

Your Greatest Ministry Will Come From Your Deepest Pain

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we also have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and so we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also boast in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces patience, patience produces character, and character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Rom. 5:1-5).

It has been rightly said that the greatest ministry comes from the deepest pain. Jesus' greatest ministry came from His deepest pain. The same is true of you and me. Your greatest ministry comes from your deepest pain.

Suffering not only sanctifies you to make you like Jesus, but it also sends you out into the suffering world to minister like Jesus. Your experiences, lessons learned and empathy gained through suffering are the very things that make you a better minister. What suffering have you endured? How has it changed you, taught you and improved you? How can you use your suffering to serve others who are suffering?

After roughly two decades of teaching, I took a break for healing and learning during the most difficult season of life for my family and me. As Grace and I met with godly ministry couples, professional counselors and deeply spiritual leaders to process what we had been through, every meeting was markedly different and yet incredibly helpful. Each person asked very different questions, saw things from very different angles and provided very different biblical insights and points of view.

In each meeting, I took notes to help me remember what God was doing for us through these wonderful people. Within months, I had filled numerous notebooks. After I had met with multiple people and considered things from various perspectives, I started putting it together. I realized they *all* offered biblical, godly, wise, helpful and necessary counsel. Had we been ministered to from only one perspective, there would have been much we missed and a lot misdiagnosed.

During this time out of ministry set aside to learn and grow, I noticed various Christian leaders had a paradigm by which they saw my problems and through which they offered solutions. Each had obvious biblical moorings, and it seemed that various teams, tribes and traditions had one predominant paradigm through which they ministered to Grace and me. We found it unbelievably beneficial that instead of sitting in the “helper” seat, we were sitting in the “helped” seat. {eoa}

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