Be Comforted to Give Comfort

Recently, the Church I help to lead has had a series of thefts and breaking and entering-type events. This is very annoying for me and for the people, most of whom are volunteers and give their time freely, have to work on the various aspects of reporting the crimes, fixing things that are broken and getting things at least back to normal, or better than they were before, ideally.

When things go wrong like this, it’d be easy to just be angry. Why do people feel that they don’t have enough, that they need to damage our property and steal what we have to make their lives better or more fulfilled? Is it ok to hurt others to get what we want or think we need or deserve? I don’t think it is, but that doesn’t mean I’m allowed to stay angry for long.  The Bible says that God ‘comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. 5 For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ’ (2 Corinthians 1:4-5).

Now, I think Paul who wrote this was talking more about Christians being hurt or killed for following Jesus, but I think the point stands. When we are in trouble, if we look to God, he will give us comfort, not just to make us feel better or to make Christians feel superior or sorted, but so that we can, in turn, share that comfort with other people. Whatever you believe or don’t believe, I think if we sought to comfort those who are in trouble wherever we can as a first instinct, a first move, things would go better generally. It saddens me that a lot of us go through life feeling like we don’t have enough and that we need more. I wish life was fairer, more balanced. We can play a part in helping that to be the case.

But it’s hard, especially in such a competitive world. This afternoon if you’re a home fan you’re here to watch the Cobblers seek to dominate Exeter and continue our excellent recent form. The idea of comforting those who are in trouble might well go out of the window for the 95 or so minutes the game lasts this afternoon, but at the end, if the result goes our way, I hope we will be able to be kind to the Exeter fans. It’s a long way home, after all.

Speaking of people who could do with comfort at the moment, prayers and good wishes for Sean Whaler as he starts the long road to recovery from a serious injury.

We all suffer, but we all have the capacity to receive comfort, and to share it too. Whatever age or stage of life we are at, there’s always someone whose day we can make better with a smile, a word, an arm round the shoulder. And you never know what prayer might do to help, either.

Up the Cobblers!