

“The Consolation Of Christ”
2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Introduction:

1. We Live In A World Full Of Suffering – Don’t We!
 - And We All Experience Suffering:
 - At Different Times Of Our Lives:
 - And In Different Ways!
 - We Experience Suffering:
 - In Our Bodies!
 - They Are Even Described As “Bodies Of Death” In The New Testament! (Romans 7:24)
 - You Suffer When You Are Sick!
 - You Suffer When You Are Injured!
 - You Suffer As You Are Dying!
 - We Experience Suffering:
 - In Our Minds!
 - When You Feel Like The Pain & Pressures Of Life:
 - Are Just Too Much To Bear!
 - We Experience Suffering:
 - In The Very Depths Of Our Spirits & Our Souls!
 - When We Face Trials & Temptations:
 - To Our Faith!
2. Is It Any Wonder Why:
 - People Want To Dull Or Even Eliminate Altogether:
 - Their Pain & Suffering?
 - Some Even Try To Do So In Drastic Ways!
 - Some Will Take Drugs!
 - Some May Take Their Own Lives!
 - The Apostle Paul:
 - Personally Experienced & Understood Suffering:
 - In Ways Most Of Us Never Have & Never Will!
 - But He Also Knew That ***ALL*** Christians:
 - Can Experience & Understand Suffering In Ways The World Never Have & Never Will!
 - Because When You Suffer:
 - Apart From Christ:
 - There Will Be Misery!
 - With No End & No Hope In Sight!
3. But - As Paul Begins His:
 - Second Letter To The Corinthian Church:
 - He Wants To Point Them & Us:
 - To The “Consolation Of Christ!”
 - That Is - The Comfort That Is Available To Every Christian - No Matter What Kind Of Suffering You Are Going Through!
 - So - Please Turn Back With Me In Your Bibles:
 - To 2 Corinthians Chapter 1 - Where We Will Learn That:
 - Even Though We Will All Experience Suffering:
 - Christians Can Also Experience Great Comfort!
 - That Comfort That Can Only Come Through Jesus Christ!
4. And This Is Why Paul Writes In:
 - 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 - “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; / Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. / For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. / And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. / And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation!”
 - These Verses Are All About:
 - The Comfort Of God!
 - The Comfort That God Provides To Christians:

- Who Are Struggling & Suffering In Life!
 - The Words Translated “Comfort” Or “Consolation”:
 - Are Found Ten Times In These Five Verses!
 - And It Is God’s Comfort:
 - That Causes Paul To Break Into Praise & Thanksgiving!
 - “Blessed Be God!”
 - “Praise God For His Great Comfort In Times Of Great Suffering!”
 - And Paul Invites Us As Well:
 - To Praise & To Thank The Lord:
 - For The Great Comfort That He Offers:
 - No Matter What Trial, Temptation, Or Even Tribulation We May Go Through!
5. So - This Morning:
- Let Us Praise God Together!
 - Let Us Praise God:

1. For The Great Provision Of His Comfort!

- Which We Find In 1:3-4a - “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; / Who comforteth us in all our tribulation!”
 - In This Verse - Paul Offers His Praise To God:
 - As A Personal Testimony Of God’s Kindness And Goodness To Him! **IE:** As We Often Do!
 - But Through This - I Want You To Know That No Matter What You Are Going Through, You Can Count On God’s Comfort!
 - God Will Provide You Comfort:
- Because Of His Connection:
 - To You - Through Your Relationship With Jesus Christ!
 - In 1:3 - Paul Offers His Praise To “The God Even The Father Of Our Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - The Special Relationship That God The Father Has With Jesus - Who Is God The Son - Extends To All Who Are Connected With Jesus Through Saving Faith!
 - When He Becomes “**Our** Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - And When He Becomes “**Your**” Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Then His Father Becomes Your Father:
 - Who Loves You More Than Any Human Father Ever Could!
 - And So - God Will Then Provide Comfort:
- Because Of His Compassion:
 - For You! In 1:3 - Paul Describes God:
 - As “The Father Of Mercies!”
 - This Is Who God Is!
 - This Is What God Is Known For!
 - David Knew This - Wrote Psalm 86:15 - “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth!”
 - And This Is Why He Wants To:
 - Comfort You When You Are Struggling & Suffering In Life!
 - God Will Also Provide Comfort:
- Because Of His Care:
 - For You! God’s Compassion:
 - Turns Into Action - In 1:3 - When Paul Further Describes Him:
 - As “The God Of All Comfort!”
 - He Comforts & Encourages & Refreshes Every Single One Of His Children!
 - His Comfort Is A “Strong Comfort!” (2 Th. 2:16)
 - His Comfort Is An “Everlasting Comfort!” (Heb. 6:18)
 - And What Does God Do For His People?
 - 1:4a - “Who Comforteth Us In All Of Our Tribulation!”
 - God Offers A Continuous & Unfailing Supply:
 - Of Comfort To All His People!
 - It Is This Truth That Will Give You Great Help & Great Hope:
 - No Matter What Kind Of Suffering You Face!
 - Even As Annie Flint Once Wrote:
 - He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;

