



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Bible, Part 233”

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Pastor Darryl R. Curtis

Family Life Baptist Church
Now Meeting at 1427 Hillcrest Street
Lansing, Michigan 48910
Phone: (517) 393-9399
Email: info@familylifebc.com
Website: <http://www.familylifebc.com>

Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



Our text for today is **2Corinthians 1:3**:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,

Thank you for listening and thinking with me as we study God's Word to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

As we begin, let me communicate to you that my preaching is based upon the fact that every episode recorded in the Bible is literally true.

We live in a culture in which fantasy and fiction dominate, but we need to resist the allure of made-up stories and intellectually concocted arguments as we develop faith in the meticulously recorded factual history of the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ by the eyewitnesses who were present on the scene.

We must do whatever we need to do to develop the personal faith needed to believe that the Bible is the absolute truth, and recognize that every fiction put forth by man or by the devil to contradict or minimize the impact of Biblical accounts is a lie.

The Apostle Paul and the Corinthian church were having a back and forth over the issues that Paul raised in his first letter to Corinth.

Not all of the Corinthians were saved by the preaching of Paul. Some heard the gospel from Apollos. Others heard the gospel from the Apostle Peter. Timothy preached in Corinth as well.

No doubt, the Corinthian church was influenced by many preachers that preached there, and every member of the church was not enamored of Paul's authoritative writings. But Paul kept in touch with the Corinthians through the emissaries that he sent there, and had the back and forth that I previously mentioned, culminating in this second letter to the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit decided should become part of the canonical record.

For those who received the Word of God from another of the many preachers that passed through Corinth, Paul felt the need to give them his bona fides as he began his letter. Paul wrote, in **2Corinthians 1:1-2**:

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In all places and in all cases, the Apostle Paul wanted the church to be under the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and have peace with God the Father. There is no more beneficial condition under which we can exist than this one. Oh,



to wake up in the morning with the confident assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ will send His Holy Spirit to map out the events of our day is the greatest blessing that we can receive in this life, regardless of the trials and tribulations through which we find ourselves going.

The physical challenges that I face on a daily basis are a blessing because I know that the Lord is with me. And I would rather have pain and suffering with the Lord on my side than in strength and power without the Holy Spirit instructing me as to what I should do on a daily basis. So, the attribute that is of the utmost importance is the Holy Spirit, without which, health and wealth are simply temporary earthly constructs.

And Paul continues, in **2Corinthians 1:3–4**:

**3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.**

Saints, let us be honest with ourselves. Without trials and tribulations, do we not tend to ignore the presence of the Lord God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and begin to depend on our own resources? Jesus spoke a parable that illustrates this point, in **Luke 12:16–21**:

16 Then [Jesus] spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’

18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” ’

20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’

21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

There are those that preach that we can have the plentiful yield of the rich man and still be rich toward the Lord God. And this is true. But the general tendency of mankind is the opposite.

Oh, you may remember our first parents. There was no lack in the situation in which the Lord God put them. They were blessed abundantly, and all they had to do was to be obedient.

But they could not. They were tempted by the tempter to be ungrateful for all that the Lord did for them, and disobey the Lord God so that they could “be like God”. Even though the Lord God did that which He did for them, they wanted more.



The great King David, the conqueror of the of the Philistine Giant Goliath and the man that took over the kingdom from Saul, was a man after God's own heart. But even David could not resist the temptation to disobey God, commit adultery and the murder, obtaining a woman that the Lord forbid him to have because she was married to another. And it was not as though David had no wives available to him, for he had seven wives at the time he committed adultery.

The general tendency of mankind is to forget the admonition of the Lord God when we reach a point of economic independence. The prayers that we put up on our way up the ladder seem irrelevant once we reach a certain point, and the tendency is to forget the Lord and depend on that which we consider to be our own resources.

But Paul admonishes us to remember our trials and tribulations through which the Lord brought us when we reach the place of ease, so that we can look back and comfort those who are in any trouble with the comfort that the Lord comforted us.

We ought always be looking to pull someone else up. We ought always be looking to comfort someone else's pain. We ought always be looking to show our godliness, having been comforted by the Lord God, by finding someone to comfort, even as the Apostle Paul is seeking to comfort the Corinthian church by letter, as he is not able to be there to comfort them in person. Paul tells the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 1:5**:

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.

