

July 11, 2021
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Mike Gaston, guest speaker
2 Corinthians 12:7-10

“Strength in Weakness”

Introduction

Broad context of the passage: Paul’s defense of his apostleship

Immediate context of the passage: The vision of 12:1-6

The Big Idea: For the Christ-follower, true strength begins with the admission of weakness

1. The Teaching: God values weakness
 - a. The intentional creation of weakness (12:7)
 - b. Paul’s dialogue with God about the weakness (12:8-9a)
 - c. The spiritual impact of the weakness (12:9b-10)
2. The Process: How weakness works
 - a. It’s not automatic!
 - i. “When I am weak, then I am weak.”
 - ii. When I am strong, then I am weak”
 - iii. When I am weak, then I am strong”
 - b. Personal examples of weakness accomplishing its task
3. The freedom: Boasting in weakness
 - a. “I am weak in the face of what is _____ me.”
 - b. “I am weak in the face of what _____ me.”
 - c. “I am weak in the face of what ____ ____ of me.”

Conclusion

Discussion and Application

1. What ideas or principles mentioned in the message most stood out to you, and why?
2. Paul mentioned in verse 7 that the revelations he had received from God could result in him becoming conceited.

What does this admission reveal about Paul?

In what areas of your life might you be tempted toward pride?

Mike pointed out that “God would rather we suffer than be proud.” What impact does that phrase make on you? What is the upside, and what is the downside?

3. Verse 8 says that Paul pleaded with the Lord three times to remove this thorn in the flesh.

Paul took this problem to God. What does that tell us about prayer?

God said no to Pauls’ request. What does THAT tell us about prayer?

Has God said no to your prayers? How did you/do you generally respond to that? How do you hope to respond differently in light of this passage?

4. God’s response to Paul’s pleading was “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.” (vs. 9)

How do you respond to the idea that His grace is sufficient for us? Have you seen that work itself out in your life?

5. The result of Paul’s experience of the thorn in the flesh was that he would “boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ might rest upon me.” (vs. 9)

Mike’s Big Idea was that “For the Christ-follower, true strength begins with the admission of weakness.” In what areas are you weak?

How does, or how might, the strength of God show up in your weakness?

6. According to verse 10, the final result in Paul’s heart was that he could be content in all kinds of challenging circumstances. How would that kind of contentment change your life?

FILL-INS: within; surrounds; God asks