

5-Day Devotional: Finding Strength in Weakness

Day 1: The Sufficiency of Grace

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Devotional:

Paul's thorn in the flesh reminds us that God's purpose in our suffering differs from our expectations. Like Paul, we plead for relief, but God's answer may be different: "My grace is sufficient for you." This isn't rejection—it's invitation. God invites us into deeper dependency, where His strength becomes most visible through our limitations. The apostle who wrote much of the New Testament needed constant reminding of his weakness. What thorns has God allowed in your life? Rather than viewing them as obstacles to ministry, consider them opportunities for God's power to rest upon you. When we stop fighting our weakness and instead lean into Christ, we discover that His grace truly is enough. Our infirmities become platforms for His glory.

Reflection: What "thorn" are you currently asking God to remove? How might He be using it to draw you closer to Him?

Day 2: Humility in Spiritual Experiences

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:1-6; Acts 14:8-20

Devotional:

Paul waited fourteen years to mention his heavenly vision, and even then spoke of it reluctantly and without detail. This stands in stark contrast to our culture's obsession with spiritual experiences and personal platforms. When the people of Lystra tried to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods, they tore their clothes in distress, redirecting glory to God alone. True spiritual maturity isn't measured by extraordinary experiences but by humble obedience. Paul could have built an empire on his visions and revelations, yet he chose to keep the focus on Christ.

The most profound encounters with God often remain between us and Him, sacred moments that fuel our service rather than our reputation. Are we seeking experiences to elevate ourselves or encounters that humble us before God?

Reflection: How do you respond when God blesses your ministry or life? Do you redirect glory to Him?

Day 3: Victory Through Dependence

Reading: Jeremiah 49:34-39; Galatians 1:11-17

Devotional:

God's work in Iran mirrors His work in individual lives—bringing hope through unexpected means. Just as Paul was taught by revelation in the Arabian desert, God often does His deepest work when we're removed from our normal supports. The Iranian church has grown from 500 believers to over one million under persecution, proving that God's strength shines brightest in hostile environments. Paul's desert experience stripped away his religious credentials and replaced them with Christ-centered revelation. Similarly, God may allow circumstances that remove our self-sufficiency, forcing us to depend entirely on Him. This isn't punishment—it's preparation. When we have nothing left but God, we discover He's everything we need. The Iranian believers celebrate freedom because they know the cost of faith. What would change if we lived with that same desperate dependence?

Reflection: What supports has God removed from your life? How has this increased your dependence on Him?

Day 4: Boasting in Weakness

Reading: 2 Corinthians 11:23-33; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Devotional:

Paul's resume of suffering reads like a nightmare: beatings, shipwrecks, stonings, imprisonments, and constant danger and death threats. Yet he calls these his credentials, the proof of authentic ministry. He takes pleasure—actual pleasure—in infirmities, reproaches, persecutions, and distresses. This seems backwards until we understand the principle: *when I am weak, then I am strong*.

Fanny Crosby, blind from infancy, wrote over 8,000 hymns, crediting her blindness for her spiritual sight. She recognized that her limitation prevented distraction from her calling. Our culture worships strength, success, and self-sufficiency, but God's kingdom operates differently. He chooses the weak to shame the strong, the foolish to confound the wise. Your greatest weakness may be your most powerful testimony. Stop hiding your struggles and start sharing how God meets you there.

Reflection: What weakness have you been ashamed of that God might want to use for His glory?

Day 5: The Purpose in Trials

Reading: James 1:2-4; Romans 5:3-5; Job 1:6-22

Devotional:

Nothing reaches us without passing through God's throne room first. Job's story reveals that even Satan's attacks require divine permission. This truth doesn't minimize our pain, but it does provide perspective. God allowed Paul's messenger of Satan because He trusted Paul with suffering. He knew the thorn would accomplish what comfort never could—complete dependence and increased effectiveness. When trials come, our first response should be prayer for removal, just as Jesus prayed in Gethsemane and Paul prayed three times. But our ultimate prayer must be, "Your will be done." God answers every prayer, though not always as we expect. Sometimes His answer is yes, sometimes no, sometimes wait—but *His grace is always sufficient*. The trials you're walking through today have purpose. God is either removing something harmful, developing something necessary, or revealing something glorious about Himself through your weakness.

Reflection: What trial are you currently facing? Can you trust that God has a purpose in allowing it?

Closing Prayer:

Father, teach us to embrace weakness as Paul did, knowing that Your strength is perfected there. Help us find joy not in our circumstances but in Your sufficient grace. When trials come, remind us that You are aware, You are sovereign, and You are working all things for our good and Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.