

BOASTING IN



Boasting in Weakness - Lessons from Paul's Life

By Ariel Presswood

2 Corinthians 12:9 - "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

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Setting the Scene

Key Concept:

Paul's message about boasting in weakness reveals a profound truth: our limitations are not a hindrance but a platform for God's grace and power to be displayed. When we acknowledge our weaknesses and invite God into those areas, His strength becomes evident in ways that transform our lives and encourage those around us. Weaknesses are opportunities for growth, reliance on God, and testimonies of His unending faithfulness. This perspective shifts our focus from self-sufficiency to Christ's all-sufficient grace.

Engaging Analogy:

"Imagine a lantern with cracks in its surface. At first glance, the cracks might seem like flaws. But when the lantern is lit, those cracks allow the light to shine through, illuminating the darkness. In the same way, our weaknesses allow God's light to shine through, making His power and presence visible to others."

Invitation:

Invite participants to reflect on their own weaknesses and challenges. Challenge them to see these areas as opportunities to experience and share God's strength and grace. Encourage them to embrace the beauty of relying on God and to find joy in sharing their testimonies of His power.



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Section 1: Reflect and Discuss

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean that God's power is made perfect in weakness? How does this change how we view our struggles?
2. Why is it important to rely on God's strength rather than our own?
3. Can you share a time when God used your weakness to reveal His power and bring about a positive outcome?
4. How can acknowledging our weaknesses inspire others and deepen their faith?
5. How does boasting in our weaknesses glorify God?

Family or Group Discussion

- **Biblical Examples:** Reflect on stories of people in the Bible who experienced God's power through their weaknesses. For example, Moses' fear of speaking (Exodus 4:10-12), David's youth and inexperience when facing Goliath (1 Samuel 17), or Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Discuss how God worked through these individuals to accomplish His purposes.
- **Overcoming Fear of Weakness:** Share why it can be challenging to admit our weaknesses and how trusting God can transform those struggles into testimonies of His faithfulness.
- **Encouragement Through Vulnerability:** Reflect on how being honest about our struggles can inspire others to trust God in their own challenges. Discuss practical ways to encourage others by sharing our stories of grace.



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Section 2: Hands-On Activities

Activity 1: Cracked Clay Pot Craft

Objective: Create a clay pot that symbolizes how God's light shines through our weaknesses.

Materials Needed:

- Small clay pots (intact or pre-cracked)
- Paints or markers
- LED tea lights
- Optional: air-dry clay for repairs
- Stickers or decorations

Instructions:

1. Decorate the clay pot with words or designs that represent God's grace, such as "Faith," "Hope," "Strength," and "Trust."
2. If using cracked pots, leave the cracks visible to symbolize brokenness. If using intact pots, gently create cracks to represent areas of weakness.
3. Place an LED tea light inside, letting the light shine through the cracks as a reminder of God's power in our lives.
4. Reflect on how our weaknesses allow God's light to shine through, bringing hope and encouragement to others.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to write a prayer of surrender on a small piece of paper and place it inside the pot as a personal commitment to trust God with their weaknesses.



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Activity 2: Grace and Strength Collage

Objective: Illustrate how God's grace transforms weaknesses into strengths.

Materials Needed:

- Magazines
- Colored paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers and pens

Instructions:

1. Cut out images or words from magazines that represent personal challenges, fears, or weaknesses.
2. Arrange these cutouts on one side of a poster or sheet of paper to symbolize struggles.
3. On the other side, add images or words that represent God's strength, grace, and victories in those areas (e.g., "Peace," "Confidence," "Healing").
4. Use markers to connect the two sides with phrases like "God's Grace Transforms" or "His Strength in My Weakness."
5. Share the collage with the group, explaining how God's power has worked in specific areas of life.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to include a Bible verse that inspires them to trust in God's strength, such as Isaiah 40:29-31 or Philippians 4:13.



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Activity 3: Power in Weakness Tree

Objective: Create a tree where participants write their weaknesses and God's promises.

Materials Needed:

- Large poster board or construction paper
- Markers
- Paper leaves or sticky notes
- Glue or tape
- Decorative items like glitter or stickers

Instructions:

1. Draw a large tree with bare branches on the poster board.
2. Write personal weaknesses or challenges on paper leaves or sticky notes.
3. Add the leaves to the tree along with Bible verses or promises about God's strength and grace (e.g., "My grace is sufficient for you," 2 Corinthians 12:9).
4. Decorate the tree with symbols of growth, such as flowers or fruits, representing the transformation God brings through His power.
5. Reflect on how the tree symbolizes spiritual growth and reliance on God.

Extension Idea: Make this an ongoing project by adding new leaves over time, representing areas where participants have seen God's power at work in their lives.



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Section 3: Music and Creativity

Memory Verse Song

Set 2 Corinthians 12:9 to the tune of a familiar children's song, such as "This Little Light of Mine":

"God's grace is enough for me, / His power shines through my need. / In my weakness, He is strong, / I'll boast of His love all along."

Encourage participants to sing along and create hand motions to make the song more interactive and memorable.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to write additional verses about their personal experiences of God's grace and power. Share these verses as a group.

Creative Writing Prompt

Ask participants to write or draw about a time when they felt weak but experienced God's strength. How did His power help them overcome challenges? How did this experience deepen their faith and encourage others?

Extension Idea: Combine individual stories into a group "Book of Grace and Power," filled with testimonies, illustrations, and reflections about God's work in their lives.



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Section 4: Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection:

- What is one area of weakness where I need to trust God's strength?
- How can I share God's grace and power with others through my struggles?
- Reflect on how embracing our weaknesses can lead to freedom, joy, and deeper faith in Christ.

Prayer:

Lead a prayer thanking God for His sufficient grace and asking for trust in His strength. Pray for courage to embrace weaknesses and share testimonies of God's love and power. Include a moment of silent reflection for participants to think about how they can rely on God in their struggles.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to write their own prayers of surrender, asking God to use their weaknesses for His glory. Share these prayers with the group or keep them as personal reflections.

