

HUB NOTES

Powerful Prayers from Weakness **Philippians 1**

PAUL'S BIG IDEA

After you've read 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 a few times, try to summarize the big idea of the passage in a single sentence: "I think the big idea of 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 is ..."

In light of what this passage is saying, answer the following questions:

What do you feel Paul wanted the Corinthians to understand and believe?

How did Paul want the Corinthians to respond?

YOUR COUNTERINTUITIVE LIFE

Our culture tells us that weakness is something to be avoided. How does this mindset measure up to the Bible's teaching on our willingness to disclose our weaknesses, fears, and doubts to God and others?

We often seek to control our happiness by bringing our strengths to bear, especially in situations where we feel uncomfortable. Why do we struggle with entrusting our lives to Christ and simply turning to God in prayer that admits our weakness as we trust His strength?

How would your life be different if you truly believed the Father had only love for you and if He asked you to give come to Him when you feel weak and trust Him to work in the midst of your weakness toward a resolution that you could never imagine?

YOUR COUNTERINTUITIVE MEDITATIONS

Now, have one person in your group read out loud the closing points from Dave's sermon on Sunday and move directly into prayer, with no prep, no guidance ... just pray your heart for your life, your family, your friends, and our church.

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Be honest here.

In chapter 1 of Philippians, Paul describes how prayer is the fundamental way that God enters into weakness and demonstrates His power and strength.

Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵ for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, (Phil. 1:1-5)

What's Paul's prayer life like? Paul prays for the believers in Philippi and He prays often. He is thrilled at the glorious riches the saints in Philippi received. God did in them what no man could do. God will continue to do in them what no man can. As He says to them in 4:19 — "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

⁹ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Phi 1:9-11).

²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. (Phi 1:27-28)

The end goal of all of Paul's prayers is love. He prays for abounding love. He prays for the capacity to navigate through life with the tough choices that love must make. How is our conduct worthy of the Gospel? It happens through lives of fearlessness and unity in love for the sake of the gospel.

¹⁹ For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰ according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain (Phi 1:19-21)

Paul is convinced that their prayers for him will affect the outcome of His imprisonment. Letter after letter, Paul makes the prayers of ordinary, relatively new believers the means in which his ministry as the greatest missionary ever would succeed.