

Strength In Weakness

I have reached the age
at which it is hard to tell the difference between a Holy
Ghost rush and a hot
flash. It wouldn't be so bad if I hadn't come to rely on body
temperature as a
spiritual thermostat to tell me when the anointing had hit.
But now I just have
to move out in faith, trusting that God is the initiator even
when I don't feel
a thing—or when what I'm feeling could be the result of a
hormone imbalance
rather than the prompting of His Spirit!

This season has brought other
physical changes, too—a tiredness I can't seem to shake,
wrinkles, sagging skin,
body parts that don't want to get in shape no matter how much
I do to encourage
the process. Perhaps worst of all is the lack of desire to
extend myself beyond
the minimum requirements for sustaining life. If an activity
isn't going to
satisfy a crucial need, it isn't worth the effort.

This applies to
spiritual pursuits as well. All the passion I once had for
fulfilling God's
purposes went out the window, I guess, along with good muscle
tone and my store
of progesterone. It's not that I don't want to be obedient;
it's just that I
don't want to expend the energy.

But I am learning that in spite of
outward indications to the contrary, I am in the perfect

condition to carry out
God's plans. How is that possible? Because instead of relying
on the things that
used to keep me going—my own zeal, ambition and commitment to
His cause—I am
relying on God to compel and sustain me. His Word says that He
works in us “both
to WILL and to DO for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13, NKJV),
so I know I can
trust Him to get me moving in the right direction when He
wants to use me—in
spite of my weakness.

I also know I can trust Him to turn my weakness
into strength. Well-known inspirational writer Catherine
Marshall discovered
this truth during a difficult season in her own life. Her
husband, Lenny
LeSourd, wrote that it was the central message of her book
“Light in My Darkest
Night” and summarized the truth this way: “If we will let Him,
the Lord will
help us grow strong precisely in the weak places themselves.”

It's
certainly not a new revelation. The apostle Paul wrote much
the same thing in
his second letter to the Corinthians. Referring to the “thorn
in the flesh” that
he says was given to him “lest [he] be exalted above measure,”
he declared: “I
pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from
me. And He said to
me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made
perfect in
weakness’” (2 Cor. 12:9).

To Paul, the exchange God offered him—His

strength for Paul's weakness-was worth the discomfort the "thorn" caused.

"Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities," he wrote, "that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (vv. 9-10).

Like Catherine Marshall and the apostle Paul, all of us have areas of weakness, no matter how capable we think we are. Yours might be a physical weakness, as mine is right now, or it might be a different form of handicap. Whatever it is, rejoice in it! Praise God for it! For it is in that weak place that God will prove Himself strong on your behalf. And when He does, the credit-and the glory-for whatever fruit is borne as a result will be all His.

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 5/31/2010

This week thank God that He is strong on your behalf even when you are at your weakest. Ask Him to help you grow strong in those areas, and thank Him that He wants to use you in spite of them. Continue to pray for those struggling with personal and financial losses. Pray that revival would ignite from coast to coast, and that our president and all in authority with him would have the needed wisdom to make the best decisions involving us and other nations around the world. Pray for the protection of Israel, our military, coastline and borders. 2 Cor. 12:9-10; Phil. 2:13