It is through the promulgation of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the preaching of the episodes of His suffering and death, but then the episode of His resurrection and life, that Paul consoles the church. Saints, the riches of this world do not provide consolation; rather consolation comes from the certain knowledge of eternal life through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul emphasizes, in **1Corinthians 15:22**:

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

It is in this eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ that we are ultimately consoled. Paul tells Timothy, his son in the ministry, in **2Timothy 2:10**:

10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Troubles, heartaches and pains are to be endured for the sake of the gospel. As the racking pains hit our mortal bodies, the gospel should be on our lips. As the disappointments of this life envelop us, the gospel should be on our lips. And even as the triumphs of this life come to us, the gospel should be on our lips.

The name of Jesus should be ubiquitous in our lives. We should be thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ for the good times and for the bad times, even as the Lord Jesus triumphantly raised Lazarus from the dead, but also bore the



Roman lash in the basement of the Fortress Antonia.

I'm a big fan of Steph Curry of the Golden State Warriors basketball team. When I first started watching his climb to prominence, I read an article about his Christian background. Every time Steph hits a three-point shot, he taps his heart and then points upward. In this motion, Steph is giving glory to the Lord for his successful shot attempt. And as I watched Steph, either live or on highlights, I noted that he never omitted that move. Every time he scored a three, regardless of how exciting the shot was, whether it was a random three in a normal situation or a game winning three from 35 feet away, Steph always taps his heart and points upward.

I have noticed younger three-point shooters in the league emulating Steph's move. Hopefully, they are making the move for the same reason that Steph is, that is, giving glory to God for His goodness in allowing them to make the shots that will provide their livelihoods.

There is much money to be made for those young men who have this skill. But the Lord Jesus Christ tells us, in **Luke 9:25**:

25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?

It is a blessing to find someone to remind me that our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, not just in church on Sunday, but on a moment-to-moment basis in the biggest arena in the sports world, is of the utmost importance, and that it is appropriate to acknowledge that whatever success that we have comes from the Lord. **Psalms 24:1** informs us:

1 The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.

All of our abilities belong to the Lord. We have the absolute responsibility to keep that fact in mind as we go through this life, either successfully or unsuccessfully.

As Paul instructed the Corinthians from the environment that he was in, he might have been considered unsuccessful as a pastor. Oh, he did not have a large church to support his ministry, but was imprisoned by the Romans. But Paul had the proper perspective, as he told the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 1:6**:
6 Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.

Paul was an example, both of suffering and of being comforted by the Lord. Paul told the Philippian church, in **Philippians 4:11-13**:

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:

12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.



13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Many take **Philippians 4:13** out of context to make the argument that Christians should be able to do anything. But Paul is actually saying that Christians should be able to endure anything through the power of Christ that gives them strength. And that is the perspective that we should develop.

For we, as Christians, must endure. The disappointments of this life are many because of the sinfulness of those that surround us. Often, we wish that those whom we love would come to the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, but they are bound and determined to live life according to their own thought that they can be like God if they only disobey Him in a certain manner. And there is nothing that we can do to change their minds; we have to let them come to the Lord on their own terms even as we did.

But we must maintain, regardless of those around us. Oh, we ought not fall prey to the wiles of the devil, who will try to tempt us to enter their environment to save them. For the Lord Jesus Christ instructs us, through the Apostle Paul, in **2Timothy 2:22**:

22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

That admonition applied equally for the Corinthians, as Paul told them, in **2Corinthians 1:7**:

7 And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.

Paul wanted the Corinthians, and us by extension, to know that his experiences were not to be considered unique, but normal. We are all disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we may share in His sufferings, just as we will share in His resurrection. As the hymnologist asks:

Must Jesus bear the Cross alone, and all the world go free?
No! There is a cross for everyone, and there is a cross for me.
The consecrated cross I'll bear until death shall set me free.
And then go home, my crown to wear, for there is a crown for me.
Oh, precious Cross, oh glorious Crown, oh resurrection day.
When the Lord Jesus from the stars will come down and bear my soul
away.

Paul talked about some of his experiences, in **2Corinthians 1:8**:
8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life.

The episode is recorded in **Acts 19:21, 23–34**:



21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

23 And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen.

25 He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: “Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade.

26 Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands.

27 So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship.”

28 Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”

29 So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul’s travel companions.

30 And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him.

31 Then some of the officials of Asia, who were [Paul’s] friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater.

32 Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander motioned with his hand, and wanted to make his defense to the people.

