

A Surprising Source of Explosive Revival

Do you want to see revival? Are you praying for God to move through your campus, home or workplace? You may have great desire, but God's strategy may surprise you.

We can't push back the darkness in our own strength, but He has given us a most effective weapon—prayer. Prayer is for those who admit they are weak, that they don't have it all together (Matt. 5:3).

It's not a popular thought, but God delights in weakness.

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enjoys our weak efforts to follow and obey Him. No one can do life without God—and He created it this way.

Scripture even calls us sheep—weak, defenseless animals—and often refers to us as children of our Father in heaven.

What does it look like to be weak before Him? Why would the Lord use weakness to grow His saints? And how can we have courage to be weak—especially in a world that tells us to be strong?

Following Paul's Example

The Apostle Paul is a great example.

“Paul received the revelation that ‘godly weakness’ was the way to experience more of God's power,” says Mike Bickle, director of the International House of Prayer of Kansas City. “Jesus promised Paul that he would experience ‘strength made perfect’ if he embraced weakness. Paul was not referring to moral weakness, but weakness coming from godly choices.”

Here's Paul's journey in his own words:

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me, lest I be exalted above measure. I asked the Lord three times that this thing might depart from me. But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in [voluntary] weakness." Therefore most gladly I will boast in my [voluntary] weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Cor. 12:7-9).

"Paul describes two types of godly weaknesses," Mike continues in the same sermon. "First, those which are voluntary, including prayer, fasting, living simply and serving and blessing those who offend us (Matt. 6:1–20). Second, those which are involuntary, including his thorn in the flesh, persecution and reproach. When Paul boasts of his weakness (2 Cor. 12:9), he is referring to both the involuntary weakness of persecution and the voluntary weakness of the fasted lifestyle (2 Cor. 11:23–28)."

The Lord knows pride is one of the strongest temptations we face. It's part of our fallen human nature. We gravitate toward it even if we don't want to.

But fasting and embracing weakness helps safeguard us against the pride that lurks below the surface. If we're strong all the time, even in doing good, we might start thinking our power is enough; or we might be tempted to take credit for the good things happening in our life or ministry. This leads to a fall.

Paul did the opposite. His ministry was full of fruit, but he boasted in his weaknesses because it allowed "the power of Christ [to] rest on me" (2 Cor. 12:9).

Like Paul, we can experience more of the God's power in our ministry, heart and Christian walk as we embrace weakness—or dependence—on God.

Looking to God Brings Freedom

We didn't save ourselves, and we can't make ourselves perfect either. That's why Paul wrote that he was "confident of this very thing, that *He who began a good work in you will perfect it* until the day of Jesus Christ." In the next chapter, he says "for *God is the One working in you*, both to will and to do His good pleasure" (Phil. 1:6, 2:13, emphasis added).

The Lord is faithful to finish what He started. Our role is to cooperate with Him, not refusing His grace by trying to do it in our own strength. Too much striving will actually separate us from God.

"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6b).

Weakness is freedom. It's how we enter the Christian faith—by admitting we cannot save ourselves and accepting Christ's death on the cross—and since salvation didn't start with us but God, we shouldn't try to complete the sanctification process without Him either.

Learning to be weak and accepting our weakness will open us up to receiving God's power in new ways. Instead of boasting in our devotion—and being discouraged when we fail to love God and others the way we want to—we can turn to God's grace, which is made perfect in our weakness. Where we fail, He's strong.

The Lord already knows we can't do it ourselves, and He's ready to help all who call on Him—both at the point of salvation and daily in our Christian walk. This grace is for new believers and seasoned saints—even pastors, missionaries and leaders in the body of Christ never outgrow their need for the Lord's constant strength.

Weakness is freedom—a good gift that God gives His saints. The

Lord will strengthen us, but only as we rely on Him. {eoa}

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