

2Corinthians – Week 2

I. Review:

A. What led up to the writing of 2Corinthians

- i. Paul's first visit to Corinth (Acts 18)
- ii. Paul's former letter to the Corinthians (1Cor. 5:9 – unpreserved letter)
- iii. The Corinthian Church writes a letter to Paul, asking doctrinal questions (1Cor. 7:1).
- iv. Paul writes 1st Corinthians.
- v. Paul's painful visitation (2Cor. 2:1).
- vi. Paul writes a severe letter to them (2Cor. 2:3-5 – unpreserved letter).
- vii. Titus met with Paul and tells him about the Corinthians (2Cor. 7:6-7).
- viii. Paul writes 2nd Corinthians.

B. Chapter 1:1-7

- i. Paul makes it clear that his apostleship was not self-appointed, but God-appointed!
- ii. God comforts us through our afflictions so that we may comfort others who are afflicted.
- iii. The afflictions that Paul endured were for their benefit...
 1. So that they may be comforted when they patiently endure afflictions.
 2. And, not to mention, to show how much they are loved by Paul!
- iv. Paul's confidence in the Corinthians was based on the fact that they were suffering for the name of Christ!

C. Paul now goes into detail as to how he felt while undergoing severe afflictions for the name of Christ...

II. Continuation

A. 1Cor. 1:8-9 (ESV), *“For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. ⁹Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.”*

i. There are some opinions as to what afflictions Paul was addressing.

1. But Paul was not concerned in giving the details of what happened, but rather, how he and Timothy felt...

- a. Paul felt that the affliction that he experienced was beyond what he could endure. Apparently, worse than what the Corinthians were enduring.
- b. It was so bad that he was certain he was going to die.
- c. God's lesson to Paul was this: Do not rely on yourself!
 - i. Paul's suffering, in this context, was to teach him to depend of God, who is able to raise the dead!

1. In other words, trust in the Omnipotent God!

d. Paul had to learn to be content in all situations...

i. Phil. 4:11-13 (ESV), *“Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”*

1. Paul, like us, was human. Prone to fear and doubt when then things got very difficult for the cause of Christ!
2. But it was in those very afflictions that he learned to draw from God's strength!

- B. 1Cor. 1:10 (ESV), “*He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.*”**
- i. Paul gives thanks to the Lord for delivering him from such a severe trial!**
 - ii. His confidence was that God, who delivered him from past afflictions, will deliver him in the afflictions to come!**
 - iii. Paul teaches us four things regarding suffering:**
 - 1. It makes us more sympathetic!**
 - 2. It makes us more appreciative of God’s comfort and encouragement He brings to us during our afflictions!**
 - 3. It causes us to trust in God more!**
 - 4. It gives us greater hope in the future!**
 - iv. Paul also knew that prayer played an integral part in deliverance...**
- C. 1Cor. 1:11 (ESV), “*You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.*”**
- i. The word “help” is the Greek word, “*sunupourgeo*,” which means to assist, to work together!**
 - 1. It comes from three words:**
 - a. “sun” – with**
 - b. “hupo” – under**
 - c. “ergon” – work**
 - 2. It paints a picture of laborers bowed down under a heavy load, working together to lift it up.**
 - ii. Intercessory prayer:**
 - 1. Intercessory prayer can be viewed as a faith-filled, continual prayer where a Christian pleads with God on behalf of another or others who desperately need His intervention.**
 - a. Example: Acts 12 – Peter imprisonment by Herod.**
 - i. The church fervently (without ceasing) prayed for Peter!**
 - ii. Intercessory prayer is an expression of love and concern!**
 - 2. Each Christian is called to pray intercessory prayers:**
 - a. In the Old Testament:**
 - i. It was the job of the priests to acts as mediators between God and the people of Israel.**
 - ii. Those of the priesthood were descendants of Aaron (Moses’ brother).**
 - b. In the New Testament:**
 - i. The blood of Christ makes all Christians priests (Rev. 1:5-6).**
 - 1. Peter says that we are a holy (set apart) and royal (kingly) priesthood (1Peter 2:4, 9).**
 - 2. One of our functions as Christians is to be intercessors in prayer!**
 - a. Note: This is why we have a prayer list, so that the righteous men and women of God may pray for those hurting among us.**
 - b. Each time you pray for another, picture yourself as a co-laborer, helping that person with his burden, lifting it up with him, feeling the same sorrow, petitioning God to act!**
 - 3. Paul knew that the prayers of righteous men are powerful and effective (James 5:16)**
 - a. He knew that the Corinthians would give God thanks as a result of their prayers being answered regarding the blessing of Paul’s deliverance.**