

**Intro:** Turn with me to 2 Cor Page 816 in your bible

Today begin a Study of 2 Cor which I have titled: "Finding God's Strength In Your Weakness"

**Background Of 2Cor**

- One of the earliest books of the NT (55AD or so)
- 1 of 4 letters: Either 1 and 3 or 2 and 4
- Cyclical: Intended for more than just the Corinthians (vs 2: Athens, Cencrea)
- Apostolic: vs 1 Paul an APOSTLE: Starts that way when he is exercising spiritual authority)  
2 X in 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10 "Authority from the Lord for building you up not tearing you down"
- Theme: Finding God's Strength in Your Weakness  
Woven throughout the book Paul over and over again tells us...God is With you...He will strengthen you, Empower  
No matter what is going on in your life, God is with you...He will strengthen you, He will walk with you. Help you.

**Key Verse**

*"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2Cor 12:9-10*

Today Paul Tells Us: "It is Possible To Find Purpose in the Pain God allows to come into your life!"

Think about that. In these first 5 or 6 verses Paul gives us ONE answer to the question we always ask: WHY?

God, WHY have you allowed this pain, this struggle, this difficulty to come into my life? Not only answer...It is ONE answer

**1. First, Remember Who God Is.**

Vs 3

- What we already Know  
~Father of our Lord Jesus Christ  
~Father of Glory ~Father of Lights ~Father of our Spirits
- What we sometimes forget or overlook  
~Father of compassion! (This is what He HAS) Emotion  
~Father of comfort (This is what He DOES) Action to come along side and encourage and strengthen
- When we talk about being the Father of something: Describing the nature and character of that individual  
It is the nature and character of God to show sympathy and act in mercy!

**Illus:** Here is the reality Paul is pointing out: We all struggle The entire world does

But, those of us that know God...have that relationship with Him. We have a resource that everyone else does not!

And because of that...We have something they don't We have strength, encouragement, hope: Resource Beyond self

**2. Remember What God Does For Us.**

Vs 4

- Comforts us: Lit = to come alongside and bring strength, peace and encouragement (You can do this!) 10 or 11 X
- In ALL our troubles: Doesn't matter what kind: God is always there  
Emotional Physical Relational Financial Spiritual  
God comforts us in ALL our trials...tribulations....stresses....strains....struggles: He is There
- Gives us All we need!  
~ Vs 2 Grace: Unmerited favor  
~ Vs 2 Peace: Inner calm  
~ Vs 6 Gives us Patience endurance: Lit = Constance; patient continuance: Not giving up...Keep on keeping on  
~ Vs 7 Gives us hope: Lit = Reliance upon the word and promise of God  
There IS something beyond this! This is not the end, final word, ultimate answer

**Applic:** Before God can do a work THROUGH you, He first has to do a work IN you!

You cant GIVE what you don't GOT! If you haven't received the comfort and strength of God...can't give it away  
BUT, When you know His comfort...Personally experienced it...THEN you have something to share!

Not that you can't help w/o sharing the exact same experience: But when you have, much more powerful

**Illus:** Dr. George Truett FBC Dallas 50 years: Tells story of trying to comforting young mother lost child: Led to Jesus  
Months later he was called to the same situation, No matter what he said, not enough: At funeral First mother came

"Before God can work THROUGH you He must first work IN You!"

**3. Remember What God Can Do Through You.**

Vs 5

- Statement of fact: He comforts Us: Comes alongside and speaks hope, help, strength, encouragement
- Statement of Purpose: So That! Grammatical Road Sign: Purpose statement  
Comforts us...so that...We can Comfort others  
You see, we ask the WRONG Question: WHY? Tells us why  
Not the right Question: Should be asking: WHO? Ask, show us who!
- Statement of Strength: Not just Sympathy: Feeling and emotion: Good. Does sympathize: Hebrews says that  
Gives us Strength! Energy to endure, strength to continue, Hope to see a future!  
God puts STRENGTH in your heart to carry on when you call on Him!

**Applic:** Don't waste your hurt, your pain, struggles by not finding what you need: Sharing it! God doesn't waste it We Do!

**4. Understand The Process God Uses To Provide Purpose: Vs 5**

There are a number of things God does to meet us in our time of need.

- God meets suffering with grace! Suffering flows...Comfort flows: It is there, He always provides
- God provides His word: Heb says it is living and active, sharper than any double edged sword!  
When trials come...Go to the word. Read it, memorize it, study it!  
It is not dull, dry, lifeless words on a page. Living Word of God changes & transforms
- Provides Others: That's what this entire message is about: God uses people!  
Velveteen Rabbit: Sometimes we need love with skin on it!
- Provides Hope: I KNOW the word of God and God tells me He can and will bring Hope  
I don't see it, I don't understand it, I might not believe it...But I hope in HIM  
Old Hymn: *My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus name!*
- Provides Purpose: When I KNOW that God will use what I am going through...For His glory  
When I KNOW God will use my pain to bring comfort to others  
When I KNOW that there is a purpose to this...I can endure, trust, hope, continue

2 Cor 4:10 *"We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body."*

Rom 8:17 *"if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."*

There is a Purpose to Our Pain! God uses it:

- For our Good
- For others blessing
- For His Glory!

**CONCL:** Today wherever you are struggling, whatever you face, whatever pain, trial, hurt, grief or sorrow you are walking thru, remember this: God has a purpose for it! Do two things

1. Call on God for Help! His word, His People, His promises, In Prayer, God Give me strength, comfort, encouragement

2. Offer your Hurt to Help others: Stop asking Why...Start asking...Who

God open my eyes to see those around me that YOU want to use me to help, encourage, comfort,

God never wastes a hurt...Don't you either: Don't stay stuck in the pain,  
Find His help, His healing, His strength, His hope

And Give it away to someone in need

Key: As a follower of Jesus: YOU HAVE A RESOURCE OTHERS AROUND DON'T HAVE  
PAIN IS THE SAME: POWER TO WALK THROUGH THAT PAIN IS DIFFERENT:  
DON'T WASTE YOUR HURT, USE IT FOR GOD'S GLORY, AND FOR OTHERS GAIN

**IF YOU DON'T GET IT...YOU CANT GIVE IT AWAY**