

His Strength Made Perfect in Weakness

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What I immediately saw when I met the young girl was a bright-eyed, enthusiastic, full-of-life child. One wouldn't know that she has been given the burden of walking alongside multiple family members who struggle with drug and alcohol addiction. Her only credential to bear this task is a heart full of love and empathy that is not of this world. She has spent countless hours caring for others, rarely considering her own needs. Each day she wakes up to face the unknown. Yet she continues with life, and she smiles, she dreams, and she allows Jesus to carry her burdens. She offers no excuses or complaints about what God has asked her to endure; she simply accepts each day. She told me that she knows she can handle what happens because God allows her to be where she is...GOD ALLOWS HER TO BE WHERE SHE IS!!

As this precious girl and I approached Angel, the horse she chose for her session, I asked her if we could just 'be' with Angel for a little while, as she finished eating her hay. I expressed that sometimes we just need to be with our horse, not demanding or asking anything, but just be. I shared with her that this is what Jesus desires from us, to just be there with Him. He doesn't stand over us demanding our works, our service, our to-do lists. He wants to hang out and eat hay together (giggles and smiles).

She then took a deep breath and looked at me with eyes that have seen far more hurt, un-kept promises, heartbreak, and disappointment than I will ever know. She looked at me with eyes that understand what it is like to 'just be there', to hold the brokenness of a drug addicted mother, to sleep next to an intoxicated, heart-broken grandma, and truly not know what tomorrow will bring. This wise sage, in an eleven-year-old's body, looked at me with eyes of strength and said two small words, "I understand". God has chosen this little one to reveal His strength in an extraordinary way.

She slowly reached out to let the horse smell her hand and was greeted with a nuzzle, and then Angel did the unexpected and moved her head into the girl's little chest and pressed gently against her heart. The girl's arms slowly embraced the neck of this nine-hundred-pound animal and time stood still. It was a picture of what Jesus does for us when our hearts are hurting. This girl, whose arms are no stranger to comforting the afflictions of those deep in sorrow, was comforted by this powerful, yet meek and exceptionally sensitive animal. A picture of weakness and strength entwined for a moment in time, but a moment that will forever be seared into this child's heart.

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ."
(2 Corinthians 1:3-5)*