



## The Purpose of Our Afflictions

2 Corinthians 1:3-11  
January 16, 2021

**The Big Idea:** *In a remarkable testimony and exhortation, Paul gives us seven specific things that happen when we or those we love face afflictions. Simply put, the Lord never wastes our troubles, but brings endless good out of them.*

### 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 (ESV)

**1** <sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of mercies** and **God of all comfort**, <sup>4</sup>who **comforts us in all our affliction**, **so that** we may be able to **comfort those who are in any affliction**, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

<sup>5</sup>For as we **share abundantly** in **Christ's sufferings**, so through Christ we share abundantly in **comfort** too. <sup>6</sup>If we are afflicted, **it is for your comfort and salvation**; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when **you patiently endure** [James 1:2-4] the **same sufferings that we suffer**. <sup>7</sup>Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you **share** in our **sufferings**, you will also **share** in our **comfort**.

<sup>8</sup>For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were **so utterly burdened beyond our strength** that we despaired of life itself. <sup>9</sup>Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But **that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God** who raises the dead.

<sup>10</sup>He **delivered us** from such a deadly peril, and **he will deliver us**. On him **we have set our hope** that he will deliver us again. <sup>11</sup>You also must **help us by prayer**, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

### 7 Good and Beautiful Things That Happen When We Face Trouble:

1. It is through our afflictions that we learn **who** God is and what He can **do**. [vv. 3-4a]
  - He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.
  - He is the God who "comforts us in all our affliction."
2. It is through our afflictions and the comfort we receive from the Lord that we are able to **comfort** others. [v. 4]
3. It is in suffering that we are brought closer to Christ, who actually **invites** us into His suffering and comfort. [v. 5]
4. It is in affliction and comfort that the Lord teaches us **endurance** and joins us to one another. [vv. 6-7]
5. Afflictions create unbearable burdens that we know we cannot lift and that drive us to **rely** on **God** who can do the "impossible." [vv. 8-9]
  - The One "who raises the dead" can do other impossible things – like bring our sufferings to an **end**. [Revelation 21:4]
6. Each time God gets us through a scary time it builds our **faith** and **hope** for the next time we need deliverance. [v. 10]
7. Troubles are opportunities to touch **God** and **people** through prayer. [v. 11]

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God's Word never pretends that God's people don't suffer. But the **problem** of our suffering is met with the **promise** of God's comfort.

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