



Sunday, February 10, 2019
Pastor Tim Van Loh

Introduction to 2 Corinthians 1

This past week Pastor Tim was taking a flight down to Tennessee. Wanting to get some work done he hunted around for his fancy noise cancelling headphones. Unfortunately, he forgot that he lent them to his son. Not wanting to be bothered by the noise for the entire flight he chose instead to wear a big, red, bulky, dorky pair of headphones. Even though it was a small sacrifice the point is clear enough. We're willing to sacrifice a lot for our own comfort. Look at Sunday mornings. The thermostat is set not too warm and not too cold, the pews are padded, we have very expensive audio equipment so everyone can hear, we try to make sure we don't Stan and sing for too long, and we have a wide array of coffee options to make everyone comfortable and happy. Comfort is not inherently bad, but our modern world is addicted to it. Comfort is the vice of the 21st century.

Context

2 Corinthians is the fourth of Paul's letters to the Corinthian church (although only two are extant). The Corinthian church is still struggling, this time false leaders have risen up in the church. They claim that their spiritual strength, good lives, and power are evidence of God's blessing on their lives. They are eloquent in a way Paul isn't and in his absence are trying to remove him from power. They look at all of the hardship in Paul's life and don't understand it. How can this man be blessed by God? He has endured so much hardship. If anything it seems like God is trying to kill him and stop him from ministering. However, Paul flips this argument on its head. He claims that it is because he suffers that he knows he has the right to be an apostle for Christ.

Discuss

- 1) Are you comfortable? Do you seek comfort in a God honoring way? How much comfort is too much? Is there such a thing?

- 2) Does suffering drive you away from God or towards Him? Describe a time when you suffered and how you responded.

- 3) How can we share God's comfort with those suffering around us?

- 4) How do you pray for those who suffer? Share with the group a how they can be praying for you this week. This can be encouragement through suffering, praises for God's faithfulness in your life, prayers for patience, etc.