

# II Corinthians 1 – 6 March 2022

## “Thriving In The Fire”

### Introduction

- \*Written in 56 AD shortly after the writing of I Cor
- \*Paul is on his 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey (see Acts 20)
- \*Paul wrote 3 letters to the Corinthians
  - \*I Cor – to seek repentance for their sin
  - \*A 2<sup>nd</sup> ‘sorrowful’ letter (don’t have) (II Cor 2:4)
  - \*This letter we call II Corinthians
- \*Paul was 1.5 yrs here (2<sup>nd</sup> M.T.), made lots of disciples
  - \*Some of them needed lots of growth & help
- \*Theme of Book: The life of the minister: temporary pain & eternal victory
- \*This letter is to vindicate Paul, that he IS God’s servant serving God is victory & pain
- \*Corinthians have endured much pain: much from self-inflicted sins & much from battles w/ unbelievers
- \*So here Paul will give them 3 keys for thriving in the fire of life**

# 1<sup>st</sup> key for thriving in the fire is to trust in the comfort and goodness of God (Vs 1-5)

Read Vs 1-2

1. “By the will of God” – He brings the very truth of God and not the invention of any man
2. “With all the saints” – W/ all Corinth’s sins, they’re still considered saints: what grace!
3. Paul opens all of his letters w/ Grace & Peace

Read Vs 3-4

1. Notice that the tribulations are just a given
2. The blessing is that God has given us what we need, thru personal experience, to help others in their need

Read Vs 5

1. ‘consolation’ – *paraklesis* – same word as in vs 4 meaning comfort, exhortation
  - a. God’s w/ us thru the fire (Read Dan 3:24-25)
2. You’re right that if you live in a bubble, you’ll won’t see pain.... but you’ll also never see joy
3. Although we suffer for Christ, He Himself comforts us thru it – pass the comfort of Christ on to others

## **2<sup>nd</sup> key for thriving in the fire is to rely on God's power working thru us for eternal life (Vs 6-14)**

Read Vs 6

1. Whether Paul was afflicted OR comforted it was for their comfort and spiritual growth
2. 'which is effectual...we also suffer' – Paul's efforts & sufferings produced a work in them that's now producing the same type of sufferings in them

Read Vs 7

1. We can rejoice in suffering for Christ truly knowing they're evidence that He will comfort as well
2. We believe, think & do b/c it's to honor Jesus!

Read Vs 8-9

1. Our witnessing for Christ put us in dangers that were beyond (not w/i) our ability to deal with
2. Therefore, we forced ourselves to consider ourselves dead and trusted God (Read Gal 2:20)
3. There's something very spiritually healthy about living in light of eminent physical death

## Read Vs 10

1. The death we're delivered from is our very flesh life & human nature with all its sins
2. The 3-fold working of eternal life in us
  - a. Have hope that as God has delivered us at salvation upon belief
  - b. He is currently working sanctification
  - c. He will yet finish the work of glorification
3. Although we don't know what God's going to do with my physical life, but I KNOW what He's done w/ my spiritual life (Read Dan 3:16-18)

## Read Vs 11

1. Paul understood the benefit of many people praying & thanking God for prospering his service

## Read Vs 12

1. There's something simply joyful about living an open Christian life before others
  - a. Reminds me of David living before Saul
  - b. There's nothing undercover or hidden

## Read Vs 13a

1. Paul didn't say one thing to one church and something different to another church

## Read Vs 13b-14

1. We should rejoice that we've brought each other along in our Christian walk
2. We're aiding each other in advancing God's work within our hearts
3. Some act as if they're 'Lone Ranger' Christians
  - a. How can you read this chapter & believe that you can fulfill your God-given mission alone?

## **3<sup>rd</sup> key for thriving in the fire is to be led of the Holy Spirit and don't be hasty (Vs 15-22)**

Read Vs 15-17

1. Paul planned a trip that would see them twice but it didn't happen that way
2. His present trip (3<sup>rd</sup> M.T.) has him going from Ephesus, to Troas, To Macedonia, To Corinth
3. Paul wasn't speaking words lightly but fully intended to fulfill his words
  - a. Yet he allowed for God to change his plans
  - b. Some men speak fluffy words but never intend to do them for lack of ability or even intention
    - i. This isn't what Paul was doing

Read Vs 18-19

1. Paul lived with a consistency of words
  - a. His words of logistics could be trusted just as his words re: Christ Jesus could be trusted
  - b. Paul accepted that God's plan never changes but God may change man's plan

## Read Vs 20

1. Paul speaks about logistics & about Christ with integrity b/c God has spoken to us thru Jesus with truth & integrity
2. Being led of the Spirit means being like Jesus

## Read Vs 21-22

1. Paul's plans to come to them weren't of his own making & decision, but as they're led of God
  - a. Christ stabilized us
    - i. He gives us direction & truth
  - b. God anoints us
    - i. Brought us into the work
  - c. H.S. secures & guarantees us
    - i. Protects & promises
2. Paul only followed his own plans to the extend that God would then lead him into them
3. Living in a world in which we have enemies; be ready to change course to realign w/ God's will

*We'll catch the last 2 verses with chapter 2*

## Conclusion

So how about you? How are you doing in this world on fire and in trouble? We can thrive & overcome by the blood of the Lamb & the word of our testimony!

1. **Trust in the comfort & goodness of God**
  - a. God is with us and He cares for you
2. **Rely on God's Power working thru us for eternal life**
  - a. Living for Christ – you will have trials in this life, but God is using them to bring us AND OTHERS into eternal life
3. **Be led of the Holy Spirit & don't be hasty in decision making**
  - a. Do what you say you'll do, but leave room for God to direct your path

\*It's a walk of faith and trusting Jesus to lead us thru

\*The 3 Israeli boy trusted God (Read Dan 3:28)

\*Live thru the fire in light of Jesus' soon return for you

\*Read I Pet 1:7