

PAUL'S SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS

LEARNING HOW TO BE A HEAVENLY CHURCH IN A CARNAL WORLD

2 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 1:1-7

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SMX782 SEPTEMBER 16, 2012

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE – PART 2

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING THE RIGHT HEART FOR HIS MINISTRY

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Comfort, Ministry, Servanthood, Mercy, Peace

2 Corinthians 1:1-7

Paul, an **apostle** of **Jesus Christ** by **the will of God**, and Timothy our **brother**, To the **church** of **God** which is at Corinth, with all the **saints** who are in all Achaia: **:2 Grace** to you and **peace** from **God** our **Father** and the **Lord Jesus Christ**. **: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**.

The Theme:

Having God's Heart in Christian Service (all of us)

Introduction:

Paul, an **apostle** of **Jesus Christ** by **the will of God**, and Timothy our **brother**, To the **church** of **God** which is at Corinth, with all the **saints** who are in all Achaia: **:2 Grace** to you and **peace** from **God** our **Father** and the **Lord Jesus Christ**.

THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE

SUFFERING, DIFFICULTIES AND TROUBLES AS A GATEWAY TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1.) Where's God when it hurts?

v. 3-4

: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**.

WHERE'S GOD WHEN IT HURTS?

1a.) He's enthroned in heaven above

v. 3

1b.) He's where the trouble is

v. 4

1c.) He's here where it hurts

v. 4

THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE

SUFFERING, DIFFICULTIES AND TROUBLES AS A GATEWAY TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

2.) Why do good people have to suffer?

v. 5-6

2a.) Suffering brings awareness

v. 5

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

Suffering Opens our Eyes & Heightens **Awareness**

(sensitivity, alertness, expectancy)

true, deep and lasting blessings can only be born out of suffering.

WHY DO **GOD'S** PEOPLE HAVE TO SUFFER?

Romans 15:4

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the **patience** and **comfort of the Scriptures** might have hope.

“of the scriptures” implying that it is the scriptures, verses and/or portions and/or chapters of the Bible that become our very source of **patience** and **comfort**.

**THE TRUE BELIEVER WILL EXPERIENCE IN SOME FORM THE
“SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST” IN THIS LIFE.**

Those “sufferings” are “served up” in a million ways.
Physical realm. Emotional realm. Spiritual realm. Horizontal realm. Vertical realm.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us,

Hebrews 4:14-16

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. :15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. :16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

so our **consolation** also abounds through **Christ**.

Hebrews 2:9-10

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, (*why?*) for the suffering of death (*showing us that there's more*) crowned with **glory** and **honor**, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. :10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, **in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.**

The Church, His Bride is the Target of Reproach.

Jesus Christ will always identify Himself with His true church.

As she will suffer for knowing Him, He soothes and comforts and encourages her to stay in the relationship.

Acts 9:1-5

Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest :2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. :3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. :4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you **persecuting Me?**” :5 And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are **persecuting.**”

Note:

When the church, a believer is persecuted, the assailant is actually attacking Jesus Christ Himself.

Are You about to Suffer or are you Suffering? – what great news.
You're about to know the Lord deeper.

Suffering of any kind for the believer

Causes us to **Meditate** on God's Word and seek out His promises.
The result = the believer being able to **Present** Christ's comfort to others.

1 Peter 5:8-10

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. :9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. :10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

IT'S ALWAYS IN THE HARDSHIP THAT GOD IS SEEN

MORE POWERFUL, MORE FAITHFUL, MORE PRESENT BECAUSE OUR GOD IS
REAL AND HE IS THE ANSWER TO OUR SUFFERING.

It was in the storm that they thought they were going to die...

When they saw Jesus walking on water.

It was late and no one had any food to feed the people...

When He said make them all sit down.

It was after the disciples had tried everything...

When Jesus said to a possessed man, be healed.

It was when the Israelites were surrounded that...

God sent hail stones and flooding rains to destroy the enemy.

What Terrible Thing Has The LORD Brought You Through?
Remember how dark and hopeless those hours felt - - **until...**
(someone prayed / a verse came to you / a message was heard)

WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE HAVE TO SUFFER?

2b.) Affliction creates ministry

v. 6

Now if (*since*) 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**.

But Christians Aren't Supposed to Suffer – right? = wrong!

Psalm 34:19

Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous,
But the LORD delivers him out of them all.

Romans 5:3-5

And not only *that*, but we also **glory** (*not growl, complain, panic, freak,*) in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; :4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. :5 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.

Suffering is the only way the Christian can see more of (his/her) God.

#1 Remember this;

as a Christian, the LORD will not allow something too great or too difficult for you.

#2 Remember this;

that the magnitude of suffering, the greater the presence of God.

#3 Remember this;

He will walk you thru all difficulties – expect Him to.

This is Why James Says...

James 1:2-4

My brethren, **count it all joy** (*because you're about to get a glimpse of God that cannot be seen any other way*) when you fall into various trials, :3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. :4 But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

A Personal thought.

