I. SUFFERING RESULTS IN A GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S CHARACTER.
VERSE 3

Paul praises God for his comfort. “He is the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.”

As a result of his suffering, Paul learned more about God’s character than he would have any other way. God is compassionate.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:15-16
God is the source of all comfort, encouragement and strength.

“God’s comfort strengthens weak knees and sustains sagging spirits so that one faces the troubles of life with unbending resolve and unending assurance.”

David Garland

II. SUFFERING RESULTS IN A GREATER COMPASSION FOR OTHERS.
VERSES 4-5

God comforts us in all our troubles. Troubles can refer to
• Outward circumstances
• Inward mental or spiritual distress

God comforts us in our troubles so we can comfort others in their troubles.

III. SUFFERING RESULTS IN A STRONGER CHARACTER. VERSES 6-7

It produces in us patient endurance of the same sufferings Paul suffered.
It results in a steadfast character that grows through trials.

“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”

Romans 5:3-5
God is so great and so powerful that even suffering can be used by God for our good and for His glory.

IV. SUFFERING RESULTS IN A GREATER TRUST IN GOD. VERSES 8-11

“This happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.”

• He has delivered us.
• He will deliver us.
• He will continue to deliver us.

“On him we have set our hope.”

“To these hardships you were called because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.” I Peter 2:21

“Few of us have the luxury – and it took me forever to think of it like that – to come to ground zero with God. In those days, I had no other identity but God and gradually he became enough.” Joni Eareckson Tada
How do we get through our troubles?
• We look to God and the truth of his Word.
• We pray for one another.

Conclusion
Do you want to know God more intimately?
Do you want to feel compassion more deeply?
Do you want your character to be more godly?
Do you want to trust God more completely?