

Paradox - Deliverance Through Trials

Icebreaker: When sick or hurt as a child, what expression of care did you find the most comforting?

Suffering – “*Far beyond our ability*” – “*We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life.*” (2 Cor 1:8)

Have you or someone close to you ever experienced a time like the Apostle Paul in verse 8? What happened and how did/they you respond?

Strength – “*God, who raises the dead*” – “*Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.*” (2 Cor 1:9)

When in trouble, where do you go to receive strength to endure. How do you rely on God? How do you rely on yourself?

☞ **Paradox: Trouble is no accident but a divine appointment.**

Do you see troubles in your life like the paradox statement above or something else? Explain

Salvation – “*He will deliver us*” – “*He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and He will deliver us. On Him we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us.*” (2 Cor 1:10)

What might it look like to set your hope primarily “On Him” instead of on the deliverance?

☞ **God delivers us “from” our trials and other times “in” our trials.**

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. (1 Cor 10:13)

Quietly consider what temptation is particular to you that has the tendency to seize you? Have you ever considered that this verse is true? How might you implement it more for the next time tempted?

Sharing – “*Help us by your prayers*” – “*...as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.*” (2 Cor 1:11)

How often do you request prayer? How many people that you know are praying for you now? Who are you praying for? Can you honestly look back on a trying situation in which you are thankful to God for it happening?

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (1 Peter 1:6-7)

A divine appointment...

- 1) Places our trust in God
- 2) Unifies community
- 3) Generates prayer
- 4) Results in thanksgiving
- 5) Adds maturity and depth to life

Which of the 5 divine appointment results communicates most to you? Take a little time as a group and pray for one another and commit to lift each other up in prayer this week.