

"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." —Mark 8:34

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³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
—2 Corinthians 1:3-4

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⁸We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. ¹¹For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. —2 Corinthians 4:8-11

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...⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger...
—2 Corinthians 6:4-5

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²³Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. ²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned.

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Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; ²⁷in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. —2 Corinthians 11:23-27

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⁷So to keep me from being too elated by the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. ⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

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Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
—2 Corinthians 12:7-10

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"There is no true Christianity without brokenness. If we are not broken, then we have not met God and we do not know ourselves."

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SURRENDER
Brokenness rises out of the mystery of suffering.

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"Grace will not do for us what it did not do for Christ—exempt us from suffering." —Ron Dunn

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Brokenness relates to the intensity of the suffering.

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Brokenness reveals the reality
of all human suffering.

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"Pain plants the flag of reality in the
fortress of a rebel heart."

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1 Corinthians 1:26-31

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Brokenness releases God's grace
at my point of need.

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The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart you will
not despise, O God. —**Psalm 51:17**

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I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become. —2 Corinthians 12:9-10 MSG

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"It is better to pray for pain's conversion than its removal." —P.T. Forsyth

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"I asked God for strength that I might achieve.
I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked God for health that I might do greater things.
I was given infirmity that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy.
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men.
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God."

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"I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.
I was given life that I might endure all things.
I got nothing I asked for
But everything I had hoped for. . .
Almost, despite myself
My unspoken prayers were answered.
I am among all men most richly blessed."
—Author Unknown

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