

2 Corinthians 2 - 1:3-11

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Outline

- Principle of comfort 1:3-5
- Application of comfort 1:6-7
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Principle of comfort 1:3-5

2 Corinthians 1:3–5 (LSB)

3Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
4who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction
with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

5For just as the sufferings of Christ abound to us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

- Why does Paul start by blessing God for what happened to him?
 - To celebrate his comfort in Asia.
 - To defend against the charge that his afflictions showed that he was not a real apostle.
 - To encourage the Corinthians to persevere in their afflictions.
 - To encourage the Corinthians to act like believers by partnering with him in Christ.
- v3 Provider of comfort.
 - Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - Expresses gratitude and adoration
 - Identifies which God: the One who loved us and sent His Son to redeem us
 - Describes the relationship between God and Jesus:
 - God: refers to Jesus' humanity
 - Father: refers to Jesus' deity.
 - Reminds the Corinthians of their position
 - Under the same Lord as Paul, who is His apostle.
 - the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
 - Inclusio: God - Father - Father - God
 - Gives comfort that we don't deserve because He is the God and Father of Jesus who redeemed us.

- What is comfort?
 - English:
 - Current: Easing of grief or distress (Oxford). About feelings.
 - Previous: Encouragement to be brave, strong, courageous, standing firm. About the will.
 - Josh 1:9 “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be in dread or be dismayed, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go.”
 - Greek
 - parakleseos (noun), paraklesis (verb)
 - From para: beside + klesis: to call
 - In NT
 - Meanings
 - Summons: call alongside
 - Address: come alongside to speak to
 - Request for help
 - Exhortation
 - To unbelievers to believe (evangelism)
 - To believers to walk worthy (discipling)
 - Consolation to relieve distress
 - Much more than making us feel good
 - Uses
 - Ro 12:1 Therefore I exhort you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—living, holy, and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.
 - In view is all of Ro 12-16
 - Heb 13:22 But I urge you, brothers, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly.
 - Refers to all of Hebrews: doctrine, commands, encouragement, warnings
 - 2 Cor
 - To believers
 - Exhortation to walk worthy
 - Consolation to relieve distress

- God of all comfort
 - Has promised to comfort
 - John 14:27 (LSB): "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.
 - Willing to comfort
 - Romans 8:32 (LSB): He who indeed did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?
 - Because He gave His Son
 - Has power to comfort
 - Mark 4:39 (LSB): And He woke up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Silence! Be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.
 - He still calms storms.
 - Understands how to comfort
 - Hebrews 4:15–16 (LSB): For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things like *we are*, yet without sin. **16** Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
 - Jesus understands our situation
 - We can be confident that we will receive effective comfort.
 - All kinds of comfort
 - To the highest degree. Sufficient for every need.
 - Only source of true comfort. Challenging the false teachers

- v4-5 Promise and purpose of God's comfort
 - us...we. Paul as an apostle
 - Promise
 - v4 who comforts us in all our affliction
 - Enables Paul to persevere in the work of an apostle
 - Affliction
 - Gk pressure, something that burdens the spirit
 - External distress resulting in inner torment
 - All: every, all kinds
 - Promised to Paul. Acts 9:16 Jesus speaking to Ananias about Paul: I will show him how much he must suffer for My name."
 - Listed in 2 Cor 1, 4, 11
 - Paul's afflictions deepened his faith
 - They were expected
 - In all his afflictions God was faithful to comfort him.
 - v5 For just as the sufferings of Christ abound to us
 - Harris: All the sufferings that befall the man of Christ in the service of Christ
 - Because Paul was a follower of Christ
 - Mt 10:22 ...and you will be hated by all because of My name
 - Because he worked to spread the gospel
 - 2 Tim 1:8 Therefore do not be ashamed of either the witness about our Lord or me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,
 - Ordained for him
 - Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name."
 - Identified with Christ in His suffering
 - As with His death and resurrection
 - 2 Cor 4:10-11 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
 - Completing the sufferings of Christ
 - Col 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and I fill up what is lacking of Christ's afflictions in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the church,
 - As part of the body of Christ
 - Acts 9:4-5 Paul's conversion: ...and falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,

- v5 so also our comfort abounds through Christ.
 - sufferings...comfort
 - Many sufferings. One comfort in Christ.
 - abound...abound
 - Sufferings abound. As needed to accomplish God's purpose
 - Heb 12:10 ...He disciplines us for our benefit, so that we may share His holiness.
 - Comfort abounds more than the sufferings
 - Used in accounting. The sum of afflictions is more than outweighed by the sum of comfort.
 - Excess to be shared with others
 - Through Christ
 - Based on our redemption in Him
 - Obtained as we abide in Him
 - Jn 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."
- Purpose
 - We are comforted so that we can comfort others with the comfort we receive
 - v4 so that we will be able to comfort
 - Equipped
 - Ja 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance. And let perseverance have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
 - Heb 2:17-18 as Jesus: Therefore, He had to be made like His brothers in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to help those who are tempted.
 - v4 those who are in any affliction
 - Not just the afflictions which we have experienced
 - All comfort is based on the gospel
 - Jesus has endured all our temptations (Heb 4:15)
 - v4 with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God
 - Not man-made comfort
 - What we experienced. Our comfort applies to their situation
 - Comfort from delivery out of the affliction
 - Shows God's faithfulness
 - Comfort in the affliction
 - 2 Cor 12:8-10 Paul's thorn in the flesh: He could rejoice in weakness, suffering, persecution.
 - Comfort from identifying with others who are comforted.
 - Comfort in caring for others when we are afflicted
 - Comfort from witnessing comfort in others.

