

Homework #1 - *Compassion Comes from God's Comfort*
II Corinthians 1:1-11

"For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives,
so also through Christ our comfort overflows." --II Corinthians 1:5

Day One:

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read Acts 18:1-18 to learn the background of the Corinthian church.

Who else helped to support Paul in starting this new church (verse 5)?

2. Who was responsive to Paul's message (verses 9-10)?
3. What opposition did Paul face (verses 6 & 12)?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. Do you think Paul was comforted by the Lord's words to him (verses 9-11, 18)? Why?
5. What did Paul do upon leaving Corinth (verse 18)?

Paul had probably taken a Nazarite vow allowing the hair to grow while in Corinth. These vows were an expression of gratitude for deliverance from danger. Why do you think Paul took this vow while staying in Corinth?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

6. Has God ever asked you to remain in a situation that you wanted to flee? Are you allowing fear or difficulties to chase you away from something God wants you to do? How can Jesus words to Paul and his response encourage you today?

Day Two:

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 1:1-11.

Contrasts in Corinthians: Paul often contrasts two opposite themes or words in this book. What contrasts can you find in this section?

2. What word is used most frequently in this section, or is the **key word**?

What word or words that have the same meaning are used next most frequently?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. What do these key words tell you about comfort and suffering?

Can comfort exist without suffering?

How would you define "comfort"?

4. Read Matthew 5:4. Explain this verse in your own words:

5. What are the three names given to God in 2 Corinthians 1:3?

6. When and where does God comfort us in 2 Corinthians 1:5?

7. What do we learn when we are comforted by God?

Why do you think this is so important?

What are some of the dangers of suffering without God's comfort?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. Have you ever personally experienced verses 3 and 4? Was it through God speaking directly to you or through another person or both? Were you able to encourage someone else later in life?

Spend the remaining time meditating on verses 3 and 4, making it a prayer. Ask God make his comfort real to you!

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Day Three

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read 2 Corinthians 1:5-7. What two things flow into our lives, as followers of Christ? (Verse 5)
2. Explain Paul's perspective on suffering--who benefits most? (Verse 6)

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

3. Why is Paul hopeful in his troubles? (Verse 7)
4. Read Philippians 3:10. What does it mean to "know Christ", according to this verse?

How would you define the word "fellowship"?

How does this verse help to explain II Corinthians 1:5?

5. What does Paul's attitude in suffering tell you about his heart for God's people?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

6. Has suffering encouraged you to know Christ better? Has it encouraged you to reach out to God's people with greater compassion? Why or why not? What other ways do you cope with suffering?

Day Four

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 1:8-10. What does Paul want the readers to know about his life?
2. List all the words that pertain to suffering in the above verses:
3. Read Romans 5:3-5. What is the progression of suffering in our lives? What can be the benefit of suffering?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate Paul's pain? Why?

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5. What benefit was gained through this time of trouble? (Verse 9)

6. What do you think it means to "rely on ourselves"?

Why do you think suffering teaches us to rely on God instead?

7. Read I Corinthians 10:13. What promise is given in this verse?

How does this verse relate to Paul's experience described in II Corinthians 1:8-11?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

8. Can you relate to Paul's feelings? Are you "under great pressure" right now, perhaps "far beyond " your own "ability to endure"? How do Paul's word encourage you to trust God during this time? How can you rely more on God and yourself less?

Day Five

Observe: What does the passage say?

1. Read II Corinthians 1:10-11. What are the key words in these two verses (words that are repeated for emphasis)?

Interpret: What does the passage mean?

2. How does Paul expect his deliverance by God to come, according to verse 11?

Read Philippians 1:19. Why does Paul expect good to come from his difficult circumstances?

What is Paul's request in Romans 15:30?

What phrase does he use to describe prayer?

What do these verses tell you about Paul's dependence upon God and other believers?

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3. According to 2 Corinthians 1:11, what further benefit is gained by suffering that is supported through prayer?
4. Read Matthew 26:36-41. How did Jesus face his time of suffering?
5. When we "rely on ourselves" (verse 9), what impact does this have on our prayer life?

How is prayer an indicator of our reliance on God?

Apply: What does the passage mean to me?

6. Can you lean on God and others for comfort and support? Are you driven away from God by your problems or do problems cause you to run to your Heavenly Father for comfort and deliverance?

How has suffering impacted your prayer life?

Write II Corinthians 1:11 in your own words. Make it a prayer, expressing your renewed hope in God for His help. Thank Him for His deliverance!