



SECOND CORINTHIANS

The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People



Part 3 — “The Mercy & Comfort of God” (2 Cor. 1:1-3) — 24 September 2023

Introduction: What were the influences on Paul’s view of God?

1. The _____
2. His encounter with the risen _____

Main Point: True _____ in this life is found in knowing the _____ of God shown to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Greeting - 1:1-2

2 Cor. 1:1-2—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.

- Paul _____ at some of the issues in the church of Corinth in his opening address (1:1)

Observations:

1. Paul begins by asserting his apostleship and therefore his _____.
“apostle”—ἀπόστολος (*apostolos*)— A delegate, envoy, or messenger (“one who is sent”)
“...an apostle was one who had seen the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:3-10; Gal. 1:15-16), had been entrusted with the gospel by him (Gal. 1:11-12; 2:7), and in whose ministry the grace of God was evident (Rom. 1:5; 15:17-19; Gal. 2:8-9).”—Colin Kruse
2. His apostleship and therefore his authority was not of himself but was derived. It was _____ God.
_____ → _____ → _____
3. He also makes reference to his partner in ministry, Timothy.
4. How he addressed them as the recipients of the letter was intentional.
“the church of God...at Corinth”
“with all the saints...in the whole of Achaia”
“While Achaia as a whole suffered poverty and neglect, Corinth enjoyed prosperity; while Achaia led a quiet life remote from the noise and press of the city and its politics, Corinth teemed with commerce and intrigue...Thus, the province and its capital were in many respects worlds apart.” —H.D. Betz

Key Point: As the people of God, the believers of Corinth should humbly receive the Word of God which was coming to them through the _____ of God, Paul.

- Paul then offered a distinctly _____ greeting to the believers of Corinth (1:2)
 1. The greeting reflects both _____ and _____ influences.
“grace” “peace”
 2. The greeting implies Paul’s entire theology of _____ in Christ (Rom. 5:1; 8:32)

Key Point: Paul’s prayer for the Corinthians is that they would experience a _____ sense of peace based on the _____ truth that they have peace with God through work of Christ.

Benediction - 1:3

2 Cor. 1:3—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

- Paul begins the first section of his letter with a benediction that reflects his _____ which is informed by both his encounters with the Lord Jesus and his understanding of the Scriptures (1:3)

Observations:

1. The benediction reflects the praises of God’s people throughout Scripture.

2. A clear distinction is made between the persons of the Father and Son within the Godhead.
 - ⇒ The Son, in His incarnation, is the _____ (Messiah: Gk. *christos*; Heb. *mashiach*), the “anointed One” who came to fulfill the promises of God (Luke 4:16-20)
 - ⇒ The Son has come in order that all who believe in Him might know the Father.

John 20:17—*Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”*
3. The wording implies that the Father and Son are _____ in glory and majesty and therefore worthy of worship.
 - ⇒ Lord (Gk. *kyrios*) is not merely a title, but the name used of God in the LXX OT (Isa. 45:22-23 // Phil 2:9-11)
4. The titles that Paul uses for God recall important truths from the OT and link them to God’s plans and purposes in Christ.

“the Father of mercies”—οἰκτιρμός (*oiktirmos*)—a display of concern over another’s misfortune, pity, mercy, compassion. In the LXX it is used to translate the Heb. *racham* - ‘mercy’ ‘compassion’ (lit. ‘womb’)

 - ⇒ Used of God’s ‘acts of compassion’ (Psa 25:6), ‘abundance of compassions’ (Psa 51:3, 69:16), and in calling on God for his ‘abundance of mercy’ (Isa. 63:15).

Exod. 34:5-6—⁵ *The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.*
⁶ *The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness*

* Because this is who the Lord declared Himself to be, the Scriptures frequently recall this to assure Israel of God’s faithfulness (Deut. 4:31) and his willingness to forgive sin (Neh. 9:17; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2).

Key Point: Paul understood that the God who declared Himself in the OT to be merciful and gracious has acted decisively in history by sending His Son to be the atoning _____ for sins.

