



## Never a Friend Like Jesus



**"Is there a heart o'erbound by sorrow?  
Is there a life weighed down by care?  
Come to the cross, each burden bearing;  
All your anxiety, leave it there.**

**"No other friend so swift to help you;  
No other friend so quick to hear.  
No other place to leave your burden;  
No other one to hear your prayer.**

**"All your anxiety, all your care,  
Bring to the mercy seat, leave it there.  
Never a burden He cannot bear;  
Never a friend like Jesus!"**

**"Casting all your care on Him, for He cares for you." - I Peter 5:7**

**"Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you. He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." - Psalm 55:22**

**"For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things such as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." - Hebrews 4:15-16**

**In Matthew 9:35-38, we read that Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness. Verse 36 says, "Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered like sheep without a shepherd." Then He told His disciples to pray to the Lord to send more laborers who would seek lost sheep and reap a spiritual harvest.**

**James refers to God's compassion in regard to Job, who is the classic example of a man who stayed faithful, even while he endured unimaginable suffering. James 5:11 says, "We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful."**

In human terms, this does not sound rational, as the Lord allowed righteous Job to suffer the loss of everything he held dear in this life, through no fault of his own. That does not sound very compassionate and merciful, but by chapter 42, Job was able to express to the Lord what he had learned through it all:

"I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge? There I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." Then Job continued, "Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me. I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You. Therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes."

At last Job was able to understand God through the eyes of faith. It was only after all the suffering and confusion that he could begin to grasp the greatness, majesty, sovereignty and independence of God. His circumstances had not changed, but his heart had. Job was able to trust his God for all that he could not possibly understand about the trials he was called to endure. Finally, in verse 10 we read that Job's fortunes were restored, as he prayed for his friends who, in their ignorance, had tried to make sense of all the calamities that had befallen him.

I had used today's hymn when I first started writing my Thoughts in the spring of 2020. As the pandemic became a daily reality, we experienced a new level of stress that came from every direction. That is what caused me to begin pairing hymn lyrics with Scriptures in order to encourage us to keep our minds and hearts focused on the One who invites us to leave all of our anxieties with Him.

We have a God who is full of compassion, which means that He truly cares about what we are going through. Compassion and caring go together, and we are called to live in such a way that others can see His heart for them in their time of need. Remember that the word "compassion" literally means, "to suffer together." The opposite would be an attitude of indifference, which should never be said of a child of God.

Are you weighed down by care today? Do you care about the same things that touch the heart of God? What burdens can you bring to the mercy seat of Christ today? He invites us to "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." We may not understand why we are going through hard times, but here we have the answer to our confusion. Leave your heavy burden at the throne of grace and thank the Lord that He is willing and able to bear it for you.