

Week One
Help for the Hurting: II Corinthians 1:1-11

II Corinthians should be titled IV Corinthians: Understanding the Context of Paul's correspondence with the Church at Corinth

1. Paul wrote his first letter to _____ their _____.
(I Cor. 5:9)
2. The Corinthian's write back with a series of _____. (I Cor. 16:17)
3. Paul's _____ letter back is I Corinthians.
4. The church responds negatively to Paul's letter.
5. Paul makes a quick painful trip to Corinth. (II Cor. 13:2)
6. Paul pen's _____ letter to check on their response to rebuke.
7. Paul meets with Timothy in Macedonia and is encouraged by his _____.
_____. (II Cor. 7:5-7)
8. Paul pen's final letter, his _____ to Corinth, we know it as _____.

This church had a special place in Paul's heart. They had traveled a _____ but beautiful road. The final letter is deeply personal, we will see the heart of the great Apostle open wide as he encourages the church to live out their _____ to Jesus _____ being a light to a dark world.

II Corinthians 6:11-12

“11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. 12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. 13 In return widen your hearts also.



Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia: **2** Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notes: _____

How we approach suffering

- 3** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,
- 4** who comforts us in all our troubles

Two words, _____, and _____, stand out repeatedly in that passage; and the two always go together: *Affliction* is what we today would probably call pressure, or stress. It is what many of you, perhaps, are feeling right now when you think about going to work tomorrow. It is whatever ties knots in your stomach and makes you feel anxious or troubled about what lies ahead. It is what makes for hectic days and for sleepless nights. It gnaws continually at your mind and threatens your well-being; it refuses to go away and leave you alone; it depresses you and darkens the future with forebodings of disaster. Now that is pressure, stress, and we all live in it. But they were not any different in the 1st century. They lived under pressure and stress just as we do. Paul experienced it as well, but along with it he experienced the comfort of God.

Now, *comfort* is more than just a little cheer or friendly word of encouragement. Paul does not mean that. The word basically means “_____.” What Paul experienced was the strengthening of God to give him a peaceful, restful spirit to meet the pressure and the stress with which he lived. That is what Christianity is all about. "Strengthen," in the Greek, is a word that is used also for the Holy Spirit. Your Bible frequently calls him "The Comforter," but really it is "The Strengthener," the one who strengthens you. This is God's provision for affliction.

It is amazing to me how many thousands of Christians are dreading facing their daily lives because they feel pressured and stressful and tied up in knots, and yet they never avail themselves of God's provision for that kind of pressure. These words are not addressed to us merely to be used for religious problems. They are to be used for any kind of stress, any kind of problems. God's comfort, God's strengthening, is available for whatever puts you under stress.

-Ray Steadman

What's Going On During Times of Suffering

5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

1. **Suffering connects us to the _____ power of Jesus; taking our _____ to levels never reached in times of _____.**

Illustration: _____

4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

6 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.

2. **Suffering allows us to _____ others how to experience _____ through suffering.**

- Others are _____ us as we _____.

- Our best witness for Christ is when we show others faith under _____.
- Suffering teaches us _____ that others will need us to share as they face times of trouble.

7 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.

3. Suffering is _____ and it will pass. We will be _____ on the other side.

8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,[a] about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

4. Suffering breaks our desire to _____ on self and pushes us to _____ upon God.

Here is this mighty apostle, who so plainly and clearly understood the principles of how God operates, and still he had to be put through a time of _____ like this that he might again learn not to rely on himself. You read the story of Saul of Tarsus, that brilliant young Pharisee, and you see a self-reliant young man who is confident that he has got the world by the tail and there is nothing he cannot do with that brilliant mind, that ability and logic, that strong, powerful personality. He felt he could handle anything, and again and again God had to break that, to put him in circumstances he could _____, that he might learn not to rely on himself, but "on God who raises the dead," the God for whom no cause is ever hopeless, who can bring life out of death. stress.

-Ray Steadman

11 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.

5. Suffering leads us to lean on one another drawing us together in _____ where we experience answered prayers, encouraged hearts and strength to keep going along the journey of _____ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 1:1-11

English Standard Version

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of 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 affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. **5** For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.^[a]

6 If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. **7** Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers,^[b] of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. **9** Indeed, 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. **10** 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. **11** 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.