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Open Arms

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*That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses and difficulties.
For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 CORINTHIANS 12:10

I remember when my husband, Ed, and I were preparing to move to Montana. Without a doubt, we knew it was God's will.

But knowing God's plan and trusting Him with the process were two different things.

When an obstacle arose involving my job, I decided to maneuver the situation by my own might and power. I thought I could figure out a way around the problem and make everything work according to the plan I believed God had given us.

It turned into a total disaster.

Looking back, I can see what I couldn't see then: I was trying to do God's work in my own strength.

It's a fact—we humans have limitations. We can't see what lies ahead. We don't know what God is doing behind the scenes. And sometimes, when an obstacle appears in our path, our first instinct is to push harder, figure it out, or find a way around it.

But perhaps some obstacles aren't meant to be maneuvered around at all. Perhaps they are invitations to stop, surrender and trust the One who already knows the way through.

When God calls us to a purpose, He doesn't simply give us the assignment and leave us to accomplish it on our own. His Spirit fills, equips and empowers us for what He has called us to do.

We don't need to manipulate circumstances or force open doors God has not opened.

The apostle Paul learned this truth through his own struggles. He wrote: "That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses and difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." —2 Corinthians 12:10

What looks like weakness to us can become the very place where God's strength is most evident.

Our God-given work is not guaranteed to be accomplished because we are strong enough, clever enough or capable enough. It succeeds because God is faithful enough.

His Spirit provides what our human strength cannot.

Eventually, the situation with my job worked itself out—not through my clever maneuvering, but through God's timing and provision. His way was far superior to mine.

And I learned a lesson I've never forgotten: when God gives the assignment, He will also provide the strength. We may encounter earthly obstacles along the way, but no obstacle is greater than the God who called us.

I'm reminded of Pat Barrett's worship song *By the Spirit*, where he sings about standing with open arms, learning where his help and strength come from.

Those words speak deeply to me because perhaps this is what God was teaching me all along.

Open arms.

Not clenched fists trying to control the outcome. Open hands willing to trust. Open hearts willing to follow. And a life learning, day by day, where its true strength comes from.

When God calls you forward and an obstacle stands in your way, are you trying to figure out how to move it—or are you trusting God to show you the way through it?

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