



Pastoral Answers to Life's Questions: How Do I Handle My Weaknesses?

Introduction: “Why am I such a weakling?”

• 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God.”

Perspective #1. “Weakness is our common human experience.”

- All of us are broken world people!
- “Everyone’s hurt is always the worst.”

Perspective #2 “We come from a long line of weaklings!”

“...from weakness were made strong...” (Hebrews 11:34)

• Hebrews 4:15 “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”

• 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

- We have a God who loves to use weak people.
- We even have a Savior who understood weakness first-hand.

Perspective #3. “Human weaknesses are not our worst flaw. Lying about them is.”

Perspective #4 “We must learn to admit our weaknesses openly and honestly.”

- “If God is ever going to use you greatly, you will walk with a limp the rest of your life.” (Rick Warren)
- “The one spiritual disease is thinking that one is quite well.” (G. K. Chesterton)
- Judges 16:17 “...become weak and be like any other man.”
- Acts 14:15 “...we are but men...”
- Psalm 103:14 “For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust.”
- 1 Corinthians 2:3 “...I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.”
 - Some of us are limping along physically...emotionally...mentally...spiritually...ignorantly.
- “Think of me as a fellow patient in the same hospital, who having been admitted a little earlier, could give some advice.” (C.S. Lewis)

Perspective #5. “Our weaknesses are not what cripples us; our bad attitude toward weaknesses do.”

- Psalm 69:3 “I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; My eyes fail while I wait for my God.”
- Psalm 42:7 “Deep calls to deep at the sound of Thy waterfalls; all Thy breakers and Thy waves have rolled over me.”

Perspective 6 “Our weaknesses are only temporary.”

- 2 Corinthian 4:16-18 “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”
- 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 “For we now that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; inasmuch as we, having put it on, shall not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.”
- 1 Corinthians 5:5-9 “Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- for we walk by faith, not by sight-- we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore also we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.”

Perspective #7 “Our weaknesses point us to God’s power.”

• 2 Corinthians 4:7-11 “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”

Perspective #8 “Our weaknesses better equip us to serve God.”

• “All of God's giants have been weak people.” (Hudson Taylor)

Perspective #9 “Our weaknesses can draw us closer to God.”

• Matthew 11:28-30 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.”

• Isaiah 40:29-31 “He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.”

• Psalm 63:1 “O God, Thou art my God; I shall see Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. Thus I have beheld Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory.”

Perspective #10 “We must look beyond our weaknesses to the glory being revealed through them.”

• Romans 8:18 “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

• 2 Corinthians 4:17 “For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison...”

Perspective #11 “We must learn to be content in our weaknesses.”

• 2 Corinthians 12:10 “Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Perspective #12 “We must let our weaknesses stimulate us to help others who are weak.”

• 1 Thessalonians 5:14 “And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.”

• Romans 15:1 “Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.” cf. 2 Corinthians 7:5-6 - Paul was comforted by the coming of Titus.

Perspective #13. “God allows some of our weaknesses to prevent us from becoming proud and self-reliant.”

• 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 “And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me-- to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”

Perspective #14 “Our weaknesses are a gift.”

• 2 Corinthians 4:7 “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves...”

• 2 Corinthians 4:10 “...always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

• 2 Corinthians 12:9 “(Christ’s power) is perfected in weakness...”

• 2 Corinthians 12:5 “I will not boast, except in regard to my weaknesses.”

Concluding Challenge: Humpty Dumpty: The Rest of the Story