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Turning Pain Into Gain

(How to use adversity to your advantage)

(SERIES: **Mastering The Art Of The Fresh Start: 06 of 08**)
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"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."
(Rom 12:12 NIV)

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may **BE MATURE AND COMPLETE**, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." (James 1:2-5)

How Do You Change?

Sometimes you change because **you want to**.

Sometimes you change because **you need to**.

Sometimes you change because **you have to**.

"He jests at scars that never felt a wound."
(William Shakespeare)

"He who knows how to suffer will enjoy much peace. Such a one is a conqueror of himself and lord of the world, a friend of Christ and an heir of heaven."
(Thomas À Kempis)

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."
(C. S. Lewis)

When we have to change

I want to know why **me**?

I want to know why **now**?

I want to know what **for**?

Don't waste the pain!

God uses pain to **make us better, not bitter**.

"And have you quite forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you, his **child**? He said, 'My son, don't be angry when the Lord punishes you. Don't be discouraged when he has to show you where you are wrong. For when he punishes you, it proves that he loves you. When he whips you, it proves you are really his **child**.' Let God train you, for he is doing what any loving father does for his children. Whoever heard of a son who was never corrected? If God doesn't punish you when you need it, as other fathers punish their sons, then it means that you aren't really God's son at all--that you don't really belong in his family. Since we respect our fathers here on earth, though they punish us, should we not all the more cheerfully submit to God's training so that we can begin really to live? Our earthly fathers trained us for a few brief years, doing the best for us that they knew how, but God's correction is always right and for our best good, that we may share his holiness. Being punished isn't enjoyable while it is happening--it hurts! But afterwards we can see the result, a quiet growth in grace and character." (Heb 12:5-11)

"For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." (Psa 30:5)

God uses pain to **build us up, not tear us down**.

"Three different times I begged God to make me well again.) Each time he said, 'No. But I am with you; that is all you need. My power shows up best in weak people.' Now I am glad to boast about how weak I am; **I AM GLAD TO BE A LIVING DEMONSTRATION OF CHRIST'S POWER**, instead of showing off my own power and abilities. Since I know it is all for Christ's good, I am quite happy about 'the thorn,' and about insults and hardships, persecutions and difficulties; for when I am weak, then I am strong--the less I have, the more I depend on him." (2 Cor 12:8-10)

God uses pain to **make us mad, not angry**.

Go ahead and get M.A.D. enough . . .

To stop complaining and **start contributing**.

To stop going with the flow and **start swimming against the current**.

To stop looking for heroes and **start being one**.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." (Col 3:12)