

By the Coming of Titus

by Edwin L. Crozier

If you're like me, you tend to skim through Paul's statements about travels and travelling companions. "Oh, neat, Titus travelled there, Luke travelled here. Good, good, can we get back to the doctrinal and theological meat?" It is no wonder I missed the profound statement that gives us good insight in **II Corinthians 7:6**.

"But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus" (ESV).

Multiple times in Scripture, the authors simply say God did something without telling us how. In **II Corinthians 1:3-4**, Paul simply calls God "the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our afflictions" (ESV). However **II Corinthians 7:6** tells us how God did it. God comforted Paul by the coming of Titus. Consider 4 insights to the working of God from this simple statement.

1. God uses instruments.

When we say, "George chopped down the cherry tree," do we assume he did it with his own hands? Or do we assume he used an instrument? All too often, we read in Scripture that God did something—comforted, put it on the heart, led, enlightened, etc.—and assume this means God supernaturally acted in some way. However, God uses instruments as well. In this case, God used Titus as His instrument of comfort.

2. It is no less God doing the work.

When we are told George chopped down the cherry tree with a chainsaw, do we respond, "Then George didn't chop down the cherry tree, the chainsaw did"? Of course not. Though Titus was the instrument, God was the wielder. Though it was Titus's message about the Corinthians that comforted Paul in his present affliction, he knew God was actually the author of his comfort.

3. Give God His due credit.

When George chopped down the cherry tree with the chainsaw because we hired him to, we don't pay the chainsaw; we pay George. In like manner, we need to be willing to give God credit. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..." (**James 1:17**, ESV). We must not be ashamed to speak of God working in our lives. I have had a fear of attributing to God good credit due His name simply because I didn't have a specific passage that said God did something. Did God specifically tell Paul the comfort through Titus was really His? Or did Paul simply know God is the God of all comfort so when Titus comforted him, he knew it was ultimately from God? Though I see the instruments God uses, I should be happy to give God credit for the provision.

4. Don't be ashamed to ask about God's instruments.

When someone says, "George chopped down the cherry tree," we are not at all ashamed to follow up by asking, "With what?" Yet, for some reason some people think asking about God's instruments is somehow less spiritual. When we read that God does something, we need to ask how He does it and what tools He uses. Then we need to search the Scriptures for answers. This is not less spiritual or less faithful. Sometimes we may discover the answer is God does it directly and supernaturally. Other times we will find He uses instruments that we need to make use of. In either case, we should not be ashamed to ask about God's instruments.

God comforted Paul by the coming of Titus. I'm glad He did.