

# Why Does it Hurt So Much?

*Ray Stedman*

I. Introduction. Text: II Corinthians 1:1-11.

II. As an Apostle, his authority did not come from the church but from the Lord Himself.

A. What Paul learned he learned from the Lord directly.

B. What we read from Paul, we are reading from the Lord.

III. Paul offers grace and peace.

A. Anything that God gives results from the supply of grace.

B. The result of grace is to be at peace.

C. This is how Christians ought to live.

IV. Christian suffering.

A. Affliction and comfort go together always.

1. Affliction is stress.

2. Along with the stress, Paul experienced the strengthening of God to give him a restful spirit to meet the stress with which he lived.

B. God meets all our problems.

C. Paul praises God for his afflictions, seeing God's hand having sent these very things in his life.

1. Paul does not pray for escape.

2. He sees them as opportunities to be strengthened by God.

D. The reasons for Christian suffering...

1. So that one can discover what God can do.

a. God's strengthening is equal to the pressure.

b. We are to glorify in our tribulations, not growl.

2. So that we can comfort others suffering likewise.

a. It is an encouragement to Paul—believers can share in their comfort if they share in their suffering.

- b. Christians are encouraged to share with each other their struggles.
3. So that we can learn to rely on divine help.
- a. Paul faced a crushing weakness—perhaps blindness or the events of Acts 19.
  - b. We must be put through a time of testing in order to learn to rely upon God.
  - c. Suffering is designed to destroy our determined stubbornness.
4. Suffering is sent to us to show us that we are not individuals who have to handle our problems by ourselves. Many prayers will bring great deliverance.

**Application questions:**

1. How would you respond to someone who says that suffering is a sign of sin in the life of a believer?

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2. Which reason for suffering brings you the most comfort?

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3. Reflect on a time of suffering in your own life. How does this message help make sense of the affliction that you went through?

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