



The Strength of Weakness

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We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 2 Corinthians 4:8–9 (NIV)

Scripture references (NIV): Acts 9:1–3, Philippians 3:4b–6, Acts 9:3–6, Acts 9:17–19, Acts 9:15b–16, 2 Corinthians 11:24–30, 2 Corinthians 12:7b–8

Q—What's your thorn?

2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NIV)

We discover His strength in our weakness . . .

⇒ **When our humility leads to a new identity.**

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

⇒ **When our authenticity leads to relatability.**

James 5:16a (The Message)

Vulnerability is not winning or losing; it's having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome. Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage. Brené Brown, Rising Strong

Spiritual Practice This Week: Begin to read through Book of Psalms, and keep reading through the summer.

⇒ **When our limitations lead to invocation.**

⇒ **When our sin leads to redemption.**

Q—Have you allowed His grace to be sufficient for you?



Study & Discussion for Your Next Small Group

Theme: *From Public Enemy to Suffering Servant*

Share Together: Is there someone you know who became a Christian, who you thought was the most unlikely person to become a believer? Why were you shocked?

Reflect Together: From Sunday's Online Experience: What impacted you the most from the message and how were you able to take steps in doing the Spiritual Practice this week?

Read Together: Acts 9:1-19

Discuss Together:

- What was Saul like, and what were his plans before encountering Jesus on the road?
- Some say, "The Holy Spirit is a gentleman." Was this true for Saul? Why do you think God chose this method to convert Saul?
- What was the most dramatic experience of God getting your attention?
- What did Jesus mean by saying that Saul was persecuting him personally, not referring to the others he persecuted?
- When we help or harm others, why are we doing the same to Jesus? Read Matthew 25:40 before answering.
- What is your speculation about the reason God blinded Saul, and the way he was healed?
- How can we be blind spiritually and when has God opened your eyes to see the light?
- Why did God choose Ananias? Why did he initially respond the way he did?
- When has there been a time you felt God was asking you to complete a tough task? What were the results?
- What do you think or feel about the message God told Ananias to give to Saul, especially regarding suffering? How did this become true for Saul, who became the Apostle Paul in his future life and ministry?
- How would you express the purpose of suffering as Christ's followers and his chosen instruments?
- What has suffering done to your faith?
- What are you enduring now for which you need prayer that your faith would be stronger?

Pray Together: Take time to share what God is doing in answering prayer and also pray over needs in your group.