

2 Corinthians 1:3–11

- 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.
- ⁸ For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life.
- ⁹ Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead,
- ¹⁰ who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us,
- ¹¹ you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.

“The Father of Mercies”
2 Corinthians 1:3-11

INTRO:

On Father’s Day, it is appropriate to look at the Biblical ideal of what a Father should be. That example is God our Heavenly Father. Today we turn our attention to the title the Apostle Paul gave to our living God. We will discover that our God is ***“the Father of Mercies.”*** We learn two things about our Heavenly Father.

1. Our God is the Father of Mercies (verse 3)

II. How His Mercies are shown. (verses 4-11)

I. Our God is the Father of Mercies (v. 3)

2 Corinthians 1:3 ***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort.”***

A. Paul began his second epistle to the Corinthians by writing about God the Father, Who was the reason the Corinthian Church existed.

1. Paul praised God first, for Who God is. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here we enter into the mystery of the trinity. It is the Son who was sent from the Father to be the Lord, Savior, and Messiah.

2. Our Lord Jesus came to provide the salvation that brings us into right relationship with God so that He can be our Father also. Everything in our relationship with God begins with our salvation through His Son. The Apostle John said it well in

John 3:36 ***“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”***

B. Two qualities about God our Father rushed into Paul’s mind as he meditated on the person of God.

1. First, God the Father is ***“the Father of mercies.”*** The word ***“Father”*** here in the way Jesus spoke about Satan in **John 8:44**, ***“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”***

Given the proximity to the statement of God as Father in His relationship with the Lord Jesus, it seems more likely Paul was thinking of an attribute of God’s Fatherhood in relationship with us. God the Father is ***“the Father of mercies.”*** The expression of God’s Fatherhood toward us, His children, is an act of mercy. The Greek word here is plural and speaks of God’s compassion toward us. There are many connections to the revelation of God’s nature in the Old Testament. My favorite is found in **Psalm 103:13** and **17**.

“As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.” “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children.”

2. Second, we are told that our God is, ***“the God of all comfort.”*** The word translated ***“comfort”*** means ***“to help, encourage, or to comfort.”*** God is the

one who supplies all comfort. God's character is to be compassionate and merciful. The expression of His compassion is His comforting us.

II. How His Mercies are shown (verses 4-11)

A. How are God's mercies expressed? Paul wrote in **verse 4**, God's mercies are expressed through His comforting us in all our trials.

“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.”

1. God comforts us in our suffering. Our merciful Father, Who is the God of all consolation, comforts us in all our affliction and oppression. God actively helps us when trouble comes. How does He help? **1 Corinthians 10:13** gives us a clue.

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

He ministers to us in that **[1]** no trial can come into our lives except that which is common to humankind. This means God will not cook up a special difficulty for any of us. Others have endured this kind of trial before and have emerged victorious to God's glory. **[2]** God is faithful. He will not allow us to be tested beyond our ability to stand up to the trial with His help. **[3]** God will always provide a way out of the test. However, many times the way out is though it to the other side. **[4]** A fourth way in which God comforts is in **Psalm 23**.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”

He never leaves us alone in the midst of the trial.

2 Now when we emerge from the trial, we have a responsibility on the other side. God comforts us, so that we can comfort others. We comfort them, not with our wit and wisdom, but with the reminder that as God was with us, He will also be with them. As the world heaps its abuse upon us because we are the Lord's, the comfort and God's presence meet the need that we have.

B. As the Corinthians read this they might be thinking, *“Wow, Paul, it seems like you do an awful lot of suffering. Are you sure God isn't trying to tell you something?”* Paul answered this thought in **verses 6 and 7**.

“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. 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.”

1. One reason God sends trouble our way is for others benefit. Paul wrote to these Corinthians, that the Lord is doing something in their lives through the trials Paul endured.

2. A second reason the Lord allowed Paul to suffer was so the Corinthians might learn endurance in the sufferings they faced. God can produce steadfastness and spiritual tenacity in us through watching God working in others. Because of this, we have great confidence as we suffer for Christ, we will also partake of the same comfort Paul know and experienced. This is really experiencing God.

C. To help them grow, Paul then mentions **verses 8-10**

“For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we should not trust in ourselves but in God Who raises the dead, Who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us.”

There are times, when we go through trying situations, we can feel like God is picking on us. Why do I have to suffer more than the guy down the street or who sits in the pew next to me? When you begin to think this way, look at the Apostle Paul’s experience. Here was a man who was committed to doing the Lord’s will at any cost, and God allowed him to suffer greatly.

1. The situation Paul came through was life threatening. It was extremely difficult. Paul’s language is vivid.

“We were burdened excessively beyond our ability so that we despaired even of life.”

2. Paul, why would God allow this to happen to you? Here is the reason.

v.9 *“Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves so that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.”*

God did this to teach the Apostle Paul, he need to trust less in himself and more in the Lord Jesus.

3. For the record, God did deliver Paul. Jesus never fails! Finally, God did this so that you had a reason to pray for us. **Verse 11** says:

“You also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.”

ESV is a little clearer.

“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.”

And He also did this so that you could join me in giving thanks and glorifying Him for His great deliverance.

Lessons

1. The greatest expression of our God being the Father of Mercies is in His provision for our salvation. Do you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior?
2. Do we know Him as the Father of compassion and mercy, and as the God of all comfort? In the trouble points of our lives we learn to really experience God.

Hymn *Does Jesus Care?*