

# Only in weakness can you be made strong

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As executive director of the Texas Baptist Bivocational/Small Church Association, I have the privilege of meeting ministers who serve on the small-church mission field throughout the state. I enjoy spending time with them and their families while hearing stories of their ministries, families and calling. Each story is unique and powerful, and I am encouraged each time I hear them.



Richard Ray This past week, I had the opportunity to visit with such a minister. He described heartache and tragedy that struck his family. He reported challenges to be overcome in both his family and his ministry. He talked about his childhood, filled with abandonment and despair. As he shared through tears brought on by his struggles and challenges, never once did he say he left the ministry. On the contrary, his pursuit of serving the Lord was never stronger. With each challenge and with each tragedy, all I could see was a man of God finding delight in his weakness.

I am reminded of 2 Corinthians 12:10: "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."

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So often in ministry, we encounter worldly tragedies and struggles that will cause us to pause in ministry, re-evaluating our calling. Ministers often second-guess their calling when hardships enter their family and ministry. If you are called by God to preach and pastor God's children, it is imperative that regardless of hardships, persecution and difficulties that come your way, strive not to abandon your post, but instead allow this weakness to become God's strength in you.

As pastors, you should not be ashamed or try to hide the effects the world can have on your family and ministry, but rather find comfort as you share your struggles, seek out prayers in times of hardships and find support during times of persecution.

You need not be afraid to acknowledge your weakness, for it is only then can you be strong. When you can acknowledge your weaknesses, you will find delight in them. The delight comes from God leading you through each struggle to find victory. If you are in the midst of a hardship, I encourage you to acknowledge this hardship; for then you will find strength and delight in the Lord.

We are here to serve you as you serve the Lord. Remember, the Lord has called you to serve, but he has not called you to serve alone. [Visit our website](#) to register for the 30th annual Bivocational/Smaller Church Conference, hosted by Dallas Baptist University July 15-16. Also see our site to learn more about how the Bivocational/Small Church Association can assist you in the ministry. For additional information or to schedule a visit, contact me at [brother\\_ray@juno.com](mailto:brother_ray@juno.com).

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