



A Captivating Phrase

“... the weakness of God is stronger than mankind”.

1 Corinthians 1:25b

This is, indeed, a captivating phrase penned by Paul - “the weakness of God”. The Greek word translated “weakness” is : *asthenes*¹, meaning “without strength”. There is a wonderful mystery in the many passages in which Paul speaks of “weakness”: It is *our* weakness which we give to God, He takes it and fills it (perfects, completes, finishes it) with His strength.

This is *God’s methodology* “from before the foundation of the world” - in “The Lamb that was slain”², in His choice of Israel³

¹ Strong’s # 772

² Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:20

³ Deuteronomy 7:7

and Gideon's company⁴, in the Cross of Christ - "the wisdom and power of God"⁵, and now in the calling of the Church to make known (demonstrate) this wisdom to the powers and principalities⁶.

God – and His power – dwell in our weakness.

⁹“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**, so that **the power of Christ may dwell in me.** ¹⁰Therefore I delight **in weaknesses, in insults, in distresses, in persecutions, in difficulties, on behalf of Christ**; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

*The Church is supposed to be “weak” (meek).
That is to say, the opposite of the powers and principalities.*

²³“But we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, ²⁴but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.** ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than mankind, and **the weakness of God is stronger than mankind.** ²⁶For consider **your calling, brothers and sisters**, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; ²⁷but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the

⁴ Judges 7

⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:18, 24, 30

⁶ Ephesians 3:9-10

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wise, and **God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,**²⁸ and the insignificant things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no human may boast before God.³⁰ But it is due to Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,³¹ so that, just as it is written: “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:23-31

This is the “great-er commission” of the Church:

⁹“And to enlighten all people as to what the plan of the mystery is which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things;¹⁰ so that **the multifaceted wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.**” Ephesians 3:9-10

*“The people whom I have formed for Myself
will make known My attributes.”*

My point is this: In both the Old and New Testaments, scripture speaks of **God forming a people to make known His attributes.**⁷ I particularly like the added detail provided in the Septuagint

⁷ Isaiah 43:21 AMP. See also: Psalm 102:18, Luke 1:17, and 1 Peter 2:9.

translation of Isaiah 43:21⁸: “My people whom I have formed⁹ to show forth¹⁰ My attributes.”¹¹ And similarly in 1 Peter 2:9¹²: “ ... a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession¹³, to show forth the attributes of the One who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”. This is one way in which the Holy Spirit has communicated to us “the whole counsel of God”. Acts 20:27

A specific aspect identifying this people is that they are a people who **individually and collectively embrace their weaknesses**. In the apostle Paul’s words, they “*boast* in their weaknesses”, for they know that “when they are weak, the power of Christ indwells their weaknesses, wherein His strength is made complete”. 2 Corinthians 12:9 In this 2nd epistle to the Corinthians, as well as in his other epistles¹⁴, Paul mentions some examples of what he meant by “weaknesses”: “in infirmities¹⁵, in insults,

⁸ “My people [G2992](#) [G1473](#) whom [G3739](#) I procured; [G4046](#) the ones [G3588](#) [²my virtues [G703](#) [G1473](#) ¹to describe]. [G1334](#) (*Apostolic Bible Polyglot*)

⁹ Greek: *peripoieomai*, Strong’s # 4046: purchased, procured, formed.

¹⁰ Greek: *diegeomai*, Strong’s # 1334: describe, declare, make known, show forth.

¹¹ Greek: *arete*, Strong’s # 703: virtues, excellencies, praise.

¹² But you [G1473](#) [G1161](#) [²race [G1085](#) ¹are a chosen], [G1588](#) a royal [G934](#) priesthood, [G2406](#) [²nation [G1484](#) ¹a holy], [G39](#) a people [G2992](#) for [G1519](#) procurement; [G4047](#) so that [G3704](#) [²the [G3588](#) ³virtues [G703](#) ¹you should publish] [G1804](#) of the one [G3588](#) [²from out of [G1537](#) ³darkness [G4655](#) ¹calling you] [G1473](#) [G2564](#) into [G1519](#) [G3588](#) his wonderful [G2298](#) [G1473](#) light. [G5457](#) (*Apostolic Bible Polyglot*)

¹³ *NASB*

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:30-32; Galatians 4:13-15; 5:11; 6:7; 2 Timothy 3:10-11. Also see:

<http://www.biblecharts.org/apostlepaulcharts/15%20-%20The%20Sufferings%20of%20Paul.pdf>

¹⁵ Physical illness. Galatian 4:13-15. https://www.thenarrowpath.com/audio/verse-by-verse/2nd-corinthians/09_0000_2nd_Corinthians_12-13.mp3

in distresses, in persecutions, in difficulties”. 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 6:3-10; 11:23-27 & 12:10

The “peculiar people”¹⁶ God is forming for Himself are a people who embrace “weakness” as a quintessential aspect of their CALLING (1 Peter 2:21). It is, in fact, a calling which God intends for the Church – an even “great-er commission”, if you will – and that is to make known (show forth, demonstrate) to the powers and principalities the wisdom and power of God residing in the Cross of Christ. Ephesians 3:10-11

There is much to say about this people and their calling which I have discussed in another article¹⁷, but this article will deal with a pre-requisite of being one of their number is a quality called “Meekness”.

