



***God Is Greater Than Our Circumstances***

*By Major Beth Desplancke*

*Territorial Women's Ministries Program Secretary*

**Read Isaiah 40.**

A little girl walking in a garden noticed a particularly beautiful flower. She admired its beauty and enjoyed its fragrance. "It's so pretty!" she exclaimed. As she gazed on it, her eyes followed the stem down to the soil in which it grew. "This flower is too pretty to be planted in such dirt!" she cried. So, she pulled it up by its roots and ran to the water faucet to wash away the soil. It wasn't long until the flower wilted and died.

When the gardener saw what the little girl had done, he exclaimed, "You have destroyed my finest plant!"

"I'm sorry, but I didn't like it in that dirt," she said. The gardener replied, "I chose that spot and mixed the soil because I knew that only there could it grow to be a beautiful flower."

Often we murmur because of the circumstances into which God has sovereignly placed us. We fail to realize that He is using our pressures, trials, and difficulties to bring us to a new degree of spiritual beauty.

We all have circumstances that bring stress and challenges – we don't have a choice about them, but we do have a choice in how we respond to those circumstances. Corrie ten Boom wrote, *"If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God you'll be at rest."*

In the Book of Isaiah, chapter 40, we see how God is greater than any of our circumstances if we will just look to Him. Verse 1 says, ***"Comfort, comfort my people," says your God.*** The answer to dealing with circumstances is turning to God.

This chapter of Isaiah is prophetic – meaning when Isaiah spoke these words, the events hadn't happened yet. In this chapter, Isaiah is speaking about events 100 years in the future. In his prophecy, God's children have been in exile in Babylon and have languished there so long that they have given up hope of returning to their homeland. Isaiah gives them words of comfort and prophecies that they will return to their homeland. Although our circumstances are different, who God is has not changed, and Isaiah 40 focuses on three attributes or qualities about God that can bring us comfort during the difficulties we face.

### **1. We have the comfort of God's presence.**

***He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.*** Verse 11

God is our shepherd and He cares for His children. We can take comfort no matter what we face that our Shepherd is there to lead and guide us. He is also there right beside us. God doesn't just point and say, "Go that way," but He journeys with us. We are not alone to face our circumstances. He is omnipresent, which means God is always present with us.

Whatever you are facing, if you look to God to see Him as Shepherd, who not only leads us but also walks beside us, you will be blessed during your circumstances.

### **2. We have the comfort of God's concern.**

Sometimes during difficult circumstances, it is easy to feel insignificant and as if nobody cares. Do you ever feel like God is so busy taking care of the entire world, He couldn't possibly have the time to deal with your seemingly insignificant circumstances? God is greater than our circumstances because He is omniscient – He knows everything. Verse 26 tells us that God not only created all the stars in the universe, He knows each one by name. If He knows the names of the stars, He surely knows you – every detail of your life.

God knows everything and is truly concerned, and we can never complain that our way is hidden from the Lord (v. 27).

Whatever you are facing, if you look to God and remember He even knows every star by name and He knows you and cares about you, you will be blessed during your circumstances.

### **3. We have the comfort of God's strength.**

No matter what circumstance you face, trying to deal with it on your own strength and energy means you will eventually get tired and run out of steam. The good news is God is omnipotent – He is all powerful.

***Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall.*** Verses 28-30

We can face any circumstance by waiting or hoping in the Lord (verse 31). Wait doesn't suggest that we sit around and do nothing. It means "to hope, to look to God for all that we need." Those that trust or wait in the Lord will find new strength – strength that comes for Him. As we wait before Him, God enables us to soar when there is a crisis, to run when the challenges are many, and to walk faithfully in the day-to-day demands of life.

Someone has defined “circumstances” as those nasty things you see when you get your eyes off of God.” If you look at God through your circumstances, He will seem small and very far away; but if by faith you look at your circumstances through God, He will draw near and reveal that He is greater than any circumstances you could ever face.