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Ride Out Your Pain

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We've all experienced our share of physical, psychological, emotional and mental pain. And when we feel squeezed, like a tennis ball in a vise, we want relief . . . now!

Pain's Not Your Enemy

At such times it's important to remember that pain isn't our enemy. It's our body's way of telling us something's wrong. And it's a tool that can make us stronger. That's why it's crucial we not run away from pain or try to anesthetize it in harmful ways. If we do that, we'll discover that what deadened the pain may create more pain than it removed.

Instead of running from pain, ride it out like you would a rising tide. Eventually it will recede.

Nobody passes through life without hardship. Even the apostle Paul experienced intense pain when afflicted with a thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9). While we don't know the source of Paul's pain, we know he suffered greatly. Three times he begged God to take it away. Three times God refused. Instead of removing the cause of suffering, God gave Paul an extra measure of His grace.

Rather than becoming angry with God, Paul wrote, "I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That's 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" (2 Cor. 12:9, 10).

God's Grace Gives Strength

Paul learned to rely on the grace of God during seasons of suffering. While the pain remained, he experienced the strength needed to endure with dignity.

Thankfully, that same grace is available to you. When you hurt, ask God to give you the grace needed to endure. Ask him to make his strength apparent through your weaknesses. While God may not take the pain away, he will give you the strength needed to make it through the pain.