

Set Free: Finding Strength

“Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me...For when I am weak, then I am strong” (**II Corinthians 12:9, 10**, ESV). Our very first step to strength is admitting our weakness.

The second step is to turn to Christ for strength. **Philippians 4:13** says, “I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (ESV). In **Ephesians 3:14-21**, Paul prayed the Ephesians “be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” and then said God “is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us” (ESV).

Remember “Jesus Loves Me”: *Little ones to Him belong / they are weak, but He is strong*. Perhaps this song writer understood a passage that has always confused me: “unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (**Matthew 18:3**, ESV). The disciples wanted to know who was greatest (**vs. 1**). The one who most recognizes his weakness is the one God can most use and, therefore, is the greatest.

Consider Moses. At age 40, Moses presumed everyone would know he was the deliverer. He went out on his own and failed. However, at 80, when he believed he was the worst candidate, God used him to deliver Egypt. When Moses realized how weak he was, he became strong.

The pressing question is “Exactly what does God do to provide us strength and accomplish great things?” While I know some things, I do not know the exact answer to this question. I know God works through His Word. I know God works through His children. I know His angels are ministering spirits for those who will be saved (**Hebrews 1:14**). I know He no longer works through miraculous gifts of the Spirit (**I Corinthians 13**). However, there is more to it than these points.

We might as well ask what God did when David faced Goliath, when Esther overcame Haman, when Moses held up his hands while Israel fought Amalek, or when Saul fought Nahash the Ammonite. **Ecclesiastes 3:11** says, “Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end” (ESV). Despite our desire to quantify God’s working, we are simply to trust that God works and strengthens.

We must learn to pray along with David, “I love You, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies” (**Psalms 18:1-3**, ESV).

More on this to come.

—Edwin L. Crozier