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## Paul: Faith for the Overwhelmed

2 Corinthians 1:8-11



When overwhelmed, we must acknowledge our \_\_\_\_\_. (8-9a)

When overwhelmed, we must rely on \_\_\_\_\_. (9b-10)

When overwhelmed, we must solicit the \_\_\_\_\_ of others. (11)

### 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

<sup>8</sup>For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.

<sup>10</sup>He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

<sup>11</sup>You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. (ESV)



# Paul: Faith for the Overwhelmed

January 24, 2021



**Open:** Have you ever had an experience in which you felt you may have been close to death? Explain.

**Read & Discuss:** 2 Corinthians 1:8-11

1. What are all the different emotions mentioned in this passage? What does this list of emotions tell us about Christian life? Which of these emotions can you relate to right now?
2. Why do you think Paul thought it was important to make his readers aware of his team's afflictions in Asia (v. 8)? Some of us are more inclined than others to make our burdens known. How and when should we share about our struggles and trials with others?
3. The emotional effects of Paul's affliction were rather severe (v. 8b). Have you ever had an experience that made you feel like this? If so, what did you learn from it spiritually?
4. In verse 9b Paul identifies the ultimate purpose God had in this affliction, which was to make his team "rely not on [themselves], but on God." Do you tend to look for God's purposes when you encounter hard things? What events or circumstances have been instrumental in helping you rely on God? In what ways could this concept be helpful to someone you are discipling?
5. Paul describes God as the one "who raises the dead" (v. 9b). How should this designation for God provide encouragement to someone in these circumstances?
6. How did Paul get to a place of hope (v. 10) from being in such deep despair (v. 8b)? What has helped you to put your hope in God when facing difficulty?
7. Paul sees prayer as essential for any successful spiritual endeavor. In verse 11, what reason does Paul give for this? How is God at the center of Paul's reasoning here? Why might we sometimes be reticent to invite others to pray for us? How should Paul's words help us overcome this?

**Apply:** How could you apply Paul's words from this passage to a situation in which you're currently feeling overwhelmed?

**Pray:** Share how you can "help each other by prayer" (v. 11). Ask God to help us be a church family who respond to our feelings of being overwhelmed in God-centered, God-honoring ways.

## **2 Corinthians 1:8-11**

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