



**A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families:** For the week of February 12, 2017

WEPC small groups meet in homes across Richmond every week to participate in Jesus Christ's mission to Richmond, enjoy fellowship, study God's Word, pray together, and explore the fruit of the Gospel on our lives. Simply put, these groups are small enough to be the church to one another, and they serve as bridges between WEPC and the community where God has planted us. It is a place where the church can go deeper in the worship of God and further in Christ's mission.

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a "worship discussion" guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

**II Corinthians 1:1-7, Comfort**

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able

to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. <sup>5</sup> For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. <sup>6</sup> If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. <sup>7</sup> Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

- Paul uses the word "comfort" 10 times in this brief passage. What does Paul mean by "comfort"?
- Recall a particularly difficult season of your life. What made that season so hard? What brought you comfort and encouragement in the midst of it?
- When you need comfort, how are you tempted to find temporary relief in created things?
- As Paul begins his letter to the Corinthian church, he is immediately led to worship God and call Him "blessed" (3). What attributes and actions of God does Paul see? What words and phrases are used of God?
- Suffering in this life can be used to make you hard-hearted, or it can be used to make you a wise & compassionate person. Why does Paul love God & love the church in light of all he has suffered?
- What connections does Paul make between Jesus Christ & our affliction and comfort?
- How does Paul's experience of being comforted benefit the Corinthians? Have you ever had a similar experience?
- Pray for one another. If someone is suffering and afflicted, ask our Father of mercies to comfort them. If someone has been comforted, thank God for the faithful, comforting ministry of Jesus Christ. And ask the God of all comfort to use us to comfort the suffering and afflicted.

*Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto:kevin@wepc.org)  
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit [www.wepc.org/archivedsermons](http://www.wepc.org/archivedsermons)*

## Sermon Notes

*This week, Steve Shelby preached on II Corinthians 1:1-7*

Note the differences between the opening of 1 Corinthians and the opening of 2 Corinthians.

God's answer to human suffering is comfort.

But probably not the kind of comfort we think we want.

We want relief, even if it is temporary.

We want answers even if they are incomplete and ultimately unsatisfying.

It is in a Person.

The Gospel in which God's love and power are displayed can be grasped only as the effective and final comfort of all human need and suffering and sorrow. In contrast to the question of suffering that seeks an answer that we might carry around in our heads to our own satisfaction, we have here comfort that comes in the form of a Person.

We need something more than a technical or intellectual answer.

Comfort is not an answer, but a relationship.

Comfort is help that speaks.

God promises not so much to answer every question, but to wipe away every tear.

All of this comes from the person and work of Christ.

The literary feature in the text indicates this,

“God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies God of all comfort.” (2)

God's answer to suffering is found in a Person who comes near.

Who hears our lament and our questions and bears them.