

“When God Is Uncooperative”

When God..., Part 2

November 15th & 18th, 2018

If you believe in God, there will be a season of your life where you feel God is either inattentive, uncooperative, or late

Things get more difficult when you look around, and it seems like everything for everybody else is going just fine

If you stay in a season like this long enough, you begin to have doubts about God

God’s lack of cooperation is not an argument for or against His existence

Today we’ll look at the story of a man named Saul, later on known as Paul who took the good news, the truth about Jesus and began spreading it throughout the Mediterranean area

After becoming a follower of Jesus Paul was afflicted with some kind of physical ailment that became an obstacle for him to do what God called him to do

Paul asked God to remove this ailment, and God told him no

In response to Paul’s request, God promised him something else; and what God promised Paul, He promises to you

In Paul’s story we gain insight into what we can expect when God says no

2 Corinthians 12:7 (NIV) “To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me.”

2 Corinthians 12:8 (NIV) “Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.”

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) “But He said to me,...”

God’s answer to Paul is available to you

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you,...’”

Here grace is the ability to put one foot in front of the other, to get up and get through another day in spite of the fact nothing has changed, you’re able to keep moving in the direction God wants

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”

We are all about giving glory to God, but we don’t want God to leverage (to use) His glory out of our weakness

In some cases God doesn’t use our success, but our inability, our lack of opportunity, what some would consider a failure – our weakness, to bring Him glory

The good news is we don’t get to choose this, because none of us would choose this

God will, God has, God is going to showcase His strength in your weakness, if we learn to take no for an answer

It has nothing to do with His love for you, nothing to do with His compassion towards you, nothing to do with His presence in your life

His strength in your weakness is His presence in your life

2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses,…”

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NIV) “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.”

Sometimes God says no, but when God says no, He says **yes** – in the meantime God says My **grace** is sufficient for you

Wrap Up

1. We have **permission** to ask God to remove our thorns
2. God has permission to say **no**
3. God may choose to showcase His power of the stage of our **weaknesses**
4. You can’t experience God’s sustaining **grace** while resisting His **will**

Striving with God is being so intensely frustrated with God because He won’t answer your prayer

You’ll still be a **believer**; you can’t get **away** from it, but you won’t **benefit** from it

Sustaining grace begins with, “Not **my** will, but **Your** will be done.”

Luke 22:42 (NIV) “[Jesus prayed] Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.”

I’m **trusting** You God, for Your strength & Your empowerment to do what I just don’t have the strength to do

My Next Step Today Is...

- I am in a time weakness, I am trusting God for His sustaining grace to see me through
- I have someone in my life who is going through a time of weakness, I will be there to support him/her through it

Next Week: “**When God...seems late.**” Invite a friend!!!