

## 2 Corinthians 1 Pt 1 vv 1-11

Jesus

### I. Intro

After writing 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians from Ephesus [Turkey]  
Paul intended to visit Corinth *after* going to Macedonia

- **First Paul sent Timothy to Corinth** who came back w/a bad report
  1. Trouble Without: Traveling false teachers
  2. Trouble Within: Accusations against Paul/**Q.** Apostleship

Paul decided to skip Macedonia/Go immediately back to Corinth  
Then planned to go to Macedonia/Jerusalem/Back to Corinth for a 2<sup>nd</sup> visit

- **Visit to Corinth was painful...**
  1. Authority questioned
  2. Personal attacks arise. Things got heavy

Paul determined to leave Corinth and...  
Not come back for the 2<sup>nd</sup> visit

**2 Corinthians 2:1** ...I determined this within myself, that I would **not come again to you in sorrow.**

- Some mocked him for being weak. He left for their benefit

**2 Corinthians 1:23** ...I call God as witness against my soul, that **to spare you I came no more to Corinth.**

Now back in Ephesus Paul sent Titus to Corinth w/another Letter  
A Tearful/Severe Correction Letter

- **Total of Four Letters to Corinth**
  1. Lost letter
  2. 1 Corinthians
  3. Third Tearful/Severe Letter [also lost] Warning to repent/God's judgment
  4. 2 Corinthians

Paul leaves Ephesus for Troas awaiting Titus...who does not show  
Paul leaves Troas for Philippi/Meets Titus w/Response from Corinth re. the sorrowful  
Letter

- Titus: Much Repentance/Some Opposition
  1. Some reject Paul's authority
  2. Some Question Paul's honesty for leaving and not coming back as planned

**2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians:** Written from Philippi 1 year/3 letters after 1 Corinthians  
Addressing the Church of Corinth's Response to the *Severe/Sorrowful Letter*

*They still need a lot of help...Look much like many churches today  
They are being conformed into the world rather than transformed by the Word*

### II. Benefits of Suffering Well

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,  
To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all  
Achaia: 2 Grace to you and peace from **God our Father** and the Lord Jesus  
Christ.3 Blessed be the God and **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, the **Father  
of mercies** and **God of all comfort**, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation,  
that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble , with the comfort  
with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Grace and Peace: *Charis* and *Shalom*  
*Grecian and Jewish Greeting*

- **Father of Mercy:** We need mercy because we are sinners
- **God of all comfort:** We need comfort because sin brings suffering

God is the Father of Mercies  
God is the God of All Comfort v 3

**Isaiah 51:12 I, even I, am He who comforts you...**

**Isaiah 66:13** As one whom his mother comforts, **So I will comfort you...**

- **Comfort:** gr. *parakaleō* to call to one's side, call for, summon
- **Comfort:** Lat. *fortis*. To make brave

Our God is the God of All Comfort  
Coming alongside us. Strengthening us. Giving us courage...

**John 16:33b** ...In the world **you will have tribulation** [*thlipsis*] ; but be of good cheer, I  
have overcome the world."

Our God comforts us in Tribulation v 4

**Tribulation:** gr. *thlipsis* To press together, pressure rt. to press as grapes, press hard upon.  
Squeeze the juice out. Ever feel that way? Life squeezing the juice out of you?

The ancient Greek word for suffering *thlipsis* originally had the idea of actual physical  
pressure. In old England, heavy weights were put on certain condemned criminals until they  
were "pressed to death." Thlipsis describes that kind of "pressing." [Guzik]

**Revelation 1:9** I, John, both your brother and **companion in the tribulation** [*thlipsis*] ...

The suffering of man followed the original sin of mankind. Without sin there would be no  
suffering [or death or aging]. Sin affected/infected all creation including man. Suffering will  
intensify as Satan acts as the god of this world knowing his time is short. [NJC]

So God comforts us so we can comfort others in trouble [*thlipsis*]

5 For as the **sufferings of Christ abound in us**, so our consolation [Comfort]  
**also abounds through Christ**. 6 Now if [since] we are afflicted, it is for your  
consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the **same**

**sufferings** which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

Suffering/Pain are common to us all. No one is immune v6

- **Physical:** Diseases/Injuries/Chronic pain
- **Mental:** Hopelessness/Loneliness/Fearfulness/Mood swings/Flashbacks
- **Emotional:** Anxiety/Depression/Grief/Humiliation/Memories
- **Spiritual Pain:** Demonic attacks/Struggles w/faith/Unsaved family members

**1 Peter 5:9b ...** know that the **same sufferings** are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, **perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle** you.

