

“He’s Alive In You!”
July 8, 2018

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

CORE: We can either try to compensate for our weaknesses OR we can live from His strength.

v. 10- Paraphrase- *“When I acknowledge my own weakness—I learn to live from His strength”*

1. COMING TO THE END OF OURSELVES

[A “thorn in the flesh” tormented Paul that he recognized as “a messenger of Satan.” Possibly operating through people close to him (see 2 Cor. 11) influenced by this spirit to scrutinize, judge his motives negatively, in order to discredit him. NOTE: There are other opinions RE the “thorn.”]

The important thing: HOW he handled it:

- ***“Three times”- Lit. “again & again”***
- **He faced & acknowledged his weakness**
- **So that *“the power of Christ may rest on me”* (“may pitch a tent and dwell upon me”- Amplified)**

Philippians 4:11-13- *“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* NIV

- ***“I have learned”- Lit.- “initiated into a life-changing secret”***
- ***“Content”- not passive indifference; Lit.- “able to handle anything & anyone”***
- ***“Strengthened”- Lit.- “to infuse with strength; to invigorate”***

2. RECEIVING & RESTING IN HIS LIFE

[On the eve of going to the Cross—Jesus’ prayer revealed His purpose]

John 17:21- *“That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”*

Jesus died, rose, & ascended to make covenant with us—to unite us with Him at the closest level possible!

[Paul prayed that the covenant Jesus made would become REALITY to us!]

Ephesians 3:19- “(I pray) that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” NIV; “that you would be a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself” AMP

He continues:

“So that God may do superabundantly far over and above all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams].” HOW? “According to the power that works in us.” Ephesians 3:20 AMP

[Not just “over us” or “with us” or “beside us” or “waiting for us later”—BUT IN US!]

This NEW COVENANT RELATIONSHIP is described in the most intimate & interactive terms possible:

- **Like a Vine and its branches** (“I am the Vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me, and I in you, you will bear much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5 NIV)
- **Like a body and its members** (“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.” 1 Corinthians 12:27)
 - **Like a brain giving life to the whole body**
 - **We are moved by His thoughts and impulses**
 - **We share in Jesus’ history—what He’s done & what He’s won!**

*“If you then were **raised with Christ**, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:1-3*

We no longer live by mere outward rules—but from His life within us!

Listen to this letter from a missionary to the Philippines:

“For many years, my Christian life has been a struggle. I disciplined myself with a strict regimen of Bible reading and prayer. But it left me cold and empty inside...I kept a strict time of prayer, but I could not begin to keep the command of Jesus to love others as Jesus had loved me. My theology was impressive. I could debate others on any issue. Yet, in my true walk with God—I was failing...

Then I was confronted with the revelation that Jesus made a covenant on my behalf. He not only died for me. He died as me—taking my place. Doing for me what I could never do for myself. No longer is it about me trying to obey and failing—but of trusting His obedient death and resurrection for

me...I saw that I had been working backwards—trying to achieve what had already been done instead of receiving, resting, and moving from it as the starting point of my life. His death, resurrection, and ascension had carried me into the covenant friendship of God...

I was dead! I had risen from the dead! I was a man who had returned to his own funeral alive in the power of an endless life! And it had all happened in my representative—Jesus...

My relationship to God is as strong as the relationship Jesus has with the Father. Now my whole existence depends on Jesus. Apart from Him, I have nothing and can do nothing...

My Christian life was a struggle to try to imitate Jesus. Now, for the first time, I understand what Paul meant when he wrote, 'For to me to live is Christ.'

I never thought of myself as someone who was 'weary and heavy laden' whom Jesus called to 'come to Me and rest.' Then I realized He was talking about me, and I came to Him and I rested. I felt like laughing with relief. Since that time, I have been learning to stand in the truth and face life as a man who's passed through death and now lives in the life of Jesus."