

ARE WE COMFORTABLE?

OPEN HEART | LIVING IN CHRIST WITH NOTHING TO HIDE 2 CORINTHIANS

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WHERE ARE WE GOING WITH THIS SERIES?

- We will study systematically through 2 Corinthians, roughly a chapter per week.
- Please read ahead and ask questions.

2 CORINTHIANS

Sometimes we feel like a '2' in front of a book means it is second best, but let's look at a few gems from 2 Corinthians!

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (NLT)

For we live by faith, not by sight.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7 (NLT)

Don't team up [be unequally yoked] with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness?

2 CORINTHIANS 6:14 (NLT)

You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7 (NLT)

GRACE & PEACE

- Greetings! Vv. 1-2
 - Paul and Timothy are co-senders of this letter to Corinth and then to all of Greece.
 - Paul's apostleship has come under questioning in Corinth and he states it clearly in the beginning.
 - It is written to exhort and encourage followers of Jesus Christ.
 - His greatest desire is that they would know 'grace and peace' from the Father and Lord Jesus.

We surely do suffer from our own stupidity...

- I burned my feet on asphalt, and tore my toes on barnacles this summer...

- A family member didn't close the driver door before backing up...

We also suffer from our own sins...

- The authorities hold us to pay for our lawlessness, and God allows us to suffer from our sins.
- **But why do we suffer when there is no connection to our stupidity or sin, and in fact we are good people? Why do bad things happen to good people?**
- God's resounding answer is!... Silence. We don't know why, but we do know 'that'.
 - Suffering is a common denominator to all humans
 - Suffering is common to all followers of Jesus, and there is the added suffering of persecution.

DON'T FEAR SUFFERING; SHARE IT!

“Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

2 TIMOTHY 3:12

- The Good News for Believers is that God gives us special comfort in our suffering!

“If you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for He will never fail you.”

1 PETER 4:19

ARE WE COMFORTABLE?

- 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-7

1. OUR COMFORT IS FOR SHARING WITH OTHERS.

- “Comfort” in modern English has ‘gone soft’. We think ‘comfort’ is a self-centered search for ease.
- It's Latin root ‘fortis’ means brave, strong, and courageous.
- It means being fortified to face that which has weakened our knees or sagged our spirits.

2. OUR GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL COMFORT.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE ‘PARAKLETOS’

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

15 “If you love me, obey my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.”

3. VV8-11 OUR EXPERIENCE OF SUFFERING IS EXCEEDED BY OUR EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S COMFORT.

- Believers today are putting their lives on the line for the advancement of the gospel! “Beyond our

ability to endure” was Paul’s testimony.

- God intervened to show His power.
- We can share in other’s suffering in our prayers.

OPEN HEART

1. There are few things that will open our hearts to God and others like hardships, afflictions and suffering.
2. As believers in Jesus we are assured of God’s exceeding fortification in the struggle.
3. We must share our stories of God’s power to fortify each other in the suffering.