

AUTOPSY • Week 4: Your Pain, Their Gain

Daily Briefing • Day 2 of 5 • What You Bring to the Table

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1

Sunday's message walked through the five-step sequence from failure to ministry. Today we look at what you actually have to offer once you have moved through that sequence. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray that You would use my experience to help others. You say that the work does not depend on me but depends on You working through me. Help me to know that it is not about my skill but about Your Scripture and Your Spirit working in and through me. Help me to share what You have done with others. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

If you sat down with a friend going through addiction, a divorce, financial collapse, or a broken relationship with their kids, you might feel like you have nothing to offer. No degree. No formal training. No certification. But if God has brought you through something similar, you have three things to offer that no credentialed expert can manufacture or fake: empathy, example, and education. And in God's economy, those three things are the most powerful ministry tools available.

The first is empathy. Second Corinthians 1:3-4 describes God as the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the same comfort we ourselves have received from God. Notice the mechanism. The comfort flows from God through your experience of affliction outward to someone else in a similar situation. The affliction is not wasted. It becomes the training ground for a ministry that could not have been developed any other way. This is not generic sympathy. It is specific, experiential recognition that reaches people at a depth that information alone cannot.

The second is example. Before his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, Paul was actively arresting and approving the killing of Christians. He writes in 1 Timothy 1:15-16 that he is the foremost of sinners and that he received mercy for a specific reason: so that in him, as the worst possible case, Jesus Christ might display His perfect patience as an example to those who would come to believe in Him. For anyone who doubts what God might be able to do with their past, Paul is the answer. Paul's emphasis is not on what he achieved after his conversion; it is on what God did through the worst possible raw material. If God did that with Paul, He can do it with anyone. That is the example you carry.

The third is education. And by that, this is not a suggestion to go back to school. Education here means knowledge acquired through experience. When God brought you through something, you found the Bible passages that speak to that specific struggle. You learned what the Designer says about this particular area of human life and how His design actually works. Then you figured out how to apply those principles in real modern life. That is education in the deepest sense: the word of Christ dwelling in you richly enough that you can now teach, challenge, correct, and train someone else who is facing similar things (Colossians 3:16). The person sitting across from someone in their mess does not need a degree. They need to know which Bible passages address the problem and how to actually work them out in practice. That is exactly what you can bring to the table.

READ & MEDITATE

2 Corinthians 1:3–4

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."

1 Timothy 1:15–16

"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life."

Colossians 3:16

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 and trace the direction the comfort travels in the passage. Where does it start, and where does it end up? Then read 1 Timothy 1:15-16 and identify whose action is being demonstrated through Paul's story. Then read Colossians 3:16 and notice the two words that describe how the word of Christ is supposed to dwell in you, and what happens as a result.

REFLECT

God does not waste your affliction. He uses it as the curriculum for a ministry that could not have been developed any other way.

What specific kind of suffering in your own life has given you the ability to recognize and sit with that same suffering in someone else? Where has your experience of God's comfort equipped you to offer something that generic encouragement could not provide?

According to 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, the comfort you received is not the endpoint. It is the supply for the next person in the same situation.

Who in your life right now is in the kind of affliction you have already been through? What specifically did you receive from God that you could offer them?

Paul does not say he received mercy because he worked hard enough or recovered impressively enough. The emphasis falls entirely on what God chose to display through the worst possible raw material.

Read 1 Timothy 1:15-16 and identify two things it tells you about why Paul received mercy:

First thing:

Second thing:

The example you carry is primarily about God's willingness to work with the worst possible starting point. That shifts the weight off your performance and onto His power.

How does framing your story as "look what God did" rather than "look what I overcame" change how you think about offering it to someone else?

The word of Christ dwelling in you richly is not an abstract spiritual state. It is specific knowledge of what God says about a specific area of life, combined with real experience of working that out in practice.

Fill in the blanks from Colossians 3:16:

"Let the word of Christ _____ in you _____, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom." (Colossians 3:16)*

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

Think about a specific area where God has brought you through something. What passages did you find that spoke directly to that struggle? What did you learn about how to apply the Designer's design to that specific problem in real life? If someone came to you in that same situation tomorrow, what would you actually tell them to do?

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Romans 8:1 from memory:
