

Compassion

Scripture Reading — Isaiah 42:1-9

“A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.” — Isaiah 42:3

The Canons of Dort note that “our merciful God has promised not to snuff out a smoldering wick or break a bruised reed.” It says this to show God’s compassion and to encourage anyone who feels they are not doing very well in the new life they have in Christ. Anyone who is dealing with doubts or feeling like a failure should not despair and think they might lose their salvation. God’s mercy and grace go deeper than we could imagine.

Remember always, as Romans 5:10 points out, that we were reconciled to God and saved in Christ “while we were God’s enemies.” And “if God is for us, who can be against us? . . . Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? . . . No one” (Romans 8:31-34).

In the book of Isaiah, God is speaking to a worn-out, distressed people who need hope and encouragement. He wants to assure them of a change coming with the promised Messiah. This echoes an earlier image: “He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart” (Isaiah 40:11).

This shows what our nature must be toward anyone who is struggling in faith. Jesus had compassion for the weak and hurting. And if people had doubts and confusion, he gave assurance and encouragement. Compassion isn’t a weakness. It’s the power of grace that we too have received. So let’s share the assurance of God’s love!

Prayer

Lord, empower us with your compassion and mercy—to share it with others. In the Savior’s name we pray. Amen.

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