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# The power of weakness

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## *The Power of Weakness*

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by Zachary J. Taylor

Personally, I find myself wondering how God will use me in my brokenness. It isn't easy to wake up in the morning and not feel anxious even though I shouldn't be anxious about anything. My day is always structured, and if I keep to that structure, then I avoid any chance of having a panic attack. However, as I become more aware of my suffering, and see that it isn't an inherent flaw, but a problem

with how my brain is wired, then I'm content to know that God will be with me in my time of trial – in my weakness, fear, and trembling. Every time I walk out the door to go to class or to run daily errands, I'm taking a risk – a risk to put myself into an uncomfortable situation that exposes me to dark memories from my childhood, and I retreat into myself, for fear of public embarrassment, into the murky depths of my mind, where I feel the safest.

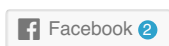
This is not to say that I'm dysfunctional, or that I can't participate in society. I love going out and meeting new people. I made many good friends in Boston, some of them wonderful colleagues, others local parishioners who are interested in my story. Yes, I have many "tics" which make me seem awkward, if a little strange—hair pulling, muttering under my breath, twiddling my fingers, staring off into space—but these things don't make me any less human. To embrace diversity, to see outside established social norms, is a gift from God. It's the gift of gaining "sight" into the world that we're not familiar with. The beauty of God is that the Spirit gives wisdom to see beyond our human understanding. We're made strong in our brokenness. Without our sin, we can't hope to know the joy of the Lord, who dwells in our hearts and minds. The recognition of one's brokenness leads to an active pursuit of the holy. So for me, at least, my "awkwardness," while it governs my being, doesn't define me. I own it. I can use it to my advantage. My suffering is my strength and endurance.

For many, however, enduring one's suffering isn't easy. Your suffering may be different from mine. That's the beauty of humanity. Each person is unique and interprets the world in their own way. For me, my awkwardness is a sign of my individuality. For others, your brokenness may be a gateway into a new chapter of your life. It may be that your brokenness opens doors that had been previously shut. Rather than allow your suffering to define you, allow yourself to be free. Yes, there will be moments that this will seem impossible. But, if you're going to overcome suffering, it will take time to heal and time to meditate upon the wisdom of God, to see things as they should be. One small step toward sanctification is one giant step toward a closer relationship with God. As God's children, we are called to see others as God sees them—not as broken creatures of sin, but as holy sons and daughters of God.



*Zachary J. Taylor is a second-year M.Div. student seeking ordination as an elder in the United Methodist Church. His interests include philosophy of language, theology of disability, and bringing awareness to anxiety and other related disorders.*

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