

It is God working in you!

II Corinthians 1:8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were **pressed out of measure, above strength**, insomuch that we **despaired even of life:** 9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that **we should not trust in ourselves**, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10 Who **delivered us** from so great a death, and **doth deliver:** in whom we trust that **he will yet deliver us;** 11 Ye also **helping together by prayer for us**, that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. 12 For our rejoicing is this, **the testimony of our conscience**, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. 13 For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; 14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that **we are your rejoicing**, even as **ye also are ours** in the day of the Lord Jesus. 15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye

might have a **second benefit**; 16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea. 17 When I therefore was thus minded, **did I use lightness?** or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? 18 But *as* God *is* true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. 20 **For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.** 21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; 22 **Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.** 23 Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. 24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

1. We can be discouraged 8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that

we were **pressed out of measure, above strength,**
insomuch that we **despaired even of life:**

- a. You may think that you are the only one that ever gets discouraged but you are not alone
- b. Paul had more trouble than he could take
- c. Paul got to the point he wondered if he would live
- d. Having troubles come on you is not necessarily your fault but how you deal with them is
- e. Suffering by definition hurts. When you are suffering it is easy to get discouraged but God has a purpose in your suffering

2. Suffering teaches us not to trust ourselves **9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves,** but in God which raiseth the dead:

- a. Paul probably felt like he would surely die in the service of the king so the suffering was expected
- b. Paul also knew that he couldn't trust himself. He was a man and would make a mistake
- c. He knew that he had to trust only in Jesus

d. God even sent him some special suffering to remind him to trust **II Corinthians 12:9** *And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee:** for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore **will I rather glory in my infirmities,** that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

3. Praying and trusting him to deliver us **10 Who delivered us** from so great a death, and **doth deliver:** in whom we trust that **he will yet deliver us;** **11** Ye also **helping together by prayer for us,** that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

a. God has delivered us in the past

b. God is a God that delivers-that is what He does

c. Since we know God, His character, and what He has done in the past we will trust Him with this now

d. You can make a difference in the life of another by praying

e. You can help with your prayers

f. God is good. We know that. He would never allow anything in my life that wasn't for my best. He will use this for His honor and glory

4. The testimony of Paul's conscience **12** For our rejoicing is this, **the testimony of our conscience**, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

a. Paul's conscience approves his actions

i. Your conscience is that inner faculty that knows and approves or disapproves of what we are doing

Romans 2:15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

ii. Our conscience is not the law of God but a witness to the law.

iii. You can hinder the effectiveness of your conscience

I Timothy 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

- iv. You can defile your conscience **Titus 1:15** *Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.*
- b. Paul worked at keeping a clear and clean conscience **Acts 24:16** *And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.*
- c. The Corinthians are accusing Paul of not keeping his word.
 - i. He had originally planned to spend the winter with them **I Corinthians 16:2-8** *Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. 4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me. 5 **Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter** with you, that ye*

may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. **7** For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, **if the Lord permit.** **8** But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

ii. He had been unable to keep his plans

iii. They accused him of being careless with the will of God

1:17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?

iv. It was as though he only made plans for selfish reasons in their opinion

d. Regardless of what they thought Paul had a clear conscience

i. Misunderstandings happen

ii. They cause more and more trouble

iii. Paul had made it clear that he would go by if he could and if the Lord would permit it **James 4:13-17** Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: **14** Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on

the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. 16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. 17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

- e. Paul was always sensitive to find God's will but it wasn't always as clear as it might seem it would be [Acts 16:6-10](#) Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, 7 After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. 8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

f. Paul knew that it was all really the work of God not him. That is a hard lesson for us to learn. He had a clear conscience that he was trying to do God's will

g. Questions to be considered

i. Do you keep a clear conscience?

ii. Have you allowed your conscience to be seared or damaged to where it doesn't function correctly

iii. Are you sensitive to the Holy Spirit and His working in your life

iv. Do you try to listen and respond in your Bible reading, your prayer time, your life, the preaching, the invitation, etc

5. Paul loves them and believes that they love him **14 As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

a. At least in part they have made it clear that they are proud of him and rejoice when they think of him

b. He is proud of them, loves them and rejoices in them

- c. And when we stand before the Lord Paul says that he will they will be a sort of great joy for him and he hopes he will be for them
 - d. This speaks of a mutual love and respect that ought to exist between the pastor and the congregation
 - e. Paul knew that God was and would use him in the life of the congregation and that God would use the church in his life
6. Paul had wanted to see them benefit each other **15** And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a **second benefit**; **16** And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.
- a. If Paul came by he would teach them and bless them and give them more of God's Word
 - i. They would be blessed to learn and grow in grace
 - ii. We should take all that God does for us in public services and realize that it is a benefit, a blessing, another work of grace
 - b. They would benefit Paul by bringing him on the way **16** And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again

out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea.

- i. They would financially care for Paul and his ministry
- ii. They would take care of him while he was there
- iii. They would send him on his way with his needs met
- c. The preacher-church relationship is mutually beneficial
 - i. They receive help from God through His gifted man
 - ii. He receives help from them to do the work of God
- d. God builds these relationships

7. Paul acknowledges that God is in ultimate control and circumstances are often beyond his control **17** *When I therefore was thus minded, **did I use lightness?** or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? **18** But *as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. **19** For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.**

- a. Paul did not flippantly make plans and intentionally deceive them
- b. Paul carefully let them know it would depend on the Lord

- c. We often look too much at what men do and can do and do not consider God's working among us
 - d. God is always yea and what He says stands even if the man of God often doesn't
8. It is all about Him and His work in our lives **20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.** **21** Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is God*; **22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**
- a. Man may fail you but God never will
 - b. His promises will always come true
 - i. It is the work of the God Himself that establishes us in Christ
 - ii. It is God that has anointed us
 - iii. It is God that has sealed us
 - iv. It is God that has given us the earnest of our salvation which is the Holy Spirit in our hearts
 - c. What security of salvation when I realize that all of my salvation is the work of God not me, not the church, not man!

d. Amazing when I can believe and trust that all of God's promises are really true