

2 Corinthians 1:3–11

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.

⁵ For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.

⁶ Now if 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.

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.

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.

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,

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.

“The Father of Mercies”
2 Corinthians 1:3-11

INTRO:

On Father’s Day it is appropriate to preach a message on the greatest father of all, God the Father. In **Ephesians 1:17** we find God described as *“the Father of Glory.”* In **James 1:17** we learn that our God is *“the Father of lights.”* Today, we will explore

2 Corinthians 1:3 where our God is described as *“The Father of mercies and God of all comfort.”*

I. Our God is the Father of Mercies (v. 3)

II. How His Mercies are shown. (v. 4-11)

I. Our God is the Father of Mercies (v. 3)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.” 2 Corinthians 1:3

A. As Paul began his second epistle to the Corinthians, he thought about God the Father who is the reason the Corinthian Church existed.

1. When he thought about God, Paul immediately praised Him. He thanked God who is *“the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Here we enter into the mystery of the trinity. The Son of God was sent from the Father to be the Lord, Savior, and Messiah.

2. He, the Lord Jesus, came to provide the salvation which brought us into right relationship with God so that He can be our Father also. Everything in our relationship with God begins with our salvation through His Son.

B. Two qualities about God our Father rush into Paul’s mind as he meditates on the person of God.

1. First, Paul described God the Father as *“the Father of mercies.”* Given the close proximity to the statement of God as Father in His relationship with the Lord Jesus, it seems appropriate Paul thought about an attribute of God’s fatherhood in relationship to us. God the Father is *“the Father of mercies.”* The expression of God’s Fatherhood toward us, His children, is an act of mercy. The Greek word translated mercies here is plural and speaks of God’s compassion toward us.

2. Second, we are told that our God is *“the God of all comfort.”* The word translated *“comfort”* means *“to help, encourage, or to console.”* The root of this word is to call to one’s side. God is the one who supplies all comfort.

II. How His Mercies are shown. (v. 4-11)

A. How are God’s mercies expressed? First, in **verse 4**, God’s mercies are expressed through His comforting us in all our trials.

“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.”

1. God comforts us in our suffering. The word translated ***“tribulation”*** and ***“trouble”*** is a word that means ***“to afflict, oppress, or harass.”*** Our merciful Father, the God of all consolation, comforts us in all our affliction and oppression. God actively helps us when trouble comes. How does He do this? **1 Corinthians 10:13** gives us a clue.

“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.”

2. Here we are told how God ministers to us in our trials. He ministers to us in that **(1)** no trial can come into our lives except that which is common to humankind. This means God will not cook up a special difficulty for any of us. Others have endured this kind of trial before and have emerged victorious for God’s glory. **(2)** God is faithful in that He will not allow us to be tested beyond our ability to stand up to the trial with His help. **(3)** God will always provide a way out of the test. However, many times the way out is though it to the other side. **(4)** A fourth way in which God works to comfort us in our trials is found in **Psalm 23**.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”

He never leaves us alone in the midst of the trial. He is always right there with us.

3. Now when we emerge from the trial, we have a responsibility on the other side. God comforts us, so we can comfort others. We comfort them, not with our wit and wisdom, but with the reminder that as God was with us, He will also be with them. God’s comfort is always equal to the trials we endure (**verse 5**).

“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.”

As the world heaps its abuse upon us because we are the Lord’s, in measure the comfort and presence also abounds to meet the need that we have.

B. As the Corinthians read this they might be thinking, ***“Wow, Paul, it seems like you do an awful lot of suffering. Are you sure that God isn’t trying to tell you something?”***

Paul answered this thought in **verses 6 and 7**.

“Now if 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. 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.”

1. One reason God sends trouble my way is for your benefit. He is doing something in your lives through the trials that I go through.

2. A second reason He allows me to suffer is so that you may learn spiritual “stick-to-it-iveness” in the sufferings you face. God produces steadfastness and spiritual tenacity in you by watching God working in me through the trials He sends into Paul’s life.

3. Because of this we have great confidence as we suffer for Christ that we will also partake of the same comfort that other believers know and experience. This is really experiencing God.

C. To help them grow, Paul then mentioned the situation which probably was the genesis of this whole passage (v. 8-10).

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

Sometimes when we go through trying situations, we tend to feel like God is picking on us. Why do I have to suffer more than the guy down the street? When you begin to feel this way, look at the experience of the Apostle Paul. Here was a man who was committed to doing the Lord’s will at any cost, and God sometimes allowed him to suffer greatly.

1. Paul wrote, that the situation he went through was life threatening. This was very difficult. Paul’s language is vivid.

“We were burdened excessively beyond our ability so that we despaired even of life.”

2. But, Paul, why would God allow this to happen to you? Here is the reason (verse 9)

“Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.”

Paul wrote, God did this to teach me, the Apostle Paul, that I need to trust less in myself and more in Him.

3. For the record, God did deliver us. God will always deliver us. Jesus never fails! Finally, God did this so you had a reason to pray for us. **Verse 11** says: ***“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.”***

And He also did this so that you could join me in giving thanks and glorifying Him for His great deliverance.

LESSONS

1. The greatest expression of our God being the Father of Mercies is in His provision for our salvation. Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior?

2. Do we know Him as the Father of compassion and mercy, and as the God of all comfort? It is in the time of trouble that we really experience God. **(Romans 5:3-5)** ***“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 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.”***

Hymn #351 *Moment by Moment*