

## Power Perfected in Weakness

II Corinthians 11:30 - 12: 1-10

4/28/02

### Intro

- Men's retreat.

.....  
Paul said to the church in Corinth, that they had many instructors, but not many fathers. He was referring to the fact that he was the one who founded the church and had a love for it like a father would for his child. These so called "eminent apostles" were bothering the church with wrong teaching and harming the church he love so much.

Theses "eminent apostles" came in boasting about their spiritual exploits and trying to start a game of one-upmanship with Paul. They were hypnotizing the Corinthian church into believing they were true apostles of Jesus Christ in order to teach them false things.

Paul, at least at first it seems, responds to the one-upmanship, but takes a completely unexpected turn. He says that if he must boast, he will boast about those things which pertain to his weakness.

Here's where we learn one of the great lessons in all of scripture –***God's power is made perfect in our weakness*** (11:30).

The first and foremost experience he wants to brag about is the time he was let down in a basket from a window in the wall of Damascus.

<b>I. God's power is not perfected in our power.</b>
--

Vs 11:30-33

Acts 9: 1-31 A. **Paul (Saul) remembers being let down by God.**

- He wanted to go to his own people first.
- But Paul was not successful. He encountered riots every time he spoke to the Jews. It got to the point where the other disciples took him to the seaport of Caesarea and sent him to Tarsus where he could cool his heals for two years.
- After he left, the scripture says that the church enjoyed a time of peace.

### **B. Paul was a man in obscurity for 7-10 years.**

- Sometimes we need a time in the desert to hear the heart of God and to stop trying to rely in our own strength.

*Illus – Moses had to spend his own 40 years in the desert.*

*Illus- Chuck Smith in one of his books describes how his ministry lacked any real success during the prime years of his life; until he learned to rely in the Lord and not on his own strength.*

### **C. Paul could not let go of this idea of going to the Jews.**

- At the end of his ministry he felt he had to go to Jerusalem, even though the Holy Spirit was warning not to go.
- He caused a riot and was arrested within 7 days of arriving there.
- **Time will always prove the Lord to be right!!**

**II. How should we pray for those things which are difficult for us?**

Vs 12:8-9 A. Sometimes God allows a thorn in the flesh to us from exalting ourselves.

- It is called a messenger of Satan.

***Important: The thorn in the flesh is not the tendency toward sin!!!***

- It's interesting how the Lord allows the enemy to be used according to His purposes.

B. We should pray until either:

- 1) The thorn is removed or
- 2) The Lord gives His peace that His grace is sufficient.

- This is way to pray and have peace with our troubles.

C. God is more interested in our Godly character and future in heaven than our present comfort.

**III. God's power is made perfect in our weakness.**

A. Paul says, "I am well content with weakness."

- This is one of Paul's greatest lessons for us today.
- He's not talking about spiritual weakness, but rather weakness in his own personal glory.
- Notice that Paul comes to the place of being content.

B. When I am weak, then I am strong.

- He is especially referring to the fact that our humility keeps us out of the way of God's purposes.
- Pride is the most dangerous threat there is to ministry!!

C. But notice that it is never man's responsibility to keep others humble.

- We are called to edify and build up.
- God is able to handle the process of humbling.

**Conclusion**

**When we come to place of peace with our weaknesses, God will be ready to show us that He delights to use us for His glory.**

***Illus- Deep see fishing with my family and then preaching at a retreat.***