

## Title: From Pain to Purpose: Drawing Closer to God

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### 1. Introduction: Pain and Purpose

- Opening Thought: Pain is often seen as something to escape or avoid, yet Scripture shows it as a means God uses to refine us, draw us closer, and prepare us to minister to others.
- Key Verse: Romans 8:28 – "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

### 2. How Pain Brings Us Closer to God

- Example from Scripture: David's cries for God in the Psalms show that pain can drive us to a deeper reliance on God.
  - Psalm 34:18 – "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."
- Application: When we face trials, we are reminded of our limitations and our need for God's strength. These moments bring us to a place of humility, dependence, and trust in His guidance.

### 3. Pain as Preparation for Ministry

- Biblical Example: The Apostle Paul faced immense suffering, yet he saw his trials as opportunities to encourage others and testify to God's power.
  - 2 Corinthians 1:4 – "...so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."
- Illustration: Paul's suffering led to the expansion of the Gospel message, and he used his story to strengthen the faith of other believers.
- Personal Application: Our pain equips us to empathize and walk alongside others in their struggles, making us better servants and ministers in God's Kingdom.

### 4. Examples of Transformation Through Pain

- Joseph: Betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery, Joseph's pain ultimately led to the salvation of his family and many others. Joseph's story shows that God can use even betrayal and hardship for good.
  - Genesis 50:20 – "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."
- Job: Though Job suffered immensely, he remained faithful, and in the end, he encountered God in a deeper way. Job's story reminds us of God's sovereignty and His ability to redeem even the most painful situations.
  - Job 42:5 – "My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you."

### 5. Surrendering Pain to God for Healing and Purpose

- Scriptural Basis: When we bring our pain to God, He not only heals but repurposes it. This process transforms us, strengthening our relationship with Him and preparing us to bring His comfort to others.
  - Isaiah 61:1-3 – God's promise to "bind up the brokenhearted" and "comfort all who mourn."
- Illustration: The early disciples, who endured suffering and persecution, found in Christ the courage and strength to continue His mission, knowing He was with them.

### 6. The Gospel Message

- Jesus' Example: Christ Himself endured the ultimate pain, the cross, to bridge the gap between God and humanity. In Jesus, we find the perfect model of suffering leading to redemption and hope.
    - Hebrews 12:2 – "For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."
  - Invitation to Hope: Because of Jesus' sacrifice, our pain is not meaningless; it is part of the journey toward knowing God more deeply and reflecting His love to others.
    - Romans 5:3-5 – "...we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit."
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## **7. Conclusion and Call to Action**

- Reflection: Invite the congregation to consider how their own experiences of pain can be offered to God for healing, for a deeper relationship, and as a way to minister to others.
- Challenge: Encourage them to ask God to reveal how He can use their pain to further His purposes.
- Closing Prayer: Pray for the strength to trust God in pain, for a heart willing to minister to others, and for the hope found in Christ's ultimate act of love and redemption.

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**This will allow you to explore how pain connects us with God and each other, pointing to Jesus as the ultimate source of healing and hope.**

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### **From Pain to Purpose**

In the heart of pain, where shadows lie,  
We find a place where souls can cry.  
Not alone in silence, not lost in fear,  
God bends to listen, drawing near.  
Through sorrow's veil, His presence found,  
In whispered grace, we're wholly bound.  
Each broken shard, each scarred embrace,  
Becomes a window to His face.  
When trials press and burdens grow,  
He leads us where His rivers flow.  
For comfort given in darkened days  
Turns us to others on their way.  
In Joseph's story, Job's reply,  
In Paul's own tears that did not dry—  
We see the thread of mercy spun,  
A tapestry God has begun.  
Christ bore it all, the thorns, the shame,  
To bring us life and take our blame.  
His cross, our bridge to joy anew,  
Where pain is met and hearts made true.  
Now, rising from our wounded past,  
We see our journey, whole at last.  
What once was loss, He calls us to share,  
A light for those who need repair.  
In every wound, His hands restore;  
In every sorrow, grace outpours.  
So let us walk, our pain redeemed,  
To love, to heal—as He has dreamed.



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## 7-Day Devotion: From Pain to Purpose

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### Day 1: Finding God in the Pain

- **Scripture:** Psalm 34:18 – “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.”
- **Reflection:** Pain often brings us to a place of raw honesty before God. When we’re broken, He draws closer, offering comfort and peace. Embrace His nearness and let Him heal you from within.
- **Prayer:** Lord, in my pain, help me to feel Your presence. Draw near to me, hold my brokenness, and remind me that You are with me through every trial. Amen.
- **Quote:** "In the darkest valleys, God’s presence shines brightest."