Rom. 3:24-25—²⁴ *and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*

“the God of all comfort”—παράκλησις (*paraklēsis*)—An act of emboldening another in belief or action (‘encouragement,’ ‘exhortation’); a strong appeal; lifting the spirits of another (‘comfort’ or ‘consolation’).

- ⇒ Used of comfort in grief (Gen. 24:67) and encouragement in difficulty (Ruth 2:13). In the prophets, particularly Isaiah, it takes on an eschatological significance in relation to how God will act personally to save His people and the comfort that would give to them.

Isa. 40:1-2—¹ *Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*

Isa. 40:9-11—⁹ *Go up on a high mountain, you who bring good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, you who bring good tidings to Jerusalem; lift it up; do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Behold, your God!” ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord comes with strength, and his arm with authority; see, his reward is with him, and his work before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd and gather lambs with his arm and comfort those that are with young.*

- * This end-time hope of God’s comfort came to be associated with the coming of Messiah to deliver His people and was referred to as the “consolation” (*paraklēsis*) of Israel (Luke 2:25).

Key Point: Paul understood that the coming of Messiah meant that believers can experience the _____ comfort of God now even in the midst of difficult and discouraging circumstances.

2 Cor. 1:5—*For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too*

Concluding Thought

- The comfort of God is given to the people of God who have experienced the salvation of God in Christ!

“[‘Comfort’ is]...closely connected with its root, the Latin *fortis*, which means brave, strong, courageous. The comfort Paul has in mind has nothing to do with a...feeling of contentment. It is not some tranquilizing dose of grace that dulls pains but a stiffening agent that fortifies one in the heart, mind, and soul. Comfort relates to encouragement, help, exhortation. God’s comfort strengthens weak knees and sustains sagging spirits so that one faces the troubles of life with unbending resolve and unending assurance.”—David Garland

We take comfort in God’s promises in Scripture!

Rom. 15:4-5—⁴ *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,*

We take comfort in our testimony of knowing Christ Jesus!



— SECOND — CORINTHIANS

The Comfort of God FOR and THROUGH His People



Part 3 — “The Mercy & Comfort of God” (2 Cor. 1:1-3) — 24 September 2023

Introduction: What were the influences on Paul’s view of God?

1. The Old Testament

2. His encounter with the risen Christ

Main Point: True comfort in this life is found in knowing the mercy of God shown to us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Greeting - 1:1-2

2 Cor. 1:1-2—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.

- Paul hints at some of the issues in the church of Corinth in his opening address (1:1)

Observations:

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“...an apostle was one who had seen the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:3-10; Gal. 1:15-16), had been entrusted with the gospel by him (Gal. 1:11-12; 2:7), and in whose ministry the grace of God was evident (Rom. 1:5; 15:17-19; Gal. 2:8-9).”—Colin Kruse

2. His apostleship and therefore his authority was not of himself, but was derived. It was ____ God.

God → Messiah → Apostles

3. He also makes reference to his partner in ministry, Timothy.

4. How he addressed them as the recipients of the letter was intentional.

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“While Achaia as a whole suffered poverty and neglect, Corinth enjoyed prosperity; while Achaia led a quiet life remote from the noise and press of the city and its politics, Corinth teemed with commerce and intrigue...Thus, the province and its capital were in many respects worlds apart.” —H.D. Betz

Key Point: As the people of God, the believers of Corinth should humbly receive the Word of God which was coming to them through the messenger of God, Paul.

- Paul then offered a distinctly Christian greeting to the believers of Corinth (1:2)

1. The greeting reflects both Greek and Hebrew influences.

“grace”

“peace”

2. The greeting implies Paul’s entire theology of salvation in Christ (Rom. 5:1; 8:32)

Key Point: Paul’s prayer for the Corinthians is that they would experience a subjective sense of peace based on the objective truth that they have peace with God through work of Christ.

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2 Cor. 1:3—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

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