DISCOVER YOUR Strength



Text: 2 Corinthians 12:1–10 (ESV)
Title: Discover Your Strength
Thought: The power of God is working in you
Topic: Gods help when you need it
Teaching: How God uses his strength to help us
Topic Introduction:

Story start:
Recently I went to visit a patient in a rehab facility: I noticed there was only a very small number of patients that could walk under the power of their own strength. Most of the patients there were either bedridden or confined to a wheelchair.

Story Setup:
The patients are in wheelchairs because they need assistance to move around and the wheelchair makes it easier to assist them; however, most of the patients didn't even have the strength to move the wheelchair, they still needed someone to push them.

Story Shift:
The reality is that for most people, if we live long enough, there may come a point in life where we will need help, we will have to rely on the strength of those around us, to help us get the things done that we can no longer do for ourselves.

Story Significance:
Most of us here today still have the physical strength to walk around on our own, but spiritually many of us are in wheelchairs, meaning somewhere in our lives we lack the strength to move, and we need a push to help us get where we need to go.

Sermon Sentence:
Every believer needs a push from God to get where were going
God is the primary source of strength for his follower
Christians are like hybrid vehicles, we have an alternate power source
When our strength runs out, God strength kicks in

Sermon Saying
With Christ Your weakness becomes your greatest strength
Your greatest strength is God using his strength to help you
You are powerful because God power is at work in you… Eph 3:20

Blessing Paragraph:
Grace involves God making up the difference where we fall short
Smokies told his mother she didn't have enough to buy cigarettes, she said make it enough, God fills in the gaps to make sure we have enough

Problem Paragraph:
We struggle in areas where we are weak, we don't recognize it or won't admit it
God has given us the Holy Spirit to help us with our weakness…Roman 8:26
The first step in AA is to admit that you have a problem.

Challenge Paragraph:
To discover your strength, you must first know your weakness
You must identify a problem before you can fix it
Understand where your weak and rely on Gods strength in that area

Text Background

Paul established the church of Corinth on his second missionary journey.
This is the second letter that he wrote to the church. The first letter he wrote is to correct errors that were happening in the church. However, it appears the first letter was not so well received.

In Paul's absence false apostles turned the church against him
They essentially challenged Paul's authority and his credentials. So, the church began to view Paul as illegitimate, and as a result they rejected his authority and the instructions he gave them in his first letter.

Paul makes another visit to the church in Corinth
Paul is successful in reestablishing his apostolic relationship with the church. 2nd Cor was written in response to that visit. To highlight the reconciliation of their relationship, and to address those who still opposed Paul's authority.

In chapter 11 Paul defends his authority as an apostle
The conversation continues here in chp 12. Paul says ok if you want to talk credentials, I can pull out my resume, and talk about my experience and accomplishments however, I don't rely on my own abilities, I rely on Gods strength.

Paul says, My Goal is it Glorify My Savior

Paul says I don't want people to see me as some great person; I want them to see the greatness of the one that I'm serving. Paul says I'm a true apostle, but my goal is not to promote myself, my mission is to lift Jesus as the savior.

Paul Says I know Where My Help Comes From

Our strength doesn't come from us; it comes to us; our strength is in Christ. Jesus is the true source of our strength, we can do all things through him, but we can do nothing without him, to get things done we must discover the strength we have in God.

TO DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTH, YOU MUST

I. IDENTIFY YOUR PURPOSE

A. What Do You Need Strength For

1. Whenever my wife asks for money, I will ask her what it's for
2. When the less fortunate ask for help, it matters why they are asking
3. Some people are asking God for help; but is it for the right reason
4. If I asked the lord for strength to rob a bank, do you think he would do it
5. When God entrust us with his power, it must be for the right thing
6. Wrong motives will keep you from getting what you ask for… James 4:3
7. It matters what you're asking God for and what you plan to do with it
8. God will give us supernatural strength if we have the proper motives
9. The proper motivation to seek God for strength is to do his will
10. You need Gods strength; without him we can do nothing… John 15:5

B. You Need Strength for Your Purpose

1. God promises to be with us and strengthen us… Isa 41:10
2. God uses his strength for our good according to his purpose… Rom 8:28
3. Our ultimate purpose is to obey God, obeying God makes us strong… Jer 7:22-23
4. God gives us the strength we need to do his will Zechariah 4:6
5. When I do a project for UPS, they provide the resources to get the job done
6. God gives us the strength we need to get the job done
7. Pharoah didn't let Isreal go because moses asked nicely, God used his power
8. God gives us access to his spirit and his power… Micah 3:8
9. God gives us power and authority to operate on his behalf…Luke 9:1
10. God strengthens us to make sure we succeed… Jer 1:8

II. YOUR PURPOSE IS TO GLORIFY GOD… 1ST Peter 2:9

A. Everything You Do Should Be for The Glory of God

1. When making decision we should ask, will this glorify God
2. Do it all for the glory of God… 1st Cor 10:31

B. Everything We Have Should Be used for The Glory of God

1. We are commanded to glorify God in body, mind, and spirit
2. glorify God in your body and in your spirit… 1st Cor 6:20
3. The bible says we must submit our bodies as a sacrifice

C. To Glorify God Is to Promote Character and Attributes

1. We promote God with the testimony of our words and lifestyle
2. God is glorified when we fulfill his purpose for our lives
3. God is glorified when we do good works in his name
4. Let your light shine so the father is glorified…Matt 5:16
5. The father is glorified when we bear much fruit… John 15:8

III. YOU MUST IDETIFY THE THINGS THAT KEEP YOU WEAK

A. Trusting in your own strength will keep you weak

B. There Is Nothing to Be Gained When You Boast About Yourself

1. Boasting is the expression of self-confidence and self-reliance
2. Boasting in self is the opposite of glorifying God
3. Pride is a hindrance to Glorifying Jesus and advancing the kingdom
4. How can God get the glory if you're keeping it all for yourselves
5. God does not share his glory Isa 42:8
6. The desire to be great can lead to embezzlement of Gods glory
7. To embezzle is to misappropriate something that isn't yours
8. Enron was accused of embezzling 11 billion (people retirement)
9. To claim credit for yourself, is to embezzle glory from God.
10. Will a man rob God, in tithes and offering, and in glory

C. Boasting in Self Takes Attention Away from God

1. Paul is boasting against his better judgement in a figurative manner
2. Paul is boasting to answer those who question his credentials
3. He's showing that he could boast about himself but chooses not to
4. Boasting will get in the way of his purpose of glorifying God
5. Your accomplishment should be a part of your testimony
6. Your testimony is about who God is to you, and what he's done for you
7. I can talk about what I have, but let people know God gave it to me
8. I can talk about what I've done, but let people know God enabled me
9. God gives us the blessing, but he reserves the glory for himself
10. The bible says those who exalt themselves will be brough low

D. Seeking Validation Will Make You Weak

1. We cannot make the mistake of making ministry about us
2. When we make it about us, we seek to prove ourselves instead of promoting God
3 The world overlooks who God ordained, and disregards who God designates
4. Paul was assigned by God, but they questioned his authenticity
5. The church put Paul in a position to boast, they said prove yourself
6. We are tempted to boast when we feel like we're in competition
7. We must realize our call comes with criticism and rejection
8. When you go into ministry someone will always question your motives
9. When God appoints you, someone will always question your authority
10. When God anoints you, someone will always question your ability

Close with Paul and Silas praying and worshiping in Jail Act 16:16-40