

Weekly Devotional
May 13, 2020

When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul. (Psalm 94:19 ESV)

The writer of Psalm 94 writes at a time when God's people are being oppressed by malicious rulers (see verses 3-7, 20-21). As the wicked afflict the faithful, the psalmist's heart is filled with many worries. He seems to be especially burdened over the cruel and unjust treatment of the socially frail—widows, foreigners, and orphans (verse 6)—and he's anguished by the evildoers' boasting and arrogance, especially as they mock the Lord (verse 7). We can certainly understand why the psalmist is burdened by so many cares. We can even be familiar with what he's feeling!

Today, all our hearts are filled with cares surrounding public health. If you ask your parents, they'll probably tell you they're also concerned about the economy. Some might even be concerned about the scope of governmental reach and authority. Others are concerned about hoaxes. And still others are concerned about the reopening process. For young people, there are also all the normal cares surrounding school, exams, and college placement. And, of course, since the pandemic doesn't stop life from continuing, we're all left dealing with all the things that life throws our way: Temptations, sorrows, regrets, heartache, and loss. Without a doubt, we can identify with the psalmist as those who experience many cares.

How do we deal with all these cares? Today's verse offers a wonderful answer: *Turn to the Lord's consolations*. Naturally, our next question is, "What are the Lord's consolations?" Psalm 94 gives us four.

First, the Lord consoles his people with the assurance that he knows what they are dealing with (verses 9-11). He is all-seeing and all-knowing, and there is great consolation in knowing our cares are known by him, especially because he acts and responds (more on this on point four below). Second, the Lord consoles his people through his abiding presence (verse 14). Through faith in Christ, God's Spirit abides in us. He does not abandon us; knowing this gives us great comfort. Third, the Lord consoles his people through his past helps (verses 17-18). This is especially true for us as we remember how the Lord has helped us escape sin and death through the work of Christ on our behalf. If the Lord has helped us with our greatest need already, we can trust he will continue to help us. And fourth, the Lord consoles his people with the assurance of his divine action (verse 23). He doesn't just see what we're dealing with (point one above), he acts and responds! Ultimately, he will respond by making all things new and bringing us into his heavenly kingdom, where we will never suffer any burdens ever again.

Have you been feeling the weight of many worries and cares lately? *Turn to the Lord's consolations*. He knows what you're dealing with, he doesn't abandon you, he's helped you in the past, and he assures you he will act. May the Lord's consolations cheer your soul.

Questions:

- What have been some of your heaviest cares lately?
- Of the four consolations of the Lord seen in Psalm 94, which one comforts you the most? Why? How could you be more mindful of that consolation in the days and weeks ahead?
- Spend some time in prayer thanking and praising God for his many consolations.