

## **God's Power and Christian Suffering**

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June 21, 2020

**Text:** *2 Corinthians 4:7-12*

### **The Imbalance: Power with No Place for Suffering**

- Obsessed with spiritual power, we neglect the ever-present \_\_\_\_\_.
- Well-intentioned but \_\_\_\_\_ responses.
- The important theological principle: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **The Proper Balance: God's Power through Human Weakness/Suffering**

- Strike the proper balance by \_\_\_\_\_ your weakness.
- Throw the \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is manifested in Christian suffering.

## Life Enrichment

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What about today's sermon challenged, disturbed, or encouraged you?

- Have you saved special correspondence like birthday and anniversary cards or love letters? When was the last time you looked through them? What emotions do they evoke?
- Why do you think Paul's opponents in Corinth focused on God's power but neglected the reality of pain and suffering?
- Why do you think Paul counters their imbalance by calling human bodies "jars of clay?"
- When people overemphasize God's power while failing to understand Christian suffering, how do they tend to treat sisters and brothers who suffer?
- How might a suffering Christian respond to ministry that overemphasizes God's power? What might they be thinking? Feeling? How might it affect their relationship with God and other Christians?
- Why would Paul deliberately boast in his physical suffering and emotional pain?
- How do God's power and Christian suffering intersect? How does Jesus serve as the primary model of power through suffering?
- How can we grow in our understanding of God's power and Christian suffering? What are some ways we can become more thoughtful in our ministry to Christians who experience long-term suffering? What can we learn from their experience?