

BE THE CHANGE

WEEK 5 | EXPERIENCES | 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-11

INSPECTION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What comfort did Paul offer in verses 3-4 to Christians going through life experiences?
According to verse 6, what two results come from using life experiences to help others?
What kind of pressure did Paul say they had faced (verse 8) in the province of Asia?
What do we see in verse 9 that was able to sustain them in their sufferings?
Read verse 11. How did the church at Corinth help in the suffering of Paul?

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Why is suffering a better teacher in life than a life of comfort?
How is suffering for others different than suffering for self?
How does prayer help us share in the suffering of others?
Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. How does grace impact our life experiences?
Does God allow or cause our life experiences? Why would it matter?

LIFE APPLICATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

Send an email to Patti Gross (grosspatti@hotmail.com) and ask to be added to the prayer room schedule on Sunday mornings.
Send a note of encouragement to someone facing difficult trials of life.
Make a note card with the words "Trust God" and post it in a conspicuous place.
Do a search of the word "patience" in the Bible.
Consider what personal experiences you can offer in ministry to Christ.

MEDITATION: WHAT DOES GOD SAY?

Ephesians 5:15-16

Proverbs 27:19

John 6:35

Proverbs 10:17

Acts 20:24

Matthew 6:34

1 John 5:12

John 8:12

SUPPLICATION: WHAT CAN WE MEDITATE?

Revival

There is a general sentiment that revival depends on the sovereign will of God, who at certain seasons pours out of His spirit on the people, as the angel at certain times troubled the waters in the pool of Bethesda. This sentiment we think of dangerous tendency. It teaches that the means ordained for salvation are not always on the same efficacy—of no efficacy at all, till God, by special, almighty power makes them so. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." I ask, is it the power of God to save the obedient believer today? Is it invariably His power every day to the believer? None will deny it. Now should I be taught that the gospel loses its power to save me, though I believe and obey it, until God, by some non-descript operation, makes it powerful to this effect, should I not view this means inadequate to the end, and wait in death for this operation? Should I not be disposed to neglect the means, believing they cannot benefit me, till they are made more powerful by the power of God? Should I reasonably feel guilty that I am carnal, lifeless, and dead, believing that the means ordained by God were able to meliorate my condition? This faith, and the legitimate fruit of it, appear evidently the reason why true revivals of religion are so rare, or rather why they do not always continue.

Dare we say, that God does not will, and therefore does not continue revivals without ceasing? Dare we think that God is more willing at one time than at another to grant His favors, or give His Holy Spirit? Dare we impute the long, lifeless intervals between revivals to God's pleasure or will it should be so? Dare we impute to Him the bondage, carnality, and death experienced by His professed people—and justify these people in this state, because He willed it should be so? But few, if any, would be thus daring.

When in heart we believe and obey the gospel, God gives us His Holy, quickening Spirit; He gives us salvation, and eternal life. In this spirit we feel a tender concern for sinners, and are led to plead with them, and pray for them. They see our good works, and from conviction are led to glorify God—they see the light of Zion, and flow to it—they see the union of Christians and are by this means led to believe in Jesus unto salvation and eternal life. God has ordained that the unbelieving world is to be saved by the means of this truth, shining in His church on earth.

Barton W. Stone (1772-1844)