

# **How You May Rely on God**

*International Bible Lesson*

## **2 Corinthians 1:1-12**

Sunday, August 3, 2014

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*"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead"*  
(2 Corinthians 1:9—KJV).

*"Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead"* (2 Corinthians 1:9—NRSV).

People can experience a sentence of death in many different ways: during the first few moments in an accident, learning you have an incurable disease, hearing a judge pronounce your death sentence in a courtroom. Though Paul did not describe his sentence of death, there were times he felt as though he had been sentenced to death. Yet Paul knew the good news that Jesus Christ can help anyone who has received the sentence of death. He knew the answer was to turn from relying on one's own self and turn to relying on God who raises the dead.

Someday everyone will receive the sentence of death, but God is the Father of mercies, and God gave the ultimate expression of His mercy when He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to save from death those who believe in Him. Jesus died on the cross so God could save His people from practicing sin and from the eternal consequences people deserve for having sinned. Jesus Christ came to free people from their slavery to destructive habits, from Satan's power, and from the fear of death. By His words and works, Jesus demonstrated that God is the God of abundant comfort and consolation, and God rescues people from many perils. After Jesus rose from the dead, He sent the Holy Spirit to live within every Christian so the Holy Spirit could comfort, counsel, empower, guide, and pray for every person He indwells. With these truths in mind, surely Paul was right to rely on God who raises the dead and not on himself.

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## **Thinking Further**

1. How can you bless God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you want to?

2. In 2 Corinthians 1:1-12, what does Paul say God does?

3. How did Paul describe his affliction?

4. What might you say to someone who was wondering why they were suffering after they had come to believe in Jesus Christ instead of having life easier?

5. When, how often, and why should we rely on God and not on ourselves?