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### Day 2: Trusting God’s Purpose

- **Scripture:** Romans 8:28 – “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him.”
- **Reflection:** Though we can’t always see how, God works every hardship for a greater good. Trust that there is purpose beyond what you feel today, and know that His plans are always rooted in love.
- **Prayer:** Father, I don’t always understand my struggles, but I choose to trust that You are weaving them into a greater story. Strengthen my faith and guide my heart. Amen.
- **Quote:** "God’s plans may be hidden, but His love is always revealed."

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### Day 3: Finding Strength to Serve Others

- **Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 1:4 – “...so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”
- **Reflection:** The comfort God gives us isn’t just for us; it’s meant to overflow. Our pain becomes a tool for empathy, helping us reach others who need encouragement. Let God use your experience to minister to others.
- **Prayer:** Lord, thank You for comforting me. Open my heart to those around me who are struggling, and help me share the peace I’ve found in You. Amen.
- **Quote:** "Our scars are the maps that lead others to healing."

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### Day 4: Embracing God’s Healing

- **Scripture:** Isaiah 61:1 – “He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted...”
- **Reflection:** Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted, and He offers that same healing today. Surrender your pain and allow Him to transform it into strength. He is the Great Healer of body, mind, and soul.
- **Prayer:** Jesus, I lay my pain before You. Heal the wounds of my heart and make me whole. Help me to trust in Your power to restore what has been broken. Amen.
- **Quote:** "God’s hands hold the balm that soothes every wound."

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### Day 5: Growing Through Trials

- **Scripture:** James 1:2-4 – “Consider it pure joy...whenever you face trials...that you may be mature and complete.”
  - **Reflection:** Trials are difficult, but they build resilience and faith. By embracing each trial as an opportunity for growth, we allow God to shape us. Every hardship has a purpose in His hands.
  - **Prayer:** God, teach me to see challenges as opportunities to grow closer to You. Give me patience and strength as I face each trial with trust in Your wisdom. Amen.
  - **Quote:** "Our trials refine us, making us vessels fit for His purpose."
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### **Day 6: Finding Joy in the Journey**

- **Scripture:** Romans 5:3-4 – “We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”
- **Reflection:** God doesn’t waste a single moment of our journey. Each step, even those that hurt, is shaping our character. As we grow, we discover joy and hope that transcend our circumstances.
- **Prayer:** Lord, fill my heart with hope and joy, even in the midst of pain. Teach me to see each moment as a step in Your divine purpose. Amen.
- **Quote:** "When we walk with God, even our tears are seeds of hope."

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### **Day 7: Redeeming Pain Through Christ**

- **Scripture:** Hebrews 12:2 – “For the joy set before him he endured the cross...”
- **Reflection:** Jesus took on the ultimate pain to redeem us. In Him, we find the strength to face our own hardships, knowing that His sacrifice transforms our suffering into something meaningful.
- **Prayer:** Thank You, Jesus, for enduring the cross for me. Help me to carry my pain with faith and courage, knowing that You have redeemed it. Lead me to share Your love with others. Amen.
- **Quote:** "In Christ’s suffering, we find redemption for our own."

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Each day of this devotional offers an invitation to walk more closely with God through pain, with a message of hope in Christ’s redemptive love. May it bring comfort and purpose to those seeking Him.

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### **An Invitation to Receive the Good News of Jesus:**

At **Hope Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ**, we believe that the greatest gift anyone can receive is the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is the message of God’s grace, love, and forgiveness, freely offered to all who come to Him in faith.

- Are you seeking peace, purpose, or hope in your life?
- Do you long for a fresh start or a deeper connection with God?

**Jesus offers this to you.** Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus has opened the door to new life—a life of freedom from sin, renewal in spirit, and eternal hope. At Hope Lutheran, we invite you to come and experience this life-transforming message. Whether you’ve been walking with Jesus for years or are just beginning to explore faith, there’s a place for you here.

### **Join us in hearing the Good News:**

- **Forgiveness:** In Christ, our sins are washed away.
- **Love:** God’s love is unconditional and never-ending.
- **Hope:** No matter what you’re facing, there’s always hope in Him.

You are warmly welcomed to worship with us, grow in faith, and be part of a community that lives out this Good News daily. **Come and receive the love of Jesus, the hope of salvation, and the joy of a life transformed.** We look forward to meeting you and sharing this journey of faith together!

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**Contemporary Services 9:30 & 11:00 am**

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