



The God Who Has Saved Us

2 Corinthians 1:1-3
January 9, 2021

- The remarkably contemporary culture of 1st century Corinth
 - Rugged individualism that prizes self-sufficiency
 - Social and economic rise of the middle-class
 - Pattern of displaying your accomplishments for the praise of others
 - Acceptance of boasting as a way of putting a light on your achievements
 - Focus on your neighborhood as a sign of your social status
 - The motivation for religious practice was the health, wealth, and social status it could add to your life
 - They admired great orators whose life was the evidence that they were being blessed by the gods – health, wealth, popularity, success.
- An incomplete list of the problems in the Church of Corinth:
 - Divisions – fan-clubs
 - Snobbery that came with growth in the city and local economy
 - Lack of church-discipline
 - Both hedonism and asceticism
 - Unruly – anti-authority
 - Lack of humility that led to taking one another to court
 - Preoccupied with the spectacular
 - Sometimes unloving

THE CITY & CULTURE:

Acts 18:1-17

The Big Idea: *In a time and place where most were moving up the social and financial ladder, when people viewed religion as a way of adding to your resources, Paul called people to focus on the Lord, not themselves. We all now need the same encouragement, to remember that what God does flows out of who He is – and the companion truth of what we do should flow from who He has made us to be.*

2 Corinthians 1:1-3 (ESV)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the **saints** who are in the whole of 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,

Grace and Peace

- Paul wrote 13 New Testament books and in all 13 he prayed for “grace and peace” for the Christians to whom he wrote.
 - Clearly grace and peace are an assumed central part of the experience of followers of Jesus.
 - Grace and peace are not one-time experiences and are not static in our lives – Paul is implying that we always need fresh grace and fresh peace in increasing measure.
 - God is the undeniable source of pure grace and perfect peace.
 - Even the order is significant – only as we have been saved by and learn to live in grace are we in a position to experience the Lord’s peace.

Father of Mercies

- “of” in both the case of mercies and comfort means that this is God’s character – who He is.
 - We need to know, not only what God does, but who He is!
 - “mercies” → deep compassion and pity for the sufferings of another

God of All Comfort

- “compassion” → “comfort, help, encourage” – “to come alongside” – a form of this word [paraclete] is how Jesus described the Holy Spirit who would come after He ascended into heaven. [John 14:16]

One of the questions asked
in every culture and in every generation is,
“Why does it hurt so much?”
Paul’s 1st answer is, “So we can see the kind of God who
made us and who seeks us.”
