

GRACE
SO AMAZING
FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

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1 Cor. 7:5-7

2 Cor. 7: 4 Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears.

6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

The life of the Apostle Paul after his conversion was one of many blessings and many battles. During his second missionary journey, the Lord led him to Macedonia (Acts 16:9) and the chief city, Philippi (Acts 16:11-12.) Soon after arriving in Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail. In this passage, the Holy Spirit moved the Apostle Paul to write to the church in Corinth to reveal the personal challenges that he faced and how he had encouragement in the midst of such a time of tribulation. We note how positive he is in verse four.

I. PAUL DECLARED HIS COMFORT IN THE TRIBULATION HE HAD, 7:4-5

A. His Personal Triumph, 7:4

2 Cor. 7:4 Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

- ❖ Paul expresses his confidence with words like “great” and “filled with comfort” and “I am exceeding joyful in all tribulation.”

Original Word: ὑπερπερισεύω

Transliteration: hyperperisseuó

Definition: to abound more exceedingly (only used 2x in NT – here and Rom. 5:20)

Usage: (a) intrans: I abound exceedingly, (b) dep: I overflow.

hyperperisseúō –

properly, *beyond* what *already* exceeds,"

i.e. *ultra* (*super*) *abounds*.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5248.htm>

Jn. 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, **that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.**

Jn. 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, **that your joy may be full.**

Rom. 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. **But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:**

- ❖ God's amazing grace can triumph over sins and over situations.

B. His Pressing Troubles, 7:5-6

- ❖ In verse 4, the Apostle Paul expresses so much joy, even in the midst of tribulation, but then begins to elaborate on just how intense the tribulation was.

1. The Fatigue, 7:5a “our flesh had no rest”

- ❖ Paul did not enjoy any “down time” of relaxation and rest.

2. The Fretting, 7:5b “we were troubled on every side”

- ❖ Paul was under constant pressure, totally surrounded.

Original Word: θλίβω **Transliteration:** thlibó

Definition: to press, afflict

Usage: (a) I make narrow (**strictly: by pressure**); I press upon, (b) I persecute, press hard.

thlibō – properly, rub together, constrict (compress), i.e. *pressed* together;

(figuratively) *oppressively* afflict (distress), i.e. like when circumstances "rub us the wrong way" that make us feel confined (hemmed in); restricted to a "narrow" place.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/2346.htm>

3. The Fightings, 7:5c “without *were* fightings”

❖ Paul faced outside conflicts and confrontations.

Original Word: μάχη **Transliteration:** maché **Definition:** a fight

Usage: (earlier: a battle, conflict, hence) in the sphere of words, etc: strife, contention, quarrel. <https://biblehub.com/greek/3163.htm>

❖ Besides the obvious challenges from without, the Apostle Paul also carried the burdens of the ministry:

2 Cor. 11:28 **Beside those things that are without**, that which cometh upon me **daily, the care of all the churches.**

4. The Fears, 7:5d “within *were* fears.”

- ❖ So often the Apostle Paul appears fearless and courageous in standing faithful for God.
- ❖ Paul confessed to the Corinthian church that he battled the fears within his soul.

Original Word: φόβος **Transliteration:** phobos

Definition: panic flight, fear, the causing of fear, terror

Usage: (a) fear, terror, alarm, (b) the object or cause of fear, (c) reverence, respect.

phóbos (*phóbos*) meant *withdrawal*, fleeing because feeling inadequate (without sufficient *resources*, *Abbott-Smith*).

Fear (*phóbos*) is commonly used in Scripture – sometimes positively (in relation to God) but more often negatively of *withdrawing from the Lord (His will)*.

[Fundamentally, *phóbos* ("fear") means *withdraw* (*separate* from), i.e. flee (remove oneself) and hence to *avoid* because of *dread* (*fright*).]

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5401.htm>

II. PAUL DECLARED HIS COMFORT IN THE TIDINGS HE HEARD, 7:6-7

A. Paul Was Comforted by His Friends – 2 Cor. 7:6
Nevertheless **God**, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

- ❖ God gets the credit for providing the comfort.
- ❖ The believers who are “cast down” are candidates for comforting, and most often it is by the countenance of a friend.

Prov. 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Original Word: παρακαλέω **Transliteration:** parakaleó

Definition: to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage

Usage: (a) I send for, summon, invite, (b) I beseech, entreat, beg, (c) I exhort, admonish, (d) I comfort, encourage, console.

parakaléō – properly, "make a call" from being "close-up and personal." *parakaléō* ("personally make a call") refers to believers *offering up evidence that stands up in God's court.*

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3870.htm>

❖ To be “cast down” is to be very low in spirit – discouraged and defeated.

Original Word: ταπεινός **Transliteration:** tapeinos

Definition: low-lying, lowly, lowly in spirit

Usage: humble, lowly, in position or spirit (in a good sense).

tapeinós (an adjective) – properly, *low*; (figuratively) inner lowliness describing the person who *depends* on the Lord rather than *self*.

tapeinós ("lowly, humble") means being *God*-reliant rather than *self*-reliant – which ironically *always exalts* a person (brings them *true worth*, cf. 1 Pet 5:6).

<https://biblehub.com/greek/5011.htm>

Jas. 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but **giveth grace unto the humble.**

1 Pet. 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and **giveth grace to the humble.**

B. Paul Was Comforted by their Fellowship –

2 Cor. 7:7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

❖ Paul was comforted in hearing of the emotional intensity expressed for his welfare!

Original Word: ἐπιπόθησις

Transliteration: epipothésis

Definition: longing (only used 2x in NT)

Usage: eager longing (desire), strong affection.

epipóthēsis – earnest (yearning) affection.

<https://biblehub.com/greek/1972.htm>

2 Cor. 7:11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what* indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* **vehement desire**, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge! In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Original Word: ὀδυρμός **Transliteration:** odurmos

Definition: lamentation; **Usage:** lamentation, wailing, mourning, sorrow. (only used 2x in NT)

odyrmós – *loud, grievous* lamentation, typically accompanied by *physical manifestations* (shedding tears, shaking the head, etc.).

<https://biblehub.com/greek/3602.htm>

Mt. 2:18 In Rama was there a voice heard,
lamentation, and weeping, and **great mourning**,
Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be
comforted, because they are not.

Summary

- ❖ The Apostle Paul was confronted with great trials of tribulation but maintained his joy.
- ❖ The Apostle Paul candidly expressed his personal challenges during difficult times.
- ❖ God provides the comfort needed in the way that each believer needs it.
- ❖ True friends and their fellowship are great comforts to those who are cast down.

Conclusion

Despair is the damp of hell, as joy is the serenity of heaven.

John Donne

https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/john_donne_165680

Psa. 40:1 **I waited patiently for the LORD**; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

2 **He** brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings.

3 And **he** hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

4 Blessed *is* that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

5 Many, **O LORD my God, *are thy wonderful works which thou hast done***, and thy thoughts *which are* to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: *if* I would declare and speak *of them*, they are more than can be numbered. ...

16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: **let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.**

17 But I *am* poor and needy; *yet* **the Lord thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer**; make no tarrying, O my God.