



## What It Means To Be Weak

### People like winners

- Every day on earth there are contests to see who is best at something.
- Olympics, contests, leagues – everybody cheers for the winners.
- People respect strong people – healthy, disciplined, practiced, pretty.

### I want to talk about being strong and being weak

- What does it mean to be strong?
- What does it mean to be weak?
- Which is better?

### 1 John 3:1-8

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him**; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

4 **Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law**: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6 **Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not**: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

### We have an amazing promise from God!

- We shall live in eternity with an exciting, loving God.
- We shall have bodies like His – we can eat, walk through walls, and fly!
- But this HOPE causes men to PURIFY themselves to be sure of it!

## **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Paul saw the importance of purifying himself to ensure his inheritance!

## **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in **infirmities**, in **reproaches**, in **necessities**, in **persecutions**, in **distresses** for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Sometimes we are naturally weak:

- With temptations and fears from past bad experiences in our lives.
- With situations in which unbelievers and mockers surround us.
- With financial and/or relationship hardships.

In contrast it is easy to see those who are strong naturally:

- Have confidence in God and have overcome fears and anxieties.
- Are surrounded by healthy, positive Christian(-like) environments.
- Are blessed in both financial and social arenas.

## **All men are not created equal, but all are equally precious to God**

- We are human products of genetic and environmental mixtures.
- We need to be thoughtful for those less fortunate.

## **Romans 15:1-3**

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

## **Then there are those who are weak spiritually**

- People have different levels of convictions in every church.
- Sometimes people have different levels of understanding between what constitutes sin and what constitutes a bad idea (choice).
- When we differ, there is a Scriptural way to deal with this situation...

## **Romans 14:1-7**

1 **Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations.**

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

## **How do we treat this person who disagrees with us?**

- Should we exclude him/her from our fellowship lest we be poisoned?
- Should we accept him/her with the intention of converting them?
- Should we squabble, discuss and argue as often as we are together?

## **No! We are to accept them as children of God!**

- We can learn from them and they can learn from us, willingly.
- We can enjoy good Christian fellowship in those areas in which we agree.
- We must admonish against sin, but not judge in areas of convictions.

## **Funny Side Note – Who is really strong and who is really weak?**

- Those who have more liberty to do more things consider themselves strong – they can handle more temptation without committing sin.
- Those who have more convictions and have more personal restraints will consider themselves strong – more discipline and security = strength.
- But no matter which of these people read this passage of Paul, they both read it as though they are the strong ones and the others are weak.
- Thus, this passage applies to everyone!

## What is a conviction – is it not a protection from feeling convicted?

- Convictions are *personal* – you know your strengths and weaknesses. Each person has a relationship with God that should not be breached.
- Convictions are *sacrificial* – wisdom teaches the benefits of saying “No.” Not all people can see all the dangers, or they may not fear the risks.
- Convictions are *courteous* – others may not be able to handle what you can. Concern for them may compel you to make additional sacrifices.

1 Corinthians 6:12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

1 Corinthians 10:23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

## We can choose to be Weak – or are we choosing to be Strong?

- There are many things that do not make up sin, but they may not be wise.
- Sacrifices made to the glory of God honour God – and He will honour us.
- The more we say “No” naturally, the more God says “Yes” spiritually.

## Have you said “No” to sin yet, and “Yes” to God?

- People think Christians are wimpy, but are you willing to confess God?
- Are you willing to make sacrifices (that others can’t understand) for God?
- Will you purify yourself that you might enjoy the Christian hope?