The Pre-requisite: “Meekness”

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

Matthew 5:5¹⁸

¹⁶ 1 Peter 2:9 KJV

¹⁷ “*The Cross & The Powers of Darkness*”: [Read](#) or [Listen](#)

¹⁸ Cf. Proverbs 22:4

The prerequisite to this inheritance is “meekness”. Jesus referred to Himself as “meek” (Matthew 11: 29). As “the Church which is His Body” (Ephesians 1:23), we are to be like the Head of the Body (1 Corinthians 12:12) – namely, **meek**.

Meekness is an essential aspect of the divine nature of which we are partakers. (2 Peter 1:4) Thus, through imparting to us the divine nature, God’s purpose is to conform us to the image of His Son (Romans 8: 29), who is “meek and lowly¹⁹ in heart”.

Matthew 11:29

Resting in the Power of God

“The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.” Matthew 11:12²⁰

“The meek will inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5

Violent men “posses” by force - children “inherit”.

“Meekness” is *not* weakness; but it embraces “weakness”.

Meekness embraces weakness in the context of having faith in God. In *that* context, human weakness finds the strength and

¹⁹ Greek: *tapeinos* - humiliated, cast down, lowly

²⁰ For my explanation of this verse, see [“Seeing the Kingdom Through the Cross”](#), pp.11-12.

power of God. Weakness is having no resources in oneself upon which to draw. But meekness draws upon limitless resources in God.²¹ Therefore, meekness is ultimately power. But the “power” then, is *not* to “*possess* the earth” in one’s own strength - as do “violent men” - but instead, to “**inherit** the land” through “childlike” faith in God’s strength to fulfill His promise.²²

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants....”²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and **I will give you rest.**”²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **you will find rest** for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is comfortable, and My burden is light.”

Matthew 11:25, 28-30

Meekness is the intentionality to *find* and *enter into* “**His rest**” in every circumstance and situation. **Rest** is the reward of faith and obedience. (Hebrews 3:18-19; 4:3-8) It is choosing to look to God and trust God in a given circumstance or situation, and

²¹ This faith includes the works of faithfulness and obedience on our part. James 2:14-26 (also Hebrews 11). Therefore, one could never attribute compromise or failure to obey, to ‘meekness’. King Saul was an example of this type of compromise. 1 Samuel 15: 3 and 18-24. Under pressure of people, circumstances and situations, unfaithfulness and disobedience are moral WEAKNESS. Whereas MEEKNESS is the inner strength to be obedient and remain faithful to God even in the face of pressure from people, circumstances, and situations.

²² In Matthew 5:5, Jesus is quoting Psalm 37:11, where it says, “The Meek will inherit the LAND.” “The land” speaks of the victories of inheriting God’s promises in this life. (Hebrews 13: 7; 6:12). “The earth” refers to the “new heaven and new earth”. (2 Peter 3: 7, 10-13)

intentionally *rest* from employing one's own works in response to that circumstance or situation. (Hebrews 4:9-11) It is choosing to let **God work** rather than you work in a given circumstance or situation. In this sense, "rest" can be understood as *a place* – a **place in the Spirit** – rather than an actual ceasing of all activity.

"A Captivating Phrase" is an excerpt from the eBook ["The Weakness of God"](#). See the corresponding [eBook](#) on our [website](#).

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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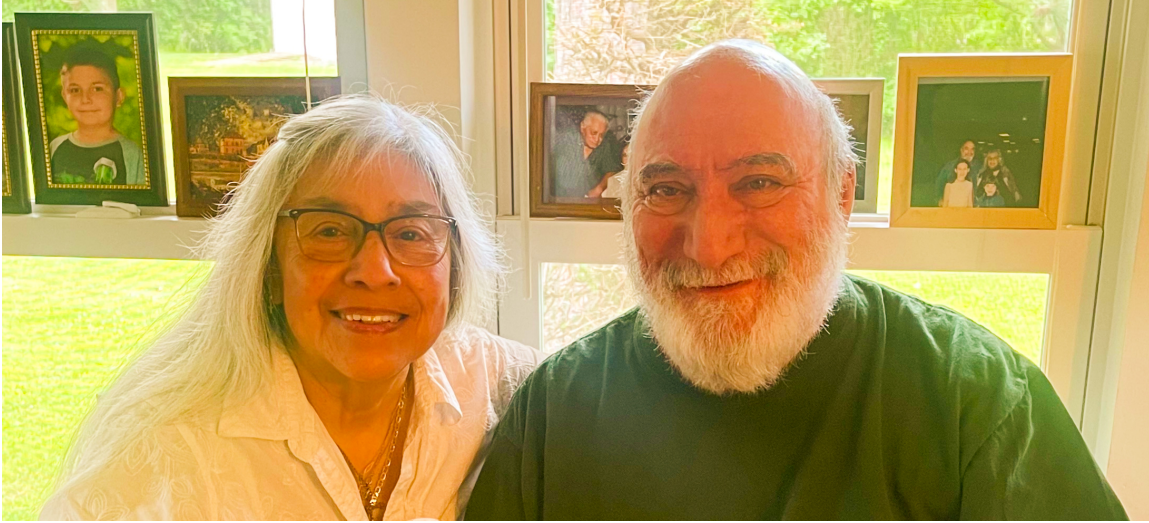
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~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, disciplined many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

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