**2 CORINTHIANS 1**

**THE AFFLICTED APOSTLE**

Paul closed his first letter to the Christians at Corinth talking about his plans to visit them. He was also trying to patch things up between the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers by encouraging the Gentile churches to take offerings to support the suffering saints back in Jerusalem.

Two years later he is writing to them again but things have changed. The Corinthian church AND Paul himself have come under attack.

**COURSON** - After hearing from Timothy that some of the Corinthian Christians had questioned his authority to write his first letter of correction and exhortation, Paul wrote a second letter to them. This second Epistle would be the most personal of any he would write. Through it, we see the heart of a man committed to the kingdom.

**WIERSBE** - Discouragement is no respecter of persons. In fact, 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 Co\_1:8). Great as he was in character and ministry, Paul was human just like the rest of us.

**He was also an Apostle…. An afflicted Apostle… *LISTEN…***

**2 Corinthians 1:1** Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the **will of God**, **(The Apostle Paul is defending himself here)** and Timothy *our* brother, To the church **of God** which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia: **(Greece)** 2 **Grace** to you and **peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **ALWAYS GRACE… THEN PEACE**

* Since his first letter to the Corinthians people had come accusing Paul of being a phony, a crook, and a self-appointed Apostle.
* Sadly, he has to defend himself even though he has suffered a lot in order to minister to them… Like most falsely accused Godly people we know – He will continue to serve the Lord with all of his heart. It is what ministers do! Right? Servants serve! Where will he find comfort? Listen…

**GOD OF ALL COMFORT (Count the comforts)**

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. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our **consolation** also abounds through Christ.

* Since his first letter to them two years earlier, Paul had come close to being murdered for his faith. His former associates had volunteered to become his current assassins. Some of them had vowed to not eat until he was dead… That is hate right from the pit of hell.
* Riots… Prison… Beatings… Betrayal… Shipwrecks… Treachery… Even natural disasters…
* Why would he suffer like this and still continue? Listen…

***WHY?...***

6 Now if we are afflicted, *it is* **for your** consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

* Paul: I’m suffering in order to make your life better… God is teaching me so that I can pass along the lessons to you…
* Chuck Smith – “Teachers must be taught…”
* Listen, Some of us are being taught lessons right now that we will get to pass along, so… Be still… Be taught… Be comforted… Have hope…

**HOPE**

7 And **our hope** for you *is* steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation.

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: **TURKEY** that we were burdened **(Stressed)** beyond measure, above **(Out of)** strength, so that we despaired even of life. **See Acts 16 – Paul & Silas in the Philippian jail**

**HOW TO HELP…**

9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, **(IE, thought we were going to die)** that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, 10 who delivered us from so great a death, **(Past)** and does deliver us; **(Present)** in whom we trust that He will **(Future)** still deliver *us,* 11  **you also helping together in prayer for us,** that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift *granted* to us through many.

* During this great suffering Paul thought that he might die, BUT… if so he would be resurrected someday…
* He credits the Corinthians for helping him by praying… Not as a “Last resort” but as with a strong weapon of prayer!
* PLEASE, CCSV, Please pray for one another… Pray for our building program. Please pray for us who are ministering to you.
* We read in our Friday reading in Isaiah that at times God answers even before we ask; But He still asks us to pray without ceasing, **1 THES 5:17**

**PAUL'S CHANGE OF PLANS**

12 For our boasting **(Rejoicing)** is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

* Paul kept his life simple for the Lord… His accusers were making up things about him that just was not true.
* Paul was able to say, “Look at my life!” Scrutinize my sincerity. Test my testimony!

13 For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. **(There is no hidden agenda with me)** Now I trust you will understand, even to the end 14 (as also you have understood us in part), that we are your boast as you also *are* ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.

* **NLT** - Our letters have been straightforward, and there is nothing written between the lines and nothing you can't understand. I hope someday you will fully understand us, 14 even if you don't understand us now. Then on the day when the Lord Jesus returns, you will be proud of us in the same way we are proud of you.
* **Look,** Those of you who HAVE been hurt by a minister OR a ministry that DID have hidden agendas… Please forgive them and DO NOT let that keep you from being a part of ministry yourself.
* **Let God use you. You will be glad someday that you did!**

**APOSTOLIC TRAVEL PLANS**

15 And in this confidence I intended to come to you before, that you might have a second benefit—16 to pass by way of you to Macedonia, to come again from Macedonia to you, and be helped by you on my way to Judea.

* Paul was NOT able to keep all of his past travel plans… He was accused because of that of NOT being sincere…
* He has to defend himself of THAT too… So he says…

17 Therefore, when I was planning this, did I do it lightly? **(Frivolously?)** Or the things I plan, do I plan according to the flesh, that with me there should be Yes, Yes, and No, No?

**NLT** - You may be asking why I changed my plan. Do you think I make my plans carelessly? Do you think I am like people of the world who say "Yes" when they really mean "No"?

**LET GOD JUDGE ME & MY TEAM**

18 But *as* God *is* faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No.

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. 20 For all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

* **The Lord loves to say YES to His children…**

**TO GOD BE THE GLORY!**

21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us **(Commissioned us)** *is* God, 22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

* Like the Apostle, you and I are commissioned by God as well to serve others… HE has given your heart a burden that is probably different from mine… You are called to a coworker that I will never meet… To a grandchild… to a neighbor… Be faithful. Be kind. Be love.

**STAND BY FAITH!**

23 Moreover I call God as witness against my soul, that to spare you I came no more to Corinth. 24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

* I think that these last two verses belong in CH 2. The chapter divisions were made in the 13th century…
* The point made however is this: Yes , some of you were disappointed that I have not visited you sooner BUT… It was not the right time, according to the will of God.

Until I DO visit you, STAND BY FAITH IN GOD!

That is a good word for us too CCSV.