

Below the Surface- Finding purpose in pain and Suffering.

Sermon Notes

January 7, 2018

Historical Connection between Paul and the Corinthians.

- Corinth was a significant Greek port city on the island/region of Achaia as part of the Roman Empire.
- Paul was the founder of the church in Corinth. **Acts 18:1-18**
- Paul wrote at least 4 letters to the Church in Corinth.
 - Significant issues in regards to their gatherings and worship had arisen. Timothy was sent to address these issues. After Timothy's visit the letter of **1 Corinthians** was written and sent.
 - Things were deteriorating among the congregation and leadership. A "severe letter" was written by Paul and sent along with Titus. **2 Corinthians 2:4-9**
 - Finally a good report was received by Paul from Titus (**2 Corinthians 7:8-12**) and then **2 Corinthians** was written.

Purpose of 2 Corinthians.

- Forge a renewed trust and relationship between Paul and the Corinthian Church.
- Outline and encourage healthy relationships within the church and those abroad.
- Provide a vision for compassion and comfort within difficult and challenging trials.
- Comfort/Encouragement is mentioned 18x in 2 Corinthians and has the basic meaning "called to ones side to help." BEC

God's Character Revealed in Pain and Suffering. **2 Corinthians 1:1-4**

- God is the Father of compassion. (3a)
 - The initiator and creator of compassion.
 - His compassion is lavished on us like a father to a child.
- God is the God of ALL comfort. (3b)
- His compassion and comfort is revealed in our troubles. (4a)
- We experience his comfort and compassion so that we can pay it forward to others. (4b)

There is Purpose in Pain and Suffering. 2 Corinthians 1:5-7

- Our trials align us with Christ. (5)
- Paul actually states his trials were to equip him for ministry to others. (6)
 - To better comfort and to lead to salvation.
 - Develops greater endurance and stamina in one's faith.
- Our trials actually unite us together in hope. (7)

Discovering Purpose in Pain and Suffering. 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

- Paul's example of great trial in Asia.
 - Pressed beyond his personal capacity. (8)
 - To the point life was in the balance. (8b-9a)
- In reflecting back, he saw it as God's way of creating reliance on Him. (9b)
 - With much success it is easy to become self-reliant.
 - When we meet our limitations, we have to look up.
- God's character is revealed in the present and as a result we can have confidence in him for the future. (10)
- Trials, pain, and suffering also arouse the church together to pray! (11)