Application of comfort 1:6-7

2 Corinthians 1:6–7 (LSB)

6But whether we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or whether we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is working in your perseverance in the same sufferings which we also suffer.

7And our hope for you is firmly grounded, knowing that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.

- v6 All for the Corinthians
 - Basic idea: All things are for the Corinthians' good.
 - Whether we are afflicted it is for your comfort and salvation
 - Whether. Certainty
 - Not saying that Paul earned salvation for the Corinthians
 - Paul's life of affliction had equipped him to comfort the Corinthians
 - He endured affliction in Corinth to bring them the comfort and salvation of the gospel.
 - They are indebted to Paul for their salvation and sanctification.
 - Whether we are comforted it is for your comfort
 - Paul employed the comfort he had received to comfort the Corinthians.
 - By his example they should be comforted.
 - As brothers in Christ who care for him, they should be comforted when they see his comfort.
 - Which is working in your perseverance
 - Their comfort is manifested in their behavior
 - perseverance.
 - Remaining under
 - Based on the expectation of help from someone else: God's comfort
 - in the same sufferings that we also suffer
 - The sufferings of Christ that the Corinthians encounter as they run their race.
 -
- v7 Grounded hope
 - our hope for you is firmly grounded.
 - Paul is confident that the Corinthians will be faithful to the end.
 - knowing that. The reason for his confidence
 - as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.
 - Better "the sufferings...the comfort"
 - The Corinthians' faith is demonstrated in their perseverance in affliction.
 - Thus, like Paul, they have a share in the afflictions of Christ and the comfort of Christ
 - Their comfort will exceed their afflictions.
 - Thus God will complete the good work He began in them (Ph 1:6)

Illustration of comfort 1:8-11

2 Corinthians 1:8–11 (LSB)

8For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even to live.

9Indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not have confidence in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;

10who rescued us from so great a peril of death, and will rescue us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet rescue us,

11you also joining in helping us through your prayers on our behalf, so that thanks may be given on our behalf by many persons for the gracious gift bestowed on us through the prayers of many.

- v8-10a. Affliction and deliverance.
 - For we do not want you to be unaware.
 - Bringing an example to their attention
 - Giving comfort to the Corinthians from his own experience
 - brothers. Emphasizing their relationship.
 - of our affliction which came to us in Asia
 - Paul does not say what the affliction or the comfort was. 2 Cor 11 mentions imprisonments, beatings without number, frequent danger of death, lashings, beatings with rods
 - He focuses on what the affliction was like and what was the outcome.
 - we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength
 - Beyond Paul's strength to bear up under the affliction
 - Ongoing
 - so that we despaired even to live.
 - Threatened his very life. He despaired of escaping
 - Indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves
 - Emotionally Paul experienced death.
 - so that we would not have confidence in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead
 - The result of Paul coming to the end of himself was trust in God.
 - God who raises the dead. Permanent attribute.
 - Heb 11:19 Abraham sacrificing Isaac: He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he also received him back.
 - who rescued us from so great a peril of death
 - Paul received God's comfort in his affliction (v4)
 - Only God could deliver him.
 - and will rescue us
 - The affliction continues but so will the comfort.
 - Ro 8:36-37 Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE COUNTED AS SHEEP FOR the SLAUGHTER." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.
 - He on whom we have set our hope
 - Decision of the will
 - 1 Tim 4:10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

- v10b-11. The circle of comfort
 - Paul comforts the Corinthians (encourages them to stand firm in their faith) by describing how their participation in his comfort would result in comfort for all.
 - Paul finds himself in affliction.
 - God would continue to bring comfort..
 - He had ordained that this comfort would come through the prayers of others.
 - The Corinthians would join with other churches in praying for him because they stood with Paul and cared about him.
 - When Paul was comforted, they and all the others praying for Paul would give thanks to God for His gracious gift of comfort which was bestowed through their prayers.
 - Lit by many faces. Faces upturned to heaven
 - All are comforted (encouraged to perseverance) and the body of Christ is built up.

Application: Share the wealth

2 Cor 1:8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers...

- Paul sharing his victory
- Comforting the Corinthians

Ps 28:6-7 Blessed be Yahweh, Because He has heard the voice of my supplications. Yahweh is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him.

- David is delivered
- Blesses Yahweh - affirms his trust - exults in his heart - thanks Him in song before others

Let us also build up the body by sharing the comfort we receive.

References

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