

## Hope for the Hurting 2 Corinthians 1:1-1:4

I have entitled this Hope for the Hurting. Maybe you are thinking this morning, “Lauraine, that sounds wonderful, but right now, I’m not hurting, and I have plenty of hope.” Well, that’s great, because this message is for you, too. You see, all of us at some time or another are going to be hurt. All of us, at one point, will lose hope. It happened to the best of men and women in the faith; even some of the prophets in the Bible had lost hope at one time; some of them were hurt and grieved because of personal losses in their lives, and at sometime in our life, it will happen to us.

It will also help you to handle those who currently are hurting. It doesn’t take me long to think of families and friends that I know are hurting this morning, and need this message of encouragement. I’m sure that many of you can think of people right off of the top of your heads as well. Unfortunately, I’m not able to speak to them this morning—but you are. You can use God’s Words of encouragement and comfort to speak with them and help them deal with their pain. The Bible says in Galatians 6:2—“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.”

But truth be told, there are probably many here this morning dealing with unresolved hurt. Pain in their lives over something that is still lingering to this very day. Maybe it is the loss of a loved one. Maybe a broken relationship. Maybe a failure in the workplace, or a moral failure in your life. Maybe it is a recent hurt, or a distant hurt, but one thing is certain—unless hurts are dealt with, they will haunt you for the rest of your life. When we let the hurt linger, we open the

door to resentment—resentment toward others, ourselves, even God. And instead of dealing with the hurt immediately, we hide it away, and never deal with it, and live lives of regret, resentment, and remorse. I’m sure that there is no one here like that this morning!!!!!!!

The problem comes when we try and resolve hurts in ways other than how God intended. Some people try and resolve their hurts in things. Sometimes it’s alcohol, sometimes it’s cigarettes, sometimes it’s drugs. Sometimes it is in shopping—you know, go on a shopping binge. Sometimes, it’s a cleaning binge. You know, you get so mad, you’ve just got to clean something. Or maybe it’s a drive, or a walk or all kinds of different things. But when you try and substitute your own method of resolving hurts, you will never resolve them, only postpone them.

Well, I want to give you hope. Maybe you don’t know if you can ever cope with the pain. I’m here to tell you that you never have to deal with it by yourself. In fact, you were never meant to. The passage that we have today shows us how to deal with the hurts in our lives—how God wants us to deal with the hurts.

Our passage this morning is 2 Corinthians 1, and we will look at verse 3 this morning. Just one verse. The reason why is that we often familiarize ourselves with a verse and lose the impact of it because we are familiar with it. And that is a shame, because we miss out on important truths and lose sight of potential blessings.

Turn in your Bible’s to 2 Corinthians 1, and in your pew bible, it is on page \_\_\_\_\_. I want to try something this

morning; let's read this verse together. I'll wait while you turn there.

Now, if you are all there, let's read that verse together: "3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,"

Let's read it again, one more time: "3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,"

Now, what is Paul telling us in this verse? What comfort can we get out of this? What hope is carried in this verse? Well, it's there, believe it or not, and sometimes hardest place to find the truth is right in front of our eyes.

To help us find the truth, let me read this verse in another version.

3All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source[1] of every mercy and the God who comforts us.

Did you catch it? Let me repeat that verse again for you this morning.

3All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source[1] of every mercy and the God who comforts us.

If your car needed to be repaired, would you go to your repair man or to me to get it fixed? Now I'd be flattered, but I

wouldn't know what in the world was wrong with your car, let alone fix it. You would go to the repairman, wouldn't you?

Here's the hope for the hurting this morning: when you are hurting, and you need comfort, you need to go to the source. There's only one source, and that is God.

He is called the Father of compassion, and the God of all comfort. You could literally say that God wrote the book on compassion and comfort, because He is the creator of it.

I'm convinced that there are many people in the world who are hurting unnecessarily because they refuse to turn for the source of all compassion and comfort.

Do any of you know Lamentations 3:22-24? Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

I want you to listen to a verse that might not be familiar to you, but I want you to listen to it closely.

Micah 7 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

God doesn't just have compassion, He designed compassion. God does not just comfort us; HE IS

COMFORT.

Let's look at the ramifications of these two statements.

He designed compassion.

Compassion is: sympathy for the suffering of others, often including a desire to help

Often we like to throw our own pity party. Anybody here ever do that before? Oh, woe is me. My life is a disaster. Oh, if only I would just die. And the party goes on, and we like to share it with everyone we come into contact with.

How are you today? Oh, I feel like I'm gonna die! My dog didn't come to me this morning when I called, and I feel rotten!

You see, we are willing to go and share our problems with others (just to complain about them), but we ought to first go to God. God designed compassion (He is the father of it), and as such, when we are hurt our first thought should be to go to Him.

Psalm 86:15 But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Psalm 116:5 The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

Hebrews 4 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who

has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.

In other words, we have a high priest in Jesus Christ who can sympathize. The next verse tells us what to do.

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

How about 1 Peter 5:7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

There can be no one who cares any more than God, because he created it! He wrote the book, and He desires you to cast all of your anxieties, your hurts, your hang-ups—all of it on Him, because He cares for you!

Maybe you don't believe that He's waiting for you to do this. Listen to this verse—maybe you've never heard this one before, either. Isaiah 30:18 Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

Not only is He the Father of all compassion, but He is the God of all comfort.

The word comfort is repeated ten times in 2 Corinthians 1:1–11 . We must not think of comfort in terms of "sympathy," because sympathy can weaken us instead of strengthen us. God does not pat us on the head and give us a sweet or a toy to distract our attention from our troubles. No, He puts strength into our hearts so we can face our

trials and triumph over them. Our English word comfort comes from two Latin words meaning “with strength.” The Greek word means “to come alongside and help.” It is the same word used for the Holy Spirit (“the Comforter”) in John 14–16 .

The greatest comfort you can have in life is knowing that you never face it alone. You may be in the darkest of valleys; abandoned by everyone else; nowhere else to turn, all hope lost, but you will never be alone. In fact, you will have the number one person to have on your side.

Remember Psalm 23:4? Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Who is David writing about here? GOD! God is always with us, and he will comfort us—he will come alongside and help. In fact, as God’s children, we have His Spirit, who is always with us.

The problems with our pains and hurts come when we focus on them instead of the God who can solve them. It is a proper focus that is required. God is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.

As I stated this morning, God never desired for you to walk this life alone. He intended for Him to walk it with you. That’s what life was like in the garden of Eden. Yet because of sin, and the rejection of God, we now have a hole in our life that was never meant to be there.

And when the problems come, and the pain comes, and the hurt comes, we don’t know how to deal with it. And we do

our best on our own, yet we will never be fulfilled, the problems still come, the pain never disappears, and the hurt still lingers.

This morning, I don’t know where you are at, but remember the words from Isaiah 30:18 Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; he rises to show you compassion.

Maybe you don’t know God personally this morning—it’s His desire that you come to know him, and not a minute later. If you want to know more about God, and how to have a relationship with Him, a relationship that will fill that empty void in your life, there are many here to talk to today, please go to the prayer corner or stay where you are after the service and someone will come and talk and pray with you.

Maybe you do know God, **yet** when it comes to the hurt and pain, you still like to hold onto it. God is telling you this morning, “I want to show you compassion. I want to help you—cast all of you anxieties to me in prayer, and I will help you with them.” The Bible tells us, “6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

This morning, I want you all to know—there is hope. There is hope that the hurts and the pain and the troubles of life can be resolved because of God. He is the father of compassion, and the God of all comfort.

Lets pray.