Follow Me As I Follow Christ - A Journey with Paul

“The Helps of Our Hurts”  
David Owens

Romans 5:3-5  
5.22.16

A. Question: Which things in life are the “_________” and which are the “not-so-_________”? (1 Thess. 5:18)

B. The old fable of the humble farmer who had a wife, a son and a horse, who whenever something happened he would say, “________ _______."

C. Any study of the life of the apostle Paul requires a serious look at the subject of ________.

D. We live in a time and culture when we are addicted to creature _______ and we try to avoid _______ and the subject of ________ at all costs.

E. Also, we live in a time when some of the biggest churches in the country and the most famous preachers on TV peddle the false doctrine of “______ & _______.”
   1. Only a cursory survey of the Bible would put that notion to _____ in a hurry.

F. All this brings us back to Saul of Tarsus - After he became a Christian, a day rarely passed when he didn’t face intense pain, suffering, and pressure related to the harshness of _______ and the hardships of ________.

G. In Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians, he reveals the most about his life and struggles (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 8-9, 4:8-9, 16-18; 6:4-5; 11:24-28).

H. How was Paul able to glory in his suffering without retaining in his soul one once of blame or bitterness toward God? The answer is found in 2 Corinthians _____.

I. What we discover about this heavenly experience:
   1. Paul was writing about ________.
   2. Paul knew ______ he went, but he was not sure about what _____ he was in.
   3. What Paul heard and witnessed were beyond his ability to express in ______.

J. What would be the most natural human response to experiencing such a phenomenal, unique experience? Answer: ________.

K. In God’s grace, He solved the ______ problem for Paul in the form of a painful affliction, which Paul called a “________ in the ________.”

L. Paul not only understood the nature of the thorn, he grasped the reason for it - it was to ensure a ________ spirit.

M. Even though Paul understood the reason for the thorn, that didn’t stop him from asking God to _______ it ______.

N. What was God’s answer to Paul’s request for relief? God answered, “_____."

O. God offered something better than relief - God offered sufficient ________.

P. Let’s notice when this happened in Paul’s life.
   1. Since Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in A.D. _____/_____, fourteen years earlier would be about A.D. ______.
   2. This places this experience after his return to the safety of ________, but before the commission with Barnabas in ________.
   3. This means that Paul received his thorn in the flesh ______ he did much of anything in his long and illustrious missionary career.

Q. Perhaps this is a good time to correct the faulty thinking that many have - It is not always God’s will that we be ________.
   1. God’s intention is for our ______-term good, not our ______-term relief.

R. Remember that suffering is nothing ________.

S. Remember that suffering plays a ________ role.

T. Remember that we don’t have to have comfort to be ________.