To added afflictions He addeth His mercy,
 To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.
 - His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
 His power no boundary known unto men;
 For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
 He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again!
 - Let Us Praise God For The Provision Of His Great Comfort!
 - Let Us Also Praise God:

2. ***For The Great Purpose Of His Comfort!***

- Which We Find In The Rest Of 1:4b - "That we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God!"
 - Not Only Does God Want To Encourage You:
 - When You Are Suffering - He Also Wants You:
 - To Encourage Others - When They Are Suffering & Struggling Through Life!
 - This Is One Of The Great Purposes:
 - Of His Comfort!
 - He Gives You More Than Enough To Share With Others! He Wants There To Be:
- The Extension Of His Comfort:
 - To Others!
 - This Is Part Of God's Purpose For Your Own Challenges & For Your Own Comfort!
 - Not Unlike The Old Testament Saints - Romans 15:4 - "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope!"
 - This Gives Us A Completely Different Perspective:
 - To Our Own Suffering - Doesn't It?
 - **IE:** Thinking About This - Great Example Is My Own Mother - Who Struggled & Suffered Deeply When My Father - Her Husband Of 31 Years - Passed Away In 1995! God Comforted Her Through His Word In Some Very Personal & Special Ways! She Then Wanted To Share That Comfort With Others! Wrote A Book - "The Widow's Path Of Promise!"
 - This Is Not A Unique Experience To Her!
 - Because Every Christian Is "Able" To Comfort Others!
 - You Might Ask - "How?" Through:
- The Encouragement Of His Comfort!
 - 1:4 - "By The Comfort Wherewith We Ourselves Are Comforted Of God!"
 - This Too Is Part Of God's Purpose For Your Own Challenges & For Your Own Comfort!
 - **Take** What Encouraged You - And **Give** To Encourage Others!
 - Even If Your Struggles Are Different Than Others!
 - Maybe God Has Encouraged You:
 - With A Special Psalm!
 - Or With A Special Promise!
 - Or A Special Sense Of His Person!
 - His Love / Care / Compassion!
- God's Comfort Is Meant To Be Shared!
 - Remember The Struggles Paul Faced:
 - When He Visited Corinth The First Time?
 - Remember The Comfort God Gave Him In Acts 18:9-10 - "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: / For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city!"
 - Perhaps Paul Had This Comfort In Mind:
 - When He Praised God For The Great Purpose:
 - Of His Comfort!
 - It Was More Than Enough To Share & To Encourage & To Comfort Others!
 - Praise God:
 - That He Has Given You A Purpose:
 - For Your Suffering And For Your Comfort! Whole Different Perspective!

* We Should Also Praise God:

3. ***For The Great Plenty Of His Comfort!***

- Which We Read About In 1:5 - “For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ!”
 - We Know From Our Own Experience That:
- The Demand For God’s Comfort:
 - Is Great!
 - Especially As Christians!
 - Since We Are Members Of The Body Of Christ:
 - We May Experience Even More Suffering Because Of Our Connection With Him!
 - **IE:** Think Of The “Great Cloud Of Witnesses” Who Have Suffered And Died For Their Faith & Witness For Jesus Christ! Many Are Known To Us - Even Read About Them In Books Like - “Foxye’s Book Of Martyrs” - Able To Visit In England & Scotland The Exact Locations Where Many Christians Became Martyrs For The Gospel & God’s Word! Many More Are Known But To God Alone!
 - But There Will Be Times In Your Own Life:
 - When The “Sufferings Of / For Christ” Will “Overflow” & “Abound” Upon You!
 - **IE:** And It Will Feel Like The Dam Is About To Break - And You Will Be Inundated & Overwhelmed By All The Pressure!
 - In Those Times - May We Cry Out To The Lord:
 - As David Did In Psalm 61:1-2 - “Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. / From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I!”
 - And When You Do This - What Will You Find? That:
- The Depth Of God’s Comfort:
 - Is Even Greater!
 - 1:5 - “For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth!”
 - How? “By Christ!”
 - As Edward Mote Once Wrote - “When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay!”
 - ***Jesus Christ Is Your Greatest Comfort!***
 - No Matter What You Are Going Through!
- So - Praise God!
 - Praise God For His Comfort:
 - That Abounds!

* We Can Also Praise God:

4. ***For The Great Power Of His Comfort!***

- Verse 6 May Read A Bit Differently In Some Translations:
 - But The Truth Is The Same - There Is Great Power:
 - In The Comfort Of Christ!
- 1:6 - “And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation!”
 - Here - Paul Is Describing His Own Challenges:
 - Which Were Many - As Well As His Own Comfort:
 - Which Was Plentiful:
 - And Powerful!
 - God Was Able To Use:
 - Everything That Paul Experienced:
 - For The Growth Of God’s People!
 - For Their Comfort & Encouragement!
 - And Even For Their Own Salvation!
 - God’s Comfort Is Powerful!
 - It Has:
- The Power To Strengthen His People!
 - Everything Paul Went Through:
 - God Used To Enable Him To Bring The Gospel Effectively To The Corinthians!
 - Paul Described The Same Thing In 2 Timothy 2:10 - “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory!”

