

MY TESTIMONY – PAUL

Text: 2 Cor 1:8

8 We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it.

[NLT]

Introduction: How was your week? Did you have a few days when all that was happening overwhelmed you? We all know that Christians have it made! DUH!!! Facetious statement!

Would you have ever believed that you would hear the apostle Paul talking like this. You can hear from the words he is speaking that he was actually despairing of life itself. This is what makes the Bible the most powerful book on this planet. It is the “WORD OF THE LORD!” Yet in it we read about the people of God having difficulty surviving the world they are in.

Let’s hear what Paul says to us in this letter he has written to his church family at Corinth, the church he founded.

I. It Was Bad!

2 Cor 1:8a “We think you ought to know...”

A. Aren’t you tired of hearing sermons about all the good things that are going on in the world and you are up against the wall with problems and cares that are overwhelming you?

1. Paul tells the folks at Corinth ‘You ought to know the truth about what we had to face.’

2. No sugar coating the facts here.
3. No spiritual hoop lah!
4. Paul would preach the same way today.
5. Times can be tough and denying its affects as if we are not bothered is foolish.

B. We faced trouble.

2 Cor 1:8b “We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia.”

1. You may not have been confronted with it but I have.
2. Folks trying to tell me that admitting difficulties or troubles was not acting in faith, etc.
3. The Bible is full of statements made by its writers describing the troubles and difficulties that the people of God had to face.

B. Paul expresses the effects this all had on him.

2 Cor 1:8c “We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it.”

1. I was overwhelmed.
2. I was crushed.
3. It was beyond my ability to handle it all.
4. He added this incredible statement.

2 Cor 1:9a “In fact, we expected to die...”

C. I am preaching this message to some folks that have been where Paul was in this text and I am speaking to some folks that are there right now.

1. You are overwhelmed.

2. You have been taxed to you limit.
3. Giving up may be your next move.

D. George Peterson tell us in laymen's' terms.

2 Cor 1:8 We don't want you in the dark, friends, about how hard it was when all this came down on us in Asia province. It was so bad we didn't think we were going to make it.

D. But God did not allow the apostle Paul to share all this with you without telling you why it is recorded in His Word.

II. But God Brought About Good.

2 Cor 1:9a "But as a result"

A. Do you know how many times "BUT" appear in the Bible?

1. KJV – 3,994
2. NIV – 3,983
3. NLT – 4,519

B. It means: With the exception of; yet; save; other than; on the other hand.

C. We stopped.

2 Cor 1:9b "But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves..."

E. We learned.

2 Cor 1:9c "But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead."

1. What a novel idea!
2. What an incredible truth!
3. You can count on God to help.

4. He has offered His support, advice, counsel, strength, might and just in case you need it, a way out.

1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

F. George Peterson, the Message

2 Cor 1:9 We felt like we'd been sent to death row, that it was all over for us. As it turned out, it was the best thing that could have happened. Instead of trusting in our own strength or wits to get out of it, we were forced to trust God totally — not a bad idea since he's the God who raises the dead!

G. Wow! A God that does not fail.

2 Cor 1:10 And he did it, rescued us from certain doom. And he'll do it again, rescuing us as many times as we need rescuing.

Conclusion: Paul shares how it all worked and what was the final outcome. As I read this you will realize one of the main reasons you need to be a part of a local body of believers who you can call upon when you are going through tough times.

2 Cor 1:11 You and your prayers are part of the rescue operation — I don't want you in the dark about that either. I can see your faces even now, lifted in praise for God's deliverance of us, a rescue in which your prayers played such a crucial part.

Here is the final report.

2 Cor 1:12 Now that the worst is over, we're pleased we can report that we've come out of this with conscience and faith intact, and can face the world — and even more importantly, face you with our heads held high. But it wasn't by any fancy footwork on our part. It was God who kept us focused on him, uncompromised.

“Your prayers and God’s faithfulness is all I needed.”

Signed: Paul, the apostle.