



Part 2: Comfort in Suffering

"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 1:2

How can I experience "grace and peace" in the midst of suffering? The Apostle Paul reminds us that it's in the tough times that God performs his most dramatic work!

Four Good Things About Bad Times...

1. _____ God's comfort.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles..." vv3-4a

Key word: _____

Latin root: **con + fortis** = _____

Greek: **parakaleo** = _____

2. _____ to the sufferings of others.

"...so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort." v4b-7

3. _____ on God instead of myself.

"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. 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. 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..." vv8-10

4. _____ the power of prayer.

"...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." v11

Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today's topic!

This week's memory verse: *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." 2 Cor. 1:3-4*

Monday

Read 2 Cor. 1:2-11. What did you learn from last weekend's sermon about experiencing grace and peace in suffering?

How can you begin to apply what you learned to the troubles you're facing right now?

Thank God today for His love for you. Thank Him for the hope He gives you. Pray for an open heart this week to receive the good things that God has for you.

Tuesday

Read Ps. 9:9, 46:12, 119:50 & 2 Cor. 1:3-4a. How have you felt God's comfort in the past?

How has your understanding of the word comfort been expanded? How would you describe God's comfort?

How do you receive hope knowing that God is the "Father of compassion and the God of all comfort"?

Think about the troubles you are facing today. What difference does God's comfort make in those troubles and in your attitude about those troubles?

Thank God today that He is compassionate and full of comfort. Talk to Him about the things that trouble you today. Ask Him to remind you throughout the day and night that He is with you, to comfort you and guide you.

Wednesday

Read 2 Cor. 1:4-7. What is the relationship between God's comfort of you and your comfort of others?

How have you been helped by someone who was "comforting you with the comfort they had received"? What impact did that have on your life and the troubles you were experiencing?

How does reaching out to comfort others help you too?

Reread verse 6. How has suffering and God's comfort taught you "patient endurance"? How has that helped you?

Reread verse 7. Write down the name of one or two people you know who you could comfort with the hope and comfort God has given you. Write down a few ways you could minister to them in the next week.

Thank God today that He never wastes your pain. Thank Him for the opportunity you have to minister to those who are hurting. Ask God to give you discernment to see those in need and courage to step out and offer comfort.

Thursday

Read Psalm 43:5 & 2 Cor. 1:8-10. How does it help you to know that Paul also suffered?

How can you relate to his description of trouble and suffering?

Reread verse 9. What happens when you rely on yourself for comfort? Why is it difficult for you to rely on God?

What does it mean to "set your hope in Christ"? How does that change your view of suffering and trouble?

Thank God today that you are not alone in suffering. Thank Him for the hope you can have in Him. Ask Him to strengthen you today and deepen your faith and hope in Him. Pray that your attitude in trouble and suffering will point people to Christ.

Friday

Read 2 Cor. 1:11 again. Also read Philippians 1:19. Paul says he was helped by the power of their prayers.

Recall a time in your life you have been helped through the prayers of others. What happened?

Someone once said the promise most frequently broken by Christians is, "I'll pray for you!" What can you do to assure you will really pray for those to whom you make this promise?

Here is your chance to help others by your prayers! Take some time right now to pray specifically for needs of people you know: Needs of those in the church, needs of people suffering internationally, needs of pastors and missionaries. If you can, pick up a copy of the weekly TLC prayer request list and pray through it. If you don't have a copy, you can e-mail Susie Williams at susie@tlc.org and subscribe to our weekly prayer updates.

Saturday

Please review the Bible verse for the week and finish up any devotions that you may have missed. Spend time talking to God today about the things that trouble you right now. Ask God to remind you, moment by moment if necessary, to rely on Him. Ask Him to open your eyes to those who need encouragement and pray that your life and hope in Him will bring comfort to those who suffer. Please pray for the services this weekend too!