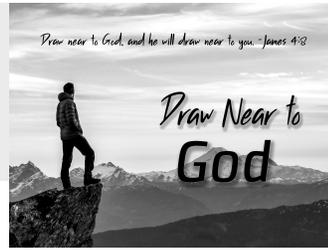


A sharp reminder about God's power & our weakness.

Draw Near to God - Part 7 Noah Largent 9/1/19



2 Corinthians 12:1-10 It is necessary to brag, not that it does any good. I'll move on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who was caught up into the third heaven fourteen years ago. I don't know whether it was in the body or out of the body. God knows. ³⁻⁴ I know that this man was caught up into paradise and that he heard unspeakable words that were things no one is allowed to repeat. I don't know whether it was in the body or apart from the body. God knows. ⁵ I'll brag about this man, but I won't brag about myself, except to brag about my weaknesses. ⁶ If I did want to brag, I wouldn't make a fool of myself because I'd tell the truth. I'm holding back from bragging so that no one will give me any more credit than what anyone sees or hears about me. ⁷ I was given a thorn in my body because of the outstanding revelations I've received so that I wouldn't be conceited. It's a messenger from Satan sent to torment me so that I wouldn't be conceited. ⁸ I pleaded with the Lord three times for it to leave me alone. ⁹ He said to me, "My grace is enough for you, because power is made perfect in weakness." So I'll gladly spend my time bragging about my weaknesses so that Christ's power can rest on me. ¹⁰ 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.

1. How do you react when God doesn't give you the answer you want to your urgent prayers?

Matthew 26:39&44 *Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."* ⁴⁴ So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

2. When you talk about your life, what gets highlighted? "Your" accomplishments or God's work in and through you?

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

3. In what areas of your life do you need to depend on God?

Proverbs 3:5-7 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. ⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

Psalms 62:7 My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

Questions for further discussion:

- Do you believe that God is more concerned with your growth or your comfort? How does your answer affect your perspective on trials you experience?
- How has God used painful experiences for good in your own life?
- What is the nature of the "grace" that is sufficient for Paul (verse 9)?
- How does James 1:5 complement verses 7-10?
- Why does God use a, "messenger from Satan" instead of His own angel (verse 7)?

Notes:
