

The gift of weaknesses

2 Corinthians 12:1-10



Living with Trouble

Job's counselors

Job's troubles proved that Job was displeasing to God

Paul's attackers in Corinth

Paul's troubles proved that Paul was displeasing to God

Their more 'successful' and pleasant lives proved that they were more pleasing to God

1-4: Paul outdoes their boasting...then he nullifies it

5-7a: Paul wanted to avoid people thinking too highly of him

7b-8: God wanted to avoid Paul thinking too highly of himself

Satan was unwittingly contributing to God's good work

9-10:

When I am weak in myself and have many troubles

...then I can know and show the strength of God

When I am strong in myself and have few troubles

...it just looks like I am strong

The Big Idea

Sometimes God gives us weaknesses as an expression of His love for us

God's glory is clearest

when the glory of God appears

in our weaknesses and troubles

His power 'made perfect' in weakness

God's glorious power is more evident

when it is displayed ...

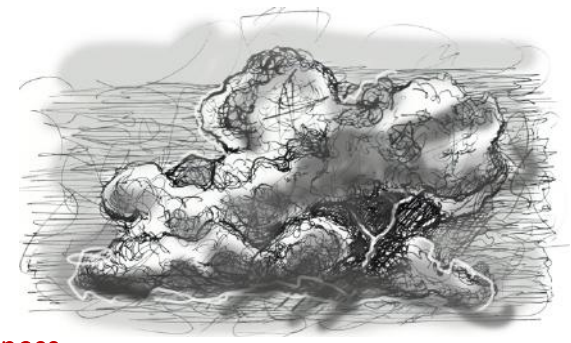
in weak vessels

in challenging times

Annie Johnson Flint (1866-1932)

Fruit of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Forbearance (patience), Kindness,

Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control



What are we to do?

**In our troubles and weakness,
trust in the all sufficient grace of God**

His power displayed in weakness and trouble

In self: humility

In others: temptation to trust in them

Ask for relief from trouble

If He doesn't remove it, accept it with active faith, hope, and obedience

Seeing it in Jesus

"In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself!" Mark 15:31

Because He didn't save Himself (weakness)

He was able to save others

If He had saved Himself

others could not have been saved

In His weakness, the power of salvation came

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What weaknesses and troubles are ongoing in your life?
2. What do you often conclude based on these weaknesses and troubles?
3. How might these weaknesses and troubles be a gift of God to reveal His grace and glory?
4. How can we help each other find God's grace in weaknesses?

Conversation starters this week

What hope is there when we are weak and troubled?