

THE MERCY OF MISERY

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 // August 30, 2026 AM

Suffering is unto savoring and sharing the comfort of the gospel God.

I. Our pains call for Godward *praise* (vv. 3-6a, 8-10).

II. Our pains call for Godward *partnership* (vv. 6b-7, 11).

QUESTIONS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP

1. Do you agree with Helmut Thielicke about American Christianity's greatest defect? Why, or why not?
2. What is surprising about the way Paul begins his letter after the opening greeting? What does it mean to bless God?
3. Can you define mercy and comfort? How do each relate to suffering? Could we really understand or experience either of them without suffering?
4. How can misery equip someone for ministry? How is this contrary to the thinking of Paul's opponents and to the way we often think?
5. How does Paul use his weakness to draw the Corinthians closer to him?
6. What challenged or convicted you in Paul's teaching on suffering?

QUESTIONS FOR PRIVATE REFLECTION

1. Has this text exposed an inadequate view of suffering in me? If so, how exactly?
2. Do I tend to turn in on myself when suffering? How does this totally miss God's gracious purpose in my trials?
3. Do I count it a privilege to share in Christ's sufferings, and do I pray for His power to be manifest through His weak and needy people?