



DOWN BUT NOT OUT

2 Corinthians 1:1 – 11

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1
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2 CORINTHIANS 1:1 – 4 (NKJV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all 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 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.



DISCOURAGEMENT IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

- Discouragement is no respecter of persons. Discouragement seems to attack the successful far more than the unsuccessful; for the higher we climb, the farther down we can fall.
- We are not surprised then when we read that the great Apostle Paul was “pressed out of measure” and “despaired even of life” (2 Cor. 1:8).
- As great as he was in character and ministry, Paul was human just like the rest of us.



PAUL'S DISCOURAGEMENT

- Paul could have escaped these burdens, BUT that he had a call from God (2 Cor. 1:1) and a concern to help people.
- He had founded the church at Corinth and had ministered there for a year and a half (Acts 18:1 – 18). When serious problems arose in the church after his departure, he sent Timothy to deal with them (1 Cor. 4:17) and wrote the letter that we call 1 Corinthians.



PAUL'S DISCOURAGEMENT

- Unfortunately, matters grew worse, and Paul had to make a “painful visit” to Corinth to confront the troublemakers (2 Cor. 2:1ff). There was still, no solution, so he then wrote “a severe letter,” which was delivered by his associate, Titus (2 Cor. 2:4 – 9; 7:8 – 12).
- After a great deal of distress, Paul finally met Titus and got the good report that the problem had been solved. It was then that he wrote the letter we call 2 Corinthians.



THE REASONS PAUL WROTE THE LETTER

- First, Paul wanted to **encourage the church to forgive and restore the member** who had caused all the trouble. (2 Cor. 2:6 – 11)
- Paul also wanted to **explain his change in plans** (2 Cor. 1:15 – 22) and **enforce his authority** as an apostle. (2 Cor. 4:1 – 2; 10 – 12)
- Finally, Paul wanted to **encourage the church to share in the special “relief offering”** he was taking up for the **needy saints** in Judea. (2 Cor. 8 – 9)



One of the key words in this letter is “comfort” or “encouragement”.

- In Greek, the word means “called to one’s side to help”. The verb is used eighteen times in this letter, and the noun is used eleven times.
- Despite all the trials he experienced, Paul was able (by the grace of God) to write a letter saturated with encouragement.
- What was Paul’s secret to obtaining victory when he was experiencing pressures and trials? His secret was God! When you find yourself discouraged and ready to quit, get your attention off yourself and focus on God.





REMEMBER
WHAT GOD IS
TO YOU



**Out of his own challenging
experience,
Paul tells us how we can find
encouragement in God.**

2 CORINTHIANS 1:3 (NKJV)

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

PAUL AND PRAISE

- Paul began his letter with a doxology. He certainly could not sing about his circumstances, but he could sing about the God who is in control of all circumstances.
- Paul had learned that praise is an important factor in achieving victory over discouragement and depression. “PRAISE changes things” just as much as “PRAYER changes things”.



PRAISE HIM BECAUSE HE IS GOD!

The phrase “blessed be God” is found in two other places in the New Testament.

Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

1 Peter 1:3 (NKJV)

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,



REASONS TO PRAISE GOD

- Paul praised God for **what He did in the past** when He “chose us in [Christ]” (Eph. 1:4) and blessed us “with all spiritual blessings”. (NASB)
- In 1 Peter 1:3, Peter praised God for **future blessings** and “a living hope”. (NASB)
- But in 2 Corinthians, Paul praised God for **present blessings**, for what God was accomplishing then and there.



PRAISE HIM BEAUSE HE IS THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST¹²

- Because of Jesus Christ, we can call God “Father” and even approach Him as His children.
- God sees us in His Son and loves us as He loves His Son.

John 17:23 (NKJV)

I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.



We can praise God because we are the “beloved of God” and “accepted in the Beloved”.



“BELOVED OF GOD” & “ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED”

Romans 1:7 (NKJV)

To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)

to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.



Whatever the Father did for Jesus when He was ministering on earth, He can do for us today. We are dear to the Father because His Son is dear to Him. We are precious to the Father, and He will see to it that the pressures of life will not destroy us.



“FATHER OF”

- To the Jewish people, the phrase “father of” means “originator of”. Satan is the “father of” lies (John 8:44) because lies originated with him.
- According to Genesis 4:21, Jubal was the “father of” musical instruments because he originated the pipe and the harp.

Genesis 4:21 (NKJV)

His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute.



**God is the Father of Mercies because
ALL mercy originates with Him and can be
secured ONLY from Him.**



PRAISE HIM BECAUSE HE IS THE FATHER OF MERCIES!

- God in His grace gives us what we do not deserve, and in His mercy, He does not give us what we do deserve.
- “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed”

Lamentations 3:22 – 23 (NKJV)

²² Through the **LORD’s mercies we are not consumed**, Because His compassions fail not.

²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.



GOD'S MERCY IS "MANIFOLD"

Nehemiah 9:19 (NKJV)

Yet in Your manifold mercies
You did not forsake them in the wilderness.
The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day,
To lead them on the road;
Nor the pillar of fire by night,
To show them light,
And the way they should go.



GOD'S MERCY IS "TENDER"

PSALM 25:6 (NKJV)

Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses,
For they are from of old.



GOD'S MERCY IS "GREAT"

Numbers 14:19 (NKJV)

Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.”

- The Bible frequently speaks of the “multitude of God’s mercies” so inexhaustible is the supply (**Ps. 5:7; 51:1; 69:13, 16; 106:7, 45; Lam. 3:32**).



PRAISE HIM BECAUSE HE IS THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT!

- The words “comfort” or “consolation” (same root word in Greek) are repeated ten times in 2 Corinthians 1:1 – 11.
- We must not think of “comfort” in terms of “sympathy” because sympathy can weaken us instead of strengthening us.
- God does not pat us on the head and give us a piece of candy or a toy to distract our attention from our troubles.



HOW GOD COMFORTS US

- God comforts us by putting strength into our hearts so we can face our trials and triumph over them.
- Our English word “comfort” comes from two Latin words meaning “with strength”.
- The Greek word means “to come alongside and help”. It is the same word used for the Holy Spirit (“the Comforter”) in John 14 – 16.



God can encourage us through His Word and His Spirit, but sometimes He uses other believers to give us the encouragement we need.



GOD COMFORTS US THROUGH OTHER BELIEVERS

2 Corinthians 2:7 – 8 (NKJV)

⁷ so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. ⁸ Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.

2 Corinthians 7:6 – 7 (NKJV)

⁶ Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, ⁷ and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.



DOWN – BUT NOT OUT!

When you find yourself discouraged because of difficult circumstances, it is easy to look at yourself and your feelings or focus on the problems around you. But the first step we must take is to look by faith in the Lord and realize all that God is to us.



PSALM 121:1 – 2 (NKJV)

I will lift up my eyes to the hills —
From whence comes my help?
² My help *comes* from the LORD,
Who made heaven and earth.

