

Message Notes

Where is God when life falls apart? - part 1

Introduction – “Fifteen of the greatest (and hardest) years of my life!”

The Journey of Paul and the Corinthians

1. First Visit (approx. 50-52 AD) (Acts 18:1-28)
2. “Previous Letter” from Paul (1 Corinthians 5:9-11)
3. Report to Paul from Chloe’s people (1 Corinthians 1:11)
4. Letter to Paul (1 Corinthians 7:1)
5. Timothy is dispatched to Corinth to deal with some of the problems (1 Corinthians 4:17; 16:10-11)
6. 1 Corinthians Letter (Spring of 55 AD)
7. Second visit, the “painful visit” (2 Corinthians 1:23; 2:1; 12:14; 13:1)
8. “Tearful letter” or “severe letter” from Paul (2 Corinthians 2:3-4, 7:8-12)
9. Proposed visits don’t come to pass (1 Corinthians 16:1-8, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, 2:1)
10. Paul to Troas & Macedonia. Titus gives good report (2 Corinthians 7:5-7).
11. “Super-Apostles” challenge Paul’s authority (2 Corinthians 11:5; 12:11)
12. 2 Corinthians Letter (approx. 56 AD)
13. Third Visit to Corinth (57 AD) (Acts 19:21-22, Romans 15:26, Acts 20:1-5)
14. Paul’s Martyrdom (64 or 65AD)
15. Clement of Rome about the disharmony at Corinth (approx 95AD)

Where is God when you guts are
being torn out? (Part one)
2 Corinthians 1:3-11 (esp. vr 3-4)

1. A Decision to Praise – (1:3a)
2. Who God is (1:3a-b)
 - a. The Father of Jesus
 - b. God of all Compassion
 - c. God of all comfort
3. What God Does (1:4a)
4. God never wastes pain! The responsibility and joy of passing it on (1:4b)

Application – “How has God comforted you?
How can you pass that on?”

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. ⁵For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. ⁶If 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. ⁷And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

⁸We 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. ⁹Indeed, 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. ¹⁰He 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, ¹¹as 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.



A STUDY OF 2 CORINTHIANS



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IN COLOR



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Where is God when life falls apart?



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2 Corinthians 1:3-4

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1. The Decision to Praise

2 Corinthians 1:3a

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“We all despise the man who demands continued assurance of his own virtue, intelligence or delightfulness; we despise still more the crowd of people round every dictator, every millionaire, every celebrity, who gratify that demand. Thus a picture, at once ludicrous and horrible, both of God and His worshippers, threatened to appear in my mind. The Psalms were especially troublesome in this way – ‘Praise the Lord,’ ‘O praise the Lord with me,’ ‘Praise Him.’ . . . Worse still was the statement put into God's own mouth, ‘whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me’ (50:23). It was hideously like saying, ‘What I most want is to be told that I am good and great.’ . . . It was extremely distressing...”

“The miserable idea that God should in any sense need, or crave for, our worship like a vain woman wanting compliments, or a vain author presenting his new books to people who never met or heard him, is implicitly answered by the words, 'If I be hungry I will not tell *thee*' (50:12). Even if such an absurd Deity could be conceived, He would hardly come to *us*, the lowest of rational creatures, to gratify His appetite. I don't want my dog to bark approval of my books...”

But the most obvious fact about praise -- whether of God or anything -- strangely escaped me. I thought of it in terms of compliment, approval, or the giving of honor. I had never noticed that all enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise unless (sometimes even if) shyness or the fear of boring others is deliberately brought in to check it. The world rings with praise -- lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game -- praise of weather, wines, dishes, actors, horses, colleges, countries, historical personages, children, flowers, mountains, rare stamps, rare beetles, even sometimes politicians and scholars..."

“My whole, more general difficulty, about the praise of God depended on my absurdly denying to us, as regards the supremely Valuable, what we delight to do, what indeed we can't help doing, about everything else we value. I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are, the delight is incomplete till it is expressed.”

C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms*, pp. 90-95

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2. Who God is

a. The Father of Jesus

2 Corinthians 1:3-b

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2. Who God is

b. The Father of compassion

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b. The God of all comfort

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3.What God does

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4. God NEVER wastes pain.

The responsibility and joy of passing on our comfort

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

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We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities, and everyone who has watched gluttons shoveling down the most exquisite foods as if they did not know what they were eating, will admit that we can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.

C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

Gospel Application

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**What's your view of the God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ?**

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**How have you let his gospel comfort minister
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**How have you let his gospel comfort minister
deeply to you?**

**Who and How is He asking you to
“pass that on”?**