

Compassion Comes from God's Comfort - II Corinthians 1:3-7

*"For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives,
so also through Christ our comfort overflows." --2 Corinthians 1:5*

- I. Our experience of pain cries out for God's comfort.
 - A. God's comfort is meant to surround us when we hurt.
--Psalm 32:7
 - B. Pain is inevitable.
 - C. What we CAN choose: Our own response to pain.
 - D. How can pain equal gain and growth in our lives?

- II. Compassion: Something you can't learn in a book.
 - A. What are my motives for ministry?
 - 1. Professional
 - 2. Personal
 - 3. Performance
 - 4. Passion
 - B. As God pours his comfort into us, we are filled with compassion for others.
 - C. Paul begins with authority but moves toward tenderness.

- II. Two words that go together: Comfort and Suffering

- III. Amazingly, Paul worships God in the middle of his problems: 1:3-4
 - A. The very first word: "Praise"!
 - B. God's comfort is unconditional - Psalm 103:13
 - C. A serious list of troubles - 2 Corinthians 1:8-9
 - D. There is a difference between comfort and being comfortable.

- IV. Paul's name for God: "Father of compassion and God of all comfort" - 2 Corinthians 1:3
 - A. Compassion is a rare jewel on earth.

- B. Compassion has two parts: feeling and doing.
- V. The greater purpose of pain - 2 Corinthians 1:4
- A. God's compassion and comfort do not dead end with us.
 - B. God will fill our clay pots to overflowing - 2 Corinthians 1:5
 - C. If we are drenched with God's love, we get others soaked.
 - D. This is the best case scenario from pain.
- VI. Pain can also be isolating
- A. We can turn away from God when we hurt.
 - B. I can become bitter toward people
- VI. Paul had a Big Picture view of pain in the world.
- A. It was part of walking with Christ and God would use it for his own and others' good.
 - B. God's comfort and compassion are meant to be contagious!
- VII. A final benefit of pain when comforted: Character - 2 Corinthians 1:6
- A. "Patience endurance" grows from God's comfort.
 - B. The most important choice we can make under pressure: To rely on God, not ourselves." - 2 Corinthians 1:9
- IX. Another benefit of pain: We learn to trust in God's faithfulness.
- A. Paul had elastic faith: 2 Corinthians 1:10
 - B. Sometimes we are looking for God in all the wrong places.
 - C. "On Him we have set our hope"--not circumstances.
- X. We learn to trust God's people - 2 Corinthians 1:11
- A. Comfort and deliverance come through relationships
 - B. We can then share the celebration of answered prayer!
- XI. Will you let God's hold you today?

