

“Power Made Perfect in Weakness”

God is all powerful. We were taught that way back in Sunday School. God can do anything! He could make our lives run without any imperfection, any weakness, any failure. And yet, it seems that everyday we hear of new tragedies, everyday people go through hardships and experience the thorns that this service is focusing on. This makes it easy for some to believe that God must be unkind, or must not care for us. But, to me, it is the words of Paul that explain how this could never be true.

In 2 Corinthians 12, verses 7-10, it says:

“To keep me from being too conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given to me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

And so, God's thorns, our weaknesses, are a blessing! Without our imperfections, what would be of God's perfection? That is what this passage says to me. It is the old idea that we can only enjoy the good because of the bad we've also been exposed to. We embrace the blessing God bestows on us because of the thorns we are made to endure. But there is a deeper meaning than that. Every thorn that is strategically placed in our lives has a purpose. Each weakness, each hardship that we are able to overcome brings us closer to God.

I can recall many times in my life when I felt weak, worthless, or insecure. Times when, crying and praying, I knew that God was the only one who could make things better, He was the real rock I could stand by in my life. Earlier this year I was overcome with stress. Stress to keep up with the five AP classes I was taking, stress to apply to college, stress to know exactly what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, and the stress to be everything to everyone. I was acting like a crazy person, and I knew it. Still, even with the faith that everything would work out for good in the end, I crashed and burned until I realized God was there to help. He'd always been there, and I'd always known that he would be, instead of looking to Him for guidance and support, I'd been trying to figure out everything and deal with it all alone. I could never accomplish that, I wasn't even supposed to try. And when I realized that, I saw, ever so clearly, that God had made me feel like this for a reason. He put me through those emotions so that I would have to realize that I needed to look to Him for help. I had been drifting away, forging some kind of independence until I finally He forced me to let go and look to Him. When I did that he sent me all kinds of wonderful things. He gave me teachers that understood, and solved all

my scheduling problems that had made school so hard; He brought me a support group of friends and my boyfriend who remind everyday to live in the moment; He reminded me just how blessed I really am.

These are times when my relationship with God has grown the most. But the reality is, I've had a great life! Nothing has ever gone wrong in a major way, the thorns I refer are nothing like the difficulties others are tormented with. But this knowledge, that God's power is made perfect in weakness, let's me know that we, God and I together, can make it through together, and will only grow closer.