

God's Power at Work

By Cheryl B. Keafer, MSW

Director of Counseling

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us...” Ephesians 3:20 (NIV)

These are powerful words, and ones that can give us great encouragement when we know that we don't have all the resources to meet the needs that are before us. They are also words that can remind us that God is working in whatever struggle or circumstance you may face today; especially one that may seem hopeless right now.

In II Corinthians 12:9, God responds to the Apostle Paul's prayer for relief with these words, ***“My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*** Later in that chapter Paul declares, ***“For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*** In Romans 5:3, Paul goes so far as to say that he would “glory in his suffering.” Now we know from other passages that there were times that Paul felt the hopelessness of his circumstances. In II Corinthians 1:8-9 he says that he and his companion even “despaired of life itself...” as if they “had received the sentence of death.”

In more than 20 years of counseling I've met many people who would say the same as Paul, at least the despairing part...not so many are as ready to ***“glory in their suffering!”*** So what's God up to that He would clearly say, ‘when we are weak, He is strong?’ Or even that suffering can be of good to us?

There are many excellent lessons to learn from the truth that God is imparting here, but let me zero in on one of them. Today's culture tends toward a rather short-sighted, quick-fix mentality on things. Everything from fitness to cooking, finances to relationships, has a fast three-step plan anymore!! But life in the Kingdom of God is not designed that way, and God sees you and your life over the long haul!

When faced with pain and suffering in our lives, God sees opportunity, not just for how to get us the quickest relief, but the deepest growth. When Paul talks about his sufferings, he describes the rich fruit they produce in perseverance, character, and hope. But the beauty of this is that God isn't standing by coldly watching to see what will happen as we suffer! No! Remember the Ephesians 3:20 passage at the opening? He is the one that can do immeasurably more than you could ever even imagine as *He works in you with His power.*

Remember Philippians 1:6 ***“...being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*** And in Matthew 19 and Mark 10 Jesus reminds us that even if it seems impossible with man, ***“...with God all things are possible!”*** Other passages remind us that God will never leave us; that He helps us carry the load, that He provides wisdom, that He gives us strength, that He gives us everything we

need! God sees the bigger picture – and He never allows suffering to be wasted! But as you trust in His strength, even letting yourself be weak, you'll see God's power at work within you!

We would be glad to walk with you through whatever you might be facing. If you are in need of counseling, contact our New Day office at (814) 535-8202, on Monday through Thursday, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.