point of space above the planet in the right place at the right time going the right velocity in the right direction to be rescued by his crewmates who have to overcome their own challenges to be there, the pivotal moment of "will he or won't he" is filled with tension and anticipation.

Then, when it happens as we hope and Watney is reunited with other people for the first time in a year and half, the held breath is released, and the heart rate begins to wind down from the height equal to what is experience while going on run for a couple of miles. Everything is going to be okay and now we can relax free from the anxiety of what we've just experienced.

That place of relief is what we can know from the Spirit. Everything is truly going to be okay, because the Spirit reminds us of the power that our God has to 'rescue' us even in the most dire of circumstances.

"Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive."

This story from Acts is a little snippet of how we are shown God's power coming to the believers in the early church. Peter is traveling around and sharing the gospel. Along the way, he runs into some folks who love this woman Dorcas, or Tabitha as she is also named. Dorcas had been a blessed pillar of the

community and had just died. In their grief, her friends send for Peter. They are clearly in distress and hope that Peter can bring something to give comfort. Part of the group in the house are the widows of the community, people that Dorcas had probably especially cared for and encouraged. Their mourning is marked by their wondering what was going to happen next. If Dorcas wasn't there to care for them, were they going to be okay?

Through Peter, the Spirit shows the power of God over death. Peter speaks, and the barrier is crossed. Breath comes to empty lungs, and the beating of a still heart begins again. The lament and grief of the house is answered with restored life and joy returns.

But in these events, Peter does something important. He makes sure that the widows not only see what has happened, but they understand. We hear nothing of the interaction except that Peter presented Dorcas to the widows, but I expect he shared some words with them. Let's imagine.

"I know you were afraid. But see, your friend is alive! Be comforted that she is with you still. Also know and understand that this is the power of God given to you in Jesus Christ. Death has been beaten. It has no power to hold those who believe in Christ anymore. Take comfort in knowing that the God who loves you holds power over sin and death and he will give his children eternal life to be with him forever!"

He wants them to know the comfort that while life can be hard, God continues to care for them. He holds all power and even death itself cannot claim the last word. They can trust in Christ because the power of the Spirit reminds us that they will be okay!

So will we. The power of Christ makes our future sure. The redemption of Christ opens the door to the presence of God that we will know for ever and ever.

In our most difficult of circumstances, let us take comfort from the Spirit that shows us this truth. His future is beautiful and he has promised his children that he will welcome them into that beauty forever.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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