



A Letter of Grace 2 Corinthians

The God of All Comforts (1:1-11)

1

Introduction

- Reading 2 Corinthians: A boy and a boat
- The city of Corinth (see previous introduction to 1 Corinthians) - the “Vegas” of the ancient world
- 4 letters that we know of
- Previous issues in 1 Corinthians
- In between: a severe letter and difficult visit
- Major divisions (1-7/8-9/10-13)
- The cultural affluence of Corinth and contribution to the problem

2

Introduction

- This is the most personal and autobiographical of Paul's letters - a laundry list of his weaknesses and suffering
- Majority of the church seems repentant and reconciled, but still a vocal minority within who reject or diminish Paul's apostleship
- Problem of "super apostles"
- This letter is fundamentally Paul's defense of his Apostleship - and a call to the Cross of Christ
- Even a man like Paul was not without critics, and the grace with which he continues to treat the church is remarkable

3

Greeting (1-2)

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:
 Grace to you and peace
 from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4

An Apologetic Eulogy (3-7)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
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

An Apologetic Eulogy (3-7)

For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings,
so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.
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.
Our hope for you is unshaken,
for we know that as you share in our sufferings,
you will also share in our comfort.

6

The Afflictions of Paul and Companions (8-11)

For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia.

For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death.

7

The Afflictions of Paul and Companions (8-11)

But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

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.

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.

8

Application/Participation

- The parallel between the suffering apostle and the suffering Jesus
- The exhalation of God not in shining victory, but in comfort through suffering
- We will read of the kinds of things that comforted Paul
- Success* for Christ contrasted with *suffering* for Christ - the shining saints
- Applied to both Christian and general suffering