

Peaks and Valleys

There is Joy, Strength, and Comfort in Jesus Christ

God is compassionate; God is with us in our struggles; He comforts us and sustains us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

There is a vastness of reality, life, and eternity, that we cannot see but we can anchor our hope in.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

God has blessed us with other people to care for us, pray for us, and encourage us.

2 Corinthians 7:4-7 I have spoken to you with great frankness; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds. For when we came into Macedonia, we had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

Will you Allow Yourself to Be cared for?

Believing that you are good, God, I allow myself to be cared for by you.

To be comforted in the places where I need it is both something I desire and something I resist.

Would you please speak your consolation into _____
(hardship/hurt).

I give you permission to show me unseen things.

“Happiness is not determined by external circumstances, but by the way we view, process and address them.”
–Timothy Keller

Hardship and Joy communicated in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

Quotes on Hardship in Paul's letter:

a very severe trial
bad report
beatings, imprisonments and riots
conflicts on the outside, fears within
despaired of life itself
dishonor
distressed
downcast
dying
excessive sorrow
extreme poverty
great distress and anguish of heart
great pressure
grieved
hard pressed on every side
hard work, sleepless nights and hunger
having nothing
longing
no peace of mind
outwardly we are wasting away
overwhelmed
perplexed
persecuted
regarded as impostors
regret
sorrowful
struck down
sufferings
troubles, hardships and distresses
we felt we had received the sentence of death
we groan and are burdened
we had no rest
we were harassed at every turn
with many tears

Quotes on Joy and Hope in Paul's letter:

always rejoicing
an eternal glory that far outweighs [our troubles]
Christ's love compels us
comfort
compassion
complete confidence
delighted
encouraged
glad
glorious
good report;
gracious favor
happy
hope
I take great pride in you.
I am greatly encouraged
in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds
inwardly we are being renewed day by day
it is God who makes both us and you stand firm
making many rich
much enthusiasm
my joy was greater than ever
no regret
not abandoned
not crushed
not destroyed
not in despair
overflowing joy
patient endurance
possessing everything
refreshed
rich generosity.
share my joy.
since we have such a hope, we are very bold
sincere love
thanksgiving
the depth of my love
the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
the power of God
the surpassing grace God has given you.
we do not lose heart
weapons of righteousness
yet we live on
[God] will continue to deliver us

“In many ways, 2 Corinthians is Paul's most personal letter. He reveals his pain and his joy, his outrage and his suffering, and his love and his convictions. Second Corinthians is filled with profound feeling.”
–The Athlete's Bible