

5. In what ways can you rely more on God instead of yourself?

Sermon Notes

"When Circumstances Overwhelm"

2 Corinthians 1:8-11

August 2, 2026

6. Paul says they have "set their hope" on God to deliver them again (1:10). How would you characterize that action of "setting your hope" on God? For instance, is it an ongoing process, or a singular event? Is it something that passively happens to you, or something you actively do? Is it something you have done, either in the past or the present?
7. One might say that Paul has a pretty high view of prayer. What principles about prayer does Paul teach in 1:11? If these are indeed true, what does that mean for your personal practice of prayer?

Let's Pray:

Growth Group Homework

For the week of 08-02-26

Questions adapted from Ted Dorman, 2 Corinthians: Life Change Series, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, 1996, pp. 17-24; James Galvin, ed., et al., New Testament Lesson Maker, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, 1992, p. 252.

Getting Started:

1. Can you think of an occasion in your life when you were completely overwhelmed by life's circumstances? Briefly share one thing that you learned as a result of those events.

Digging Deeper:

2. Paul's opponents were apparently commending themselves to the Corinthians by their impressive ministry résumé and lengthy list of references (3:1; 10:12). Paul is careful to distinguish himself from these men (5:12; 10:7; 11:12-15). Contrary to his opponents' argument that suffering made Paul's apostolic authority suspect, Paul insists that it is actually his God-given perseverance through suffering that commends him as a true servant of God (6:3-4). Thus, rather than boast in his accomplishments (as were his opponents), Paul chose to boast in his weaknesses (11:30; 12:9-10). How does this background help explain why Paul was eager to tell the Corinthians about the hardships they endured in Asia Minor (1:8)?
3. Sometimes we're eager to share our stories of affliction with others, but for the wrong reasons. What wrong motivations can soil our desire to share? Alternatively, what wrong motivations can prevent us from sharing our story for the benefit of others?
4. For what purpose does God allow this overwhelming affliction in the lives of Paul and his companions (1:9)?