

2 Corinthians 1:3 - 7 (NASB) - God Offers Comfort to All

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

⁵For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. ⁶But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer;

⁷and our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are *sharers* of our comfort.

- **Affliction** translates the Greek word *thlipsis*, which literally means, "pressure." Throughout **all** the stress, persecution, and trials he experienced in his turbulent life, Paul experienced God's comforting, strengthening presence. The apostle's life was thus an amazing juxtaposition of **affliction** and comfort.

1. He permits the trials to come.

There are ten basic words for suffering in the Greek language, and Paul used five of them in this letter.

1. The most frequently used word is *thlipsis*, which means "narrow, confined, under pressure,"
2. And in this letter is translated *affliction* (2 Cor. 2:4; 4:17),
3. *Tribulation* (2 Cor. 1:4)
4. *Trouble* (2 Cor. 1:4, 8).
5. In 2 Corinthians 1:5-6, Paul used the word *pathema*, "suffering," which was also used for the sufferings of Jesus (1 Peter 1:11; 5:1).

There are some sufferings that we endure simply because we are human and subject to pain; but there are other sufferings that come because we are God's people and want to serve Him.

2 Corinthians 2:4 (NASB) ⁴For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not so that you would be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you.

2 Corinthians 4:16 - 18 (NASB) ¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

- ***We must never think that trouble is an accident. For the believer, everything is a divine appointment.*** There are only three possible outlooks a person can take when it comes to the trials of life. If our trials are the products of “fate” or “chance,” then our only recourse is to give up.
- *Nobody can control fate or chance. If we have to control everything ourselves, then the situation is equally as hopeless. **But if God is in control, and we trust Him, then we can overcome circumstances with His help.***

God encourages us in all our tribulations by teaching us from His Word that it is He who permits trials to come.

2. He is in control of trials (v. 8).

2 Corinthians 1:8 (NASB)

⁸For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life;

- *We do not know what the specific “trouble” was, but it was great enough to make Paul think he was going to die. Whether it was peril from his many enemies, a serious illness, or special satanic attack, we do not know; but we do know that God controlled the circumstances and protected His servant.*

Deuteronomy 31:6 (NLT)

⁶So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.”

MONDAY MORNING MOMENT: **ACTION STEP**

“Remember Who God Is to You, Remember What God Does for You”

Job 1:20 - 22 (NLT)

²⁰Job stood up and tore his robe in grief. Then he shaved his head and fell to the ground to worship.

²¹He said,

“I came naked from my mother’s womb,
and I will be naked when I leave.

The LORD gave me what I had,
and the LORD has taken it away.

Praise the name of the LORD!”

²²In all of this, Job did not sin by blaming God.