

# Running On **EMPTY**

## Part # 3: The Pain of Life

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Porter

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Even though more and more demands are placed on our time, very few seem concerned about **overload**. Sometimes simply saying **no** to the things that drain us, and allowing ourselves to slow down to **refuel** serves as a simple solution.

The truth is, the things that overload us can keep us continually **overwhelmed**.

We have discovered so far two fundamental ways in which life can overwhelm us:

1. We can be overwhelmed by the **pace** of life.
2. We can be overwhelmed by the **pressure** of life.

We can also find ourselves overwhelmed by the **pain** of life.

### *Central Point...*

Pain can come into our lives in a variety of ways:

1. **Physical** Pain
2. **Mental** Pain
3. **Emotional** Pain
4. **Spiritual** Pain

Any one form can be enough to overwhelm us, but often pain does not limit itself to a single path of attack. In fact, it is not unusual for us to experience all four types almost **simultaneously**.

If our physical, mental and/or emotional pain is significant, we can **count** on it resulting in spiritual pain.

The ultimate Biblical example is the story of Job.

**Painful Truth # 1:** Loving and being obedient to God does not **exempt** us from pain.

**Painful Truth #2:** God may not cause our pain, but He does **allow** it in our lives.

**Painful Truth #3:** We will always be tempted to **doubt** God in our pain.

**Painful Truth #4:** We may not be able to **grasp** the reason for our pain.

**Painful Truth #5:** The most overwhelming pain of all is the spiritual pain of searching for God and **not** finding Him.

**Painful Truth #6:** God is at work **behind** our pain.

**Painful Truth #7:** God's purpose in allowing pain in our lives is to build our **faith**.

## God's Pain Perspective

**2 Corinthians 12:9** *But he said to me, "My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you." So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ's power can live in me.*

### *Focal Point...*

## Choosing To Redirect The Pain

**Step # 1:** Accept its **inevitability**.

**John 16:33** *"I told you these things so that you can have peace in me. In this world you will have trouble, but be brave! I have defeated the world."*

**Step # 2:** Gain a Godly **perspective**.

- God promises it is only **temporary**.

**Romans 8:17-19** *If we are God's children, we will receive blessings from God together with Christ. But we must suffer as Christ suffered so that we will have glory as Christ has glory.<sup>18</sup> The sufferings we have now are nothing compared to the great glory that will be shown to us.<sup>19</sup> Everything God made is waiting with excitement for God to show his children's glory completely.*

## Revelation 21:4

*He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

- God **understands**.

**Hebrews 2:14-18** *We are people of flesh and blood. That is why Jesus became one of us. He died to destroy the devil, who had power over death.<sup>15</sup> But he also died to rescue all of us who live each day in fear of dying.<sup>16</sup> Jesus clearly did not*

*come to help angels, but he did come to help Abraham's descendants.<sup>17</sup> He had to be one of us, so that he could serve God as our merciful and faithful high priest and sacrifice himself for the forgiveness of our sins.<sup>18</sup> And now that Jesus has suffered and was tempted, he can help anyone else who is tempted.*

- God plans to **help** us.

**Romans 8: 26-28** *And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.<sup>27</sup> And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.<sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

### **Step # 3:** Position yourselves for God to **ble**ss you through it.

**2 Corinthians 7:8-11** *I don't feel bad anymore, even though my letter hurt your feelings. I did feel bad at first, but I don't now. I know that the letter hurt you for a while.<sup>9</sup> Now I am happy, but not because I hurt your feelings. It is because God used your hurt feelings to make you turn back to him, and none of you were harmed by us.<sup>10</sup> When God makes you feel sorry enough to turn to him and be saved, you don't have anything to feel bad about. But when this world makes you feel sorry, it can cause your death.<sup>11</sup> Just look what God has done by making you feel sorry! You sincerely want to prove that you are innocent. You are angry. You are shocked. You are eager to see that justice is done. You have proved that you were completely right in this matter.*

## *Turning Point...*

God's painful blessing guarantees we will have less **regret** and that we will be more...

**Alive**

**Concerned**

**Sensitive**

**Reverent**

**Human**

**Passionate**

**Responsible**

Our challenge...

Believers – simply ask God,

*Father God – How am I doing in dealing with the pain of life?*

**Seekers – If you are one checking out the claims of Christianity, know that the future God desires for you to experience is one that includes a growing personal relationship with Him. The good news is that to receive it, you simply have to ask Him.**

**To invite Christ into your heart, you can simply pray,**

*Lord Jesus, I want to receive your love today. I believe you came and died for me, and I want to be your friend and follower, starting today. So I officially invite you into my life today. Lead me, guide me, love me, so that I can love others better each day. In Jesus' name, Amen.*