- Could He Do This On His Own?
 - Of Course Not!
 - But God's Comfort Had The Power To Strengthen Him & His Witness For The Lord!
 - Also God's Comfort Has:
- The Power To Save His People!
 - "It Is For Your Consolation And Salvation!"
 - Every Fresh Challenge:
 - And Every Fresh Comfort:
 - Given By God - Had One Great Aim & One Great End!
 - To Provide The Greatest Comfort Of All!
 - Eternal Salvation Through The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - Do You Realize That:
 - This Is What Your Trials Are For? This Is What Your Testimonies Are For!
 - God Can Use Your Challenges:
 - And Your Comfort:
 - To Point Other Struggling Sinners:
 - To Himself!
 - And Then - God's Comfort Has:
 - The Power To Sustain His People!
 - 1:6b - "Which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer!"
 - Ever Feel Like Giving Up:
 - In The Middle Of A Trial Or Temptation?
 - When Your Suffering Felt Too Strong? Too Long?
 - Remember 1 Corinthians 10:13 - "There hath no temptation / trial taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted / tried above that ye are able; but will with the temptation / trial also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it!"
 - God's Comfort – Through Christ – Has The Power:
 - To Sustain You!
 - So You Can "Endure" Any Kind & Every Kind Of Suffering!
 - "O Give Thanks Unto The Lord!"
 - For The Great Power Of His Comfort!
 - Also - Be Thankful:

5. For The Great Promise Of His Comfort!

- 1:7 - "And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation!"
 - Paul Wrote This *As* A Suffering Christian:
 - *To* Suffering Christians!
 - And He Wants You To Know:
 - Without Any Doubt – That:
 - The Comfort Of God:
 - Is Certain!
 - If You Are His Child - Through Faith In His Son, Jesus Christ!
 - It Is Certain!
 - Paul Uses Three Words:
 - That Just Ooze Certainty & Confidence!
 - "Hope" & "Stedfast" & "Knowing!"
 - And You Can Use These Three Words:
 - To Describe All Of God's Promises!
 - So - Just Like Paul - You Can Count On The Promise Of God's Comfort:
 - In All Of Your Struggles!
 - And Whenever You Suffer!
 - Keep Your Trust In The Lord!
 - But You Can Also Know That:
 - The Comfort Of God:
 - Is Comprehensive!
 - What Does Paul Know?
 - "That As Ye Are Partakers Of The Sufferings, So Shall Ye Be Also Of The Consolation!"

- This Is God's Promise To You!
 - Whenever You Share In:
 - The Sufferings Of Christ:
 - You Will Also Share In:
 - The Comfort Of Christ!
- So Remember:
 - "In The Service Of Christ . . . There May Be Disappointments, But There Cannot Be Despair! There May Be Conflicts, But Never Doubt! There May Be Afflictions, But Never Without Comfort!" (Philip Hughes)

Conclusion:

1. And All Of These Things:
 - Led Paul & Should Lead You & Me:
 - To Say & To Pray - "Blessed Be God, Even The Father Of Our Lord Jesus Christ!"
 - His Great Promise Of Comfort:
 - That Is Powerful, Plentiful, And Purposeful:
 - Should Cause You To Praise & Thank Him!
 - Who Alone Is The "Father Of Mercies & The God Of All Comfort!"
2. Are You Facing Struggles & Suffering Today?
 - You Need To Realize:
 - That Without Christ:
 - There Is No True & Lasting Comfort!
 - Without Christ - You Will Be Miserable!
 - Is He ***Your*** "Lord Jesus Christ?"
 - He Can Be!
 - Listen To The Testimony Of Paul Today!
 - Back In 1:6 - "Whether We Be Afflicted – Or Whether We Be Comforted – It Is For Your Consolation And Salvation!"
 - Listen To The Testimony Of Other Christians Who Are Suffering Today!
 - And Turn Over All Of Your Sins & Struggles & Suffering To The Lord & Trust In Him!
3. And Then - Along With Other Christians:
 - See That God Has A Plan:
 - For Your Suffering – As Well As A Purpose:
 - For His Comfort!
 - It Is Plentiful! And Is More Than Enough To Share!
 - So - Today:
 - Remember To Give Thanks To The Lord:
 - For His Great Comfort!
 - But Then - Testify Of His Comfort:
 - To Others!
 - Because God The Father Has Something Very Special:
 - In Store For His Suffering Children!
 - So Much So That Paul Could Say In Romans 8:17-18 - "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us!"
 - This Comfort Will Strengthen You!
 - This Comfort Will Sustain You!
 - This Comfort Will Save You!
 - This Is The Comfort That We Have Through The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - 4. "Wherefore Comfort One Another With These Words!" (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

* "It Will Be Worth It All!"

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