



Real Life Ministry ~ 2 Corinthians 1:1-7
January 18, 2026

next week: 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

Questions for the Community

What does the Bible say? (goal: go slow, notice the text, let God speak for Himself in the words of His book)

1. Read our passage out loud, together. What do you see?
2. How is God described? What titles and character traits are there?
3. What tone is set for this letter in the greeting and opening idea? (harsh, hopeful, defensive, gentle, calming, confident, other...)

What does it mean? (goal: get to the heart of the text by understanding what Paul is teaching then and how it relates to now)

4. The sermon emphasized this central truth: "Real life ministry is painful, so it requires comfort." How do you see that truth clearly reflected in this passage?
5. Why is it significant that Paul opens a hard letter by focusing on comfort rather than correction?
6. The sermon pointed out that comfort is not the same as being comfortable. How does Paul's definition of comfort differ from how our culture usually defines it? Why is this so key?
7. According to this passage, why does God allow suffering to continue rather than removing it immediately? Where have you seen this in your life?
8. Verse 4 says God comforts us so that we can comfort others. What does that tell us about the purpose of pain in the life of a believer and the church?

What do I do? (goal: move from understanding to faithful, obedient lived response; this is sometimes plain and sometimes requires listening in prayer)

9. Where do you currently feel pressure, affliction or emotional weight in your life? When pain comes, what is your default response? (Avoidance? Control? Withdrawal? Self-reliance?) How does this invite a new response?
10. Who has God used to bring you real comfort during a hard time? What did it actually look like? Was it immediately comfortable? How can this help you moving forward?
11. Which of the following "3 sources of comfort" mentioned on Sunday do you need to lean into more right now? How are you to BE the source of comfort to someone else in this season?