With very good intentions, I want my children and my grandchildren to be spared from hardship and difficulty. Yet, as I get older I have seen that there is a very ugly, spiritual retardation among those who have never suffered and how they are missing out on so much of who God is. My weak and immature reaction is "Lord don't let that happen to me" but it ends up being at my own peril. I become a - - shallow, critical, complaining kind of believer and so ruin any witness I may have had for Jesus to family, coworkers, staff or neighbors. *What was it that caused Paul or James to almost embrace suffering? They looked at hardships of life, even sickness and persecution as an opportunity to see the power and comfort and strength of God in such special ways unknown to those in ease.*

Philippians 3:10

that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. :10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

That makes our attempts to seek (Y2K-like) protection and seclusion and safety a deathtrap spiritually.

It is God's will that we be Galvanized

Acts 21:13-14

Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." :14 So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE

SUFFERING, DIFFICULTIES AND TROUBLES AS A GATEWAY TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

3.) Is this really happening to me ? v. 7

Suffering and Hardships and Pressures
Reveal, Confirm and Solidify a Believers Faith in God.

3a.) Faith must undergo testing v. 7

And our hope *for* you *is* steadfast,

Example:

Luke 22:31-32

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. :32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and **when** you have returned to Me, **strengthen your brethren.**"

**We All Remember That Event of Peter's Great Failure.
but because of it - - we have all been encouraged by it.**

Matthew 26:74-75

Then he began to curse and swear, *saying*, “I do not know the Man!” Immediately a rooster crowed. :75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” So he went out and wept bitterly.

Body, Soul and Spirit = Where was Peter???

God’s People Are Never The Victim.

We allow ourselves to become victims.

Romans 8:28-29

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. :29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Make Sure You Get This.

Discipline for wrongdoing is not godly suffering. It’s reaping of what you’ve sowed. If you’re having sex outside of marriage and get aids – that’s not a trial. Its not persecution. It’s the wages that sin pays.

But if you’re living a God-honoring life and you’re walking with Jesus in this life and you’re being mocked, attacked, hated, misrepresented for it – then God is near to you like white on rice.

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, :4 to an **inheritance incorruptible and undefiled** and that **does not fade away, reserved** in heaven for you, :5 who are **kept by the power of God** through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. :6 In this you **greatly rejoice**, though now for a little while, **if need be**, you have been grieved by **various (multi-colored) trials**, :7 that the **genuineness** of your faith, *being* much **more precious** than gold that perishes, though it is **tested by fire**, may be found to **praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, THIS IS NOW = 1Pet. 1:8** whom having not seen **you love**. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet **believing**, you **rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory**, :9 receiving the end of your faith—the **salvation of your souls**.

2 Corinthians 11:16-28

I say again, let no one think me a fool. If otherwise, at least receive me as a fool, that I also may boast a little. :17 What I speak, I speak not according to the Lord, but as it were, foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. :18 Seeing that many boast according to the flesh, I also will boast. :19 For you put up with fools gladly, since you *yourselves* are wise! :20 For you put up with it if one brings you into bondage, if one devours *you*, if one takes *from you*, if one exalts himself, if one strikes you on the face. :21 To *our* shame I say that we were too weak for that! But in whatever anyone is bold—I speak foolishly—I am bold also. :22 Are they Hebrews? So *am* I. Are they Israelites? So *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So *am* I. :23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. :24 From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. :25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; :26 *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; :27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness - - :28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Psalm 139:1-14

O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*. :2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. :3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. :4 For *there is* not a word on my tongue, *But* behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. :5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. :6 *Such* knowledge *is* too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot *attain* it. :7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? :8 If I ascend into heaven, You *are* there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You *are there*. :9 *If* I take the wings of the morning, *And* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, :10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. :11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,” Even the night shall be light about me; :12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day. The darkness and the light *are* both alike *to You*. :13 For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. :14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well.

IS THIS REALLY HAPPENING TO ME ?

3b.) We can see Heaven from here

v. 7

because we know that as **you are partakers** of the sufferings,
so also **you will partake** of the consolation.

1 Peter 4:12-13

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; :13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that **when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.**

1 Peter 1:6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, :7 that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

Fact Check This:

When we teach our children that there is no fallen world or the effects of sin in this world - we take away their ability to cope and deal with suffering. Their conclusion is - - if there is a god, he is sick, angry, mean and...
How Could a God of Love... blah. Blah. Blah???

1 Peter 4:19

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God **commit** (*deposit. hand-over, entrust for protection*) **their souls to Him** in doing good,
as to a faithful Creator.

commit Its not until you let go does it go into deposit, safe-keeping.
Until you do – you will make yourself out to be a victim.

Let's Pray for Those Who are Suffering under Pressure, Affliction, Difficulty.

>>>> The Cross, The Christ, The Call <<<<

Come Forward for Prayer

Will You Agree with God That

Rom. 3:23 you have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, Rom. 6:23a That you understand that the wages of sin *is* death, Rom. 6:23b but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 5:8 Believing today that God demonstrates His own love toward you, in that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you. Rom. 10:13 But He now says to you that "*if you would call on the name of the LORD you shall be saved.*" Rom. 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. :10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

End of Study