# OVERCOMING HARDSHIP

## WARM UP

During the 16th Century there was a man called Alphonsus Rodriguez who lived in Spain. His life was full of tragedies. When he was 14 his father died and he left school to run the family business. At 23 he married but his wife died in childbirth three years later. Within a few years his mother and son died. On top of all this the business failed. So he applied to join the Jesuits but was turned down because his schooling was poor. But he did not give up. Alphonsus went back to school to suffer the ignominy of learning alongside young children. He eventually became educated and joined the Jesuits to become a teacher of spiritual growth. He taught people how to discover joy through hardship.

## BACKGROUND

Paul was able to write this passage after having suffered great persecution for the faith. He had been flogged, put in prison and beaten many times but was still able to rejoice.

## READ     2 Corinthians 6:4-10

## QUESTIONS FOR INTERACTION

1. Share with the group a time when something happened in your life that caused you pain.

2. How did you deal with the pain and what has helped you to cope?

3. When someone comes to you who is going through a difficult time, how do you encourage them? Give some examples.

4. As Christian men we are challenged to bring the peace of Christ into the world around us. How have you done this?

## IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER

## MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER

Each morning I will awake to a new day giving joyful praise to God.
I will be willing to listen to my brothers' problems and give words of encouragement.

## CONSIDER THIS

Three quarters of the women in the world spend three quarters of their life carrying water and all we have to do is turn on the tap.

## WRAP UP

Psalm 95:1-2 says,
**"Come let us praise God
Acclaiming the rock of our safety
Let us come into his presence
with thanksgiving
Acclaiming him with music."**

Share how as a group you can encourage one another for this to be true in your own lives.