The exact circumstances of suffering are not as important as what God does and wants to do through the suffering. Christians should never get into a competition of comparing suffering. There is a sense in which we all share the same sufferings. [Guzik]

We can all enjoy the same benefits of suffering

- **Perfect:** gr. *katartizō* Render sound/Set bone straight. rt. To be fitted for special use
- **Establish:** gr. *stērizō* To make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix. rt. Immovable. On the Rock
- **Strengthen:** gr. *sthenōō* Strengthen the very soul. Spiritual strength
- **Settle:** gr. *themelioō* To lay the foundation, to found. A solid base to build upon

All the result of Fruit Suffering

We should see suffering as one of the means God chooses to employ in order to make us increasingly useful to the Master. It is from this perspective that James urges his readers to *consider it pure joy...whenever you face trials of many kinds*. [Alistair Begg]

In **adversity** we usually want God to do a removing job when He wants to do an improving job. [Unknown]

**Romans 5:3b ...**but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Life is 10% what happens and 90% how we react [Swindoll]

Right Suffering leads to an effectiveness to endure till Jesus returns v 6

**Endure:** gr. *Endure-hupo-mone*. It isn't the idea of passive, bleak acceptance, but of the kind of spirit that can *triumph over pain and suffering to achieve the goal*. It is the spirit of the marathon runner, not of the victim in the dentist's chair.

**Attitude:** Nurses negative report on the mood of a Christian man suffering with brain cancer: She wrote "*He was inappropriately joyful*". She won't forget that.

Paul: Our way of suffering is to teach you how to endure the same

Our comfort from God is to give you that same hope v 6

7 And our hope for you is **steadfast**, because we know that **as you are** partakers of the sufferings, **so also you will** partake of the consolation.

As you are...so also you will?  
IOWs Not all suffering is for the sake of Christ  
There is good *thlipsis* and bad *thlipsis*

**1 Peter 4:12** Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice **to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings**, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified...**15 but** let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, and evildoer, or as a busybody in other peoples matters.

Agreeing we are to die to self and actually dying to self are two completely different things. Agreeing humility is a wonderful Godly attribute does not necessarily mean **we** are humble. The suffering the Corinthians were experiencing was not primarily due to outward persecution but the result of their own inward self-centered desires not being met. [e.g. lawsuits/divisions/competition] Those who suffer that way i.e. easily offended, not getting our way, not recognized as we think we deserve...will not experience God manifested as the Father of Mercies nor the God of All Comfort. Only those who suffer well will know Him like that. [NJC]

This was Corinth: Thin-skinned narcissistic and yet brothers in Christ

In the same way, Many people today are just waiting to be offended  
Churches are dying because people are not

Obedience manifests the presence of God [NJC]

### III. More Than We Can Handle

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened **beyond measure, above strength**, so that we **despaired even of life**.

God will never give us more than we can handle?

**1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted **beyond what you are able**, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

God always gives us more than we can handle!  
That's the point! To make us turn to Him

Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains... [CS Lewis]

...To get us to release our trust in self

**Jeremiah 17:5** Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the Lord ...7 **"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, And whose hope is the Lord.**

**1 Peter 4:1** ...since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for **he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin...**

Whoever has suffered for doing right, **and has still gone on obeying** God in spite of the suffering it involved, has made a **clear break with sin.** [Grudem]

Paul opens his heart to the Corinthians  
Burdened beyond Measure/Strength...Despairing even of life

9 Yes, **we had the sentence of death in ourselves,** that we should **not trust in ourselves** but in God who raises the dead, 10 who **delivered us** from so great a death, and **does deliver us;** in whom we trust that **He will still deliver us...**

Physical/Mental/Emotional/Spiritual pain so *intense* we knew death was next  
God would need to raise us from the dead?

- **V 10** Supernatural Second wind as God steps in
- How many times has He raised us from the dead?
  1. He's done that, and...
  2. He's doing that, so
  3. He will do it again

He gives us more than we can handle that we might stop trusting in ourselves  
To Trust in the God who Raised the dead/Is raising the dead/Will raise the dead

**Romans 8:11** But if [since] the **Spirit of Him who raised Jesus** from the dead dwells in you, **He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life** to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

**Philippians 3:10** [Suffer well/Die to live] ...that I may know Him and the **power of His resurrection,** and the **fellowship of His sufferings...**

We are never more intimate with the LORD  
Than when we partake in His sufferings/His response to attack

**1 Peter 2:23** ...who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, **but committed Himself** to Him who judges righteously ;24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed

Much of our daily suffering?  
Keeping our mouths closed when provoked

Being quiet. Blessing when we *feel like* cursing.  
Killing the Adam in us for Jesus/others. Utterly destroy the Amalekite

**1 Peter 3:8** Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 **not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling**, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For "He who would love life And see good days, **Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.**

We are invincible until God says we're done  
He Has/He is/He will deliver us

**11 ...you also helping together in prayer for us**, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.

Brothers/Sisters Cooperating w/the LORD in prayer for others who suffer

**Romans 15:30** Now **I beg you**, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you **strive together with me in prayers to God for me...**

**Philippians 1:19** For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance **through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ...**

God expects us to employ every drop of our pain efficiently  
To comfort others after He has comforted us/Come alongside others in empathy

**2 Timothy 3:12 ...all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**

I've learned to kiss the wave that throws me against the Rock of Ages. [CS Lewis]

- Only when we learn to do that can we say with Paul...

**2 Corinthians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.