

The 3rd Sunday after Epiphany ~ Sunday, January 21, 2018
“Half Truths ~ God Won’t Give Us More Than We Can Handle”
2 Corinthians 1:3-11

This saying is usually spoken out of deep _____ and compassion, with no criticism implied—only care and _____. And people who employ this saying usually mean well—they mean to _____ and strengthen others. They certainly don’t intend to place _____ in the path of someone’s faith.

I. The Half Truth.

This saying is actually a _____.

“No temptation has seized you that isn’t common for people. But God is faithful. He won’t allow you to be tempted beyond your abilities. Instead, with the temptation, God will also supply a way out so that we will be able to endure it.”
(1 Corinthians 10:13)

Corinth was full of people and _____ from all over the world, and _____ was literally on every corner.

Paul is clearly talking about something very _____ here—he’s talking about _____ in the face of temptation with the hope of avoiding sin and not _____ about the trials and challenges of life. Paul is telling the Corinthians that their experience isn’t _____.

When we’re tempted, God will make sure the temptations are not so strong that we can’t _____ them. God will provide a way out, if we are _____ to it and willing to _____ it.

II. The Lie.

This saying is doctrinally _____ and can be _____ to a person’s _____.

- **It creates theological _____.**

When we say these words we’re implying that God is the _____ of the difficult and painful things in our lives.

They depict God as a _____ deity who weighs His children down with pain and suffering. This understanding of the nature of God is both biblically and theologically _____.

As popular as this saying may be, it’s a _____ because God doesn’t give us _____ things—let alone no more than we can handle.

God doesn’t enjoy bringing hardship into our lives—He’s a _____ Father. We all face adversity; we all experience suffering, hardship, and loss. However, these things are not a part of God’s perfect _____. They’re not sent by God, but are an unfortunate _____ of the human experience.

The vast majority of suffering comes from the fact that we live in a messed-up, fallen world that’s full of _____, combined with the fact that we sometimes choose to use the _____ that God’s given us in bad ways. Suffering is part of the _____ of corporate sin.

God doesn’t bring suffering into our lives, however, He does _____ it—this is a very important distinction to make.

He permits it because of the high _____. He’s places on free-will—on our ability to _____ right or wrong; good or evil; light or dark. He permits it to draw us _____ to Himself. And ultimately, if we’re willing to trust Him, to work all things together for _____ in our lives.

The _____ of Scripture isn’t that we won’t experience hard times; it’s not that we can _____ everything this world throws at us by ourselves. It’s that at all times, good or bad, God is _____ us and He wants to be our hope, our help, and our strength.

- **It creates _____ confusion.**

When someone’s struggling to keep their head above water in the midst of a crisis, this saying can make them feel _____.

If God won’t give them more than they can handle and their falling apart, it must be their _____—there must be something _____ with them or their _____.

This kind of thinking will ultimately steal our _____, and make it difficult for us to put James 1:2-4: “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

- **It is not true to the _____ of Scripture.**

To say that God won’t give us more than we handle is contrary to the _____ of biblical _____ and the Christian _____.

“Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”
(2 Timothy 3:12)

• **It elevates our _____ and _____ above God's.**
We need to _____ that we don't have what it takes to handle trials on our own. This superficial saying points people _____—to their own resources and strengths—while the Bible points us _____. Our greatest hindrance to living the victorious Christian life is our own _____. To say that God won't give us more than we can handle suggests that we don't need God's help or God's _____—and ends up sounding like a spiritual pep talk instead of biblical _____.

III. The Truth.

It's not that God won't give us more than we can handle, but that God will _____ us _____ all that we've been given.

It doesn't suggest that suffering is _____ to us by God at all. Instead, it acknowledges that _____ happens, and it promises that when we go through trials and tribulations, God is _____—and promises to walk through it with us.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me.” (Psalm 23:4)

“We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. (2 Corinthians 1:8-9)

Hardship = *thlipsis* =

“But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.” (2 Corinthians 1:9)

TWO IMPORTANT LESSONS

#1. We can't make it without _____.

The Christian life isn't a journey from dependance to independence, but instead is a process of moving from _____ self-reliance to spiritual _____ on God.

When life give us more than we can handle; when we come to the end of ourselves, we're forced to _____ on God. And when we come to Him, we can trust that He's more than _____. He is _____ than anything this world can throw at us.

“He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.” (2 Corinthians 1:10)

We worship a God who can _____ the dead—which means that He can do _____! It's all about _____ and His _____ and not about us and our inability.

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7)

#2. We can't make it without _____.

We need to _____ to, and _____ on, the support and _____ of each other.

“You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.” (2 Corinthians 1:11)

We weren't meant to go it _____. We were created for _____ and we're better together!

“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

We show our love for each other by:

God comforts us so that we, in turn, can _____ others.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

When everybody else in the world is _____ people down, we're called to build people up and _____ them.

When you are over burdened by life, who or what do you turn to?

Do you turn to God? Do you turn to other believers?



If we truly want to comfort those who suffer, we need to comfort them not with empty _____ that sound spiritual, but with the truth of God's _____.

“**The mountains and hill may crumble, but my love for you will never end,** so says the Lord who loves you.” (Isaiah 54:10)