

MAKING SENSE OF OUR PAIN

May 11, 2014 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 by Bob Branch

MAIN IDEA: How do we deal with our pain? How do we make sense of it?

God is active, compassionate and comforting to us in all our troubles. (v.2-7)

⁸ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. **2 Corinthians 1:8-9**

Trouble comes...apparently beyond the coping threshold.

1. We can get stuck in the “WHY” QUESTION.

But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us **2 Corinthians 1:9-10**

2. These situations expose our SELF-RELIANCE.

3. Crushing and impossible situations beckon us to RELY ON GOD.

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.” Psalm 121:1-2

“I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.” **Ephesians 1:19-20** NLT

“...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.”... For when I am weak, then I am strong.” **2 Corinthians 12:7-10**

How do you cultivate reliance on God?

Admit our weakness.

“when I am weak, then I am strong.” **2 Cor. 12:7-10**

Stop Striving.

“Cease striving and know that I am God” **Psalm 46:10** NAS

“Be still in the presence of the LORD, and wait patiently for him to act. Don’t worry about evil people who prosper or fret about their wicked schemes.” **Psalm 37:7** NLT

Anchor into His Truth.

“My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.” **Psalm 119:28**

Pray and Ask.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” **Philippians 4:6-7**

Surrender the outcomes to Him.

4. Grab hold of HOPE that whatever is ahead, he’s powerful enough to handle it.

On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹ as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many. **2 Corinthians 1:10-11**

Part of God’s deliverance equation is **the prayer and support of others.**

“But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.” **2 Corinthians 7:6-7**