

Life Is Hard! Now What?

Lessons in the School of Suffering from the God of All Comfort

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

What Should You Do When Life Is Hard and...

*You don't know what to do? You don't know what God is doing?
And you're not even sure God knows what He is doing?*

Remember that God always has a **PURPOSE** for our suffering, but we have to learn the lessons He is trying to teach us.

Lessons to Learn from the God of All Comfort

1. Let God **COMFORT** you in your suffering. (vv. 3-4a)

Three Reasons

- He is the Father of **COMPASSION**. (Source)
- He is the God of **ALL COMFORT**. (Sovereignty)
- He is able to comfort us in **ALL OUR TROUBLES**. (Skill)

2. Look forward to comforting **OTHERS**. (v. 4)

Two Reminders

- I don't have to go through the **SAME** suffering others are going through in order to comfort them.
- I need to comfort others in **SIMILAR** (but not identical) ways that God has comforted me in my suffering.

3. Learn how to **PERSEVERE** in both suffering and comforting like Christ. (vv. 5-7)

Three Realities

- You can't comfort others, if you don't persevere in **YOUR OWN SUFFERING** like Christ did for us.

- You can't comfort others like they need you to do, if you don't persevere in **COMFORTING THEM** like Christ does us.
- Persevering in both suffering and comforting is **EVIDENCE** of being truly saved.

4. Lean on God's **POWER** and not your own. (vv. 8-10)

Three Realizations

- God will allow us to experience suffering that is **BEYOND** our ability to endure.
- God wants to highlight the hope of His resurrection power!
- God wants us to learn to lean on Him at **ALL TIMES**—not just in times of suffering.

5. Leverage the **PRAYERS** of God's people. (v. 11a)

6. Lift up **GOD'S GLORY** from beginning to end. (v. 11b)

7. Live for **CHRIST** in the crucible of suffering.

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ."
2Corinthians 1:3-5*

So How Do We Learn These Lessons in the School of Suffering?

- It is a **practical process** that is **learned by experience** in the crucible of suffering.
- It is a **supernatural process** that is **taught by the God of all comfort** through the person of His Son, the power of His Spirit, and the presence of His people.

Be TEACHABLE Let God teach you in the school of suffering.

Be TRUSTING God has a compassionate purpose for everything He allows into our lives.

Be THANKFUL God will comfort you in Christ, so you can comfort others in Christ.

God always has a compassionate purpose in our suffering that will comfort us and comfort others, but we have to learn the lessons He is trying to teach us through our suffering.