34 But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!”

Fortunately for Paul, his arm bearers deterred him from entering the arena and engaging the silversmiths. The city clerk was able to get control of the crowd and disburse them, but Paul recognized the need for him to terminate his ministry in the city, as he departed Ephesus to go to Macedonia, on his way to Jerusalem, to face a similar riotous situation, the one that caused the Roman guard to rescue him and put him under house arrest until his case could be adjudicated.

Paul recognized the dangerous situation that preaching the gospel kept him in, as he told the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 1:9–11**:

9 Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead,

10 who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us,



11 you also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us through many.

Life, for Paul, was a gift. Had the officials of Asia not restrained Paul, the Ephesian silversmiths would have done him great bodily harm. Had the Romans not rescued Paul, the Jews would have killed him. There were factions all over the empire that stood to lose if Christianity grew, and for many of them, Paul was a focal point. But the prayers of the church, Paul's arm bearers in the ministry, and the intervention of the Holy Spirit kept Paul preaching in the dangerous times in which he lived.

Paul was grateful for the gift of the Holy Spirit that he was given. Paul saw his ministry as a gift, not something of which he could boast. Paul told the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 1:12**:

12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

Paul preached with simplicity. Paul preached in sincerity. Paul preached, not with eloquence or academic wisdom, but by the grace of God. As Paul reminded the Corinthians, in **1Corinthians 2:2-5**:

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

3 I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Paul was not tickling the ear, but simply testifying to the truth of the crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, which he knew to be true because of his experience on the Damascus Road. Paul freely confessed that he was a persecutor of the church and, as such, was not worthy to preach the gospel. But the Lord Jesus Christ Himself called Paul to preach the gospel, not with the wisdom of men, but in the power of the Lord God that raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead.

We should have faith, not in the eloquent, persuasive arguments of men, but in the simple, historically factual account of those that were there, that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross of Calvary on that Friday. After Jesus' death was verified by the Roman centurion and reported to Pilate, the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was given to Joseph of Arimathea, who ladened the body with spices and laid it in a new tomb, in which never a man had laid.

But the Jews were not satisfied with Jesus' successful execution and burial. **Matthew 27:62-66** informs us:

62 On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate,



63 saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘**After three days I will rise.**’

64 Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.”

65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.”

66 So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

The Lord Jesus Christ’s body was in the tomb. The tombs was sealed. The tomb was guarded. Oh, but when the women went to anoint the Lord Jesus Christ’s body on that first Easter Sunday morning, they were faced with a miraculous sight. **Matthew 28:1–10** informs us:

1 Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

5 But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

6 He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”

8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!**” So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.**

10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me.**”**

The Lord Jesus Christ was indeed risen. The Lord Jesus Christ saw the disciples in Galilee, just as He said that He would. And those fearful men, who were hiding from the potential reprisals of the Jews in Jerusalem, returned to Jerusalem for the Pentecost, went into the Upper Room, waited on the Holy Spirit to come on the Day of Pentecost, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, began preaching the gospel of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in the tongues of all of the pilgrims that had come to Jerusalem for the feast.



As the people marveled of the miracles of tongues, Peter spoke to the crowd. **Acts 2:22–39:**

22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—

**23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;
24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.**

25 For David says concerning Him: ‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.

27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

29 “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,

31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

34 “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,

35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ’

36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

Those who were there responded. **Acts 2:41–42** informs us:



41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

As Paul reminded the Corinthians, in **1Corinthians 2:2–5**:

2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Paul preached the gospel to the Corinthians. The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. The Lord Jesus Christ died and was buried. The Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on that first Easter Sunday morning. And the Lord Jesus Christ tells us all, in **John 3:16–17**:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Paul tells the Corinthians, in **2Corinthians 1:13–14**:

13 For we are not writing any other things to you than what you read or understand. Now I trust you will understand, even to the end

14 (as also you have understood us in part), that we are your boast as you also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Paul preached the gospel so that the Corinthians would know that they have eternal life. The eloquence of man has no power like that of the simple truth that Paul transmitted, in **1Thessalonians 4:14**:

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

The hymnologist put it thusly:

God sent His son, they called Him, Jesus;
He came to love, heal and forgive;
He lived and died to buy my pardon,
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives!

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives, all fear is gone,
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives!

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis
Family Life Baptist Church