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SEEKING JESUS

Visuals With Points To Ponder
To Help You Find Jesus' Principles

TO SEEK THE SAVIOUR, JESUS THE, SAVE YOU BY THE LOAF.

HOW THE FOLLOWING PAGES WERE PREPARED TO HELP YOU FIND JESUS' PRINCIPLES

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SEEKING JESUS

PAUL'S TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

In recent classes we've looked at Christ establishing his church and ministering to his people, both in Acts and in the Book of Mormon. In this class, we're going to study the Apostle Paul's witness of Jesus Christ.

As with so many of our classes, we could have a whole course just on this subject, but we will focus on ONE ASPECT of Paul's teachings about Christ.

QUESTION

DO YOU KNOW THE ONE WORD PAUL FREQUENTLY USES IN HIS WRITINGS IS THE WORD

WEAK?

Lord Frey Writing the Apostle Paul by Sandro di Botticelli

Paul doesn't intend the word "weak" to be defined as not strong. He uses it to refer to personal "weaknesses" or "weak things" we each struggle with. Paul uses this word a lot.

DO YOU HAVE ANY WEAKNESSES?

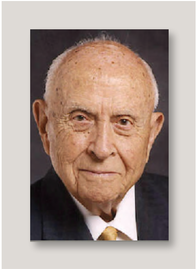
Do you have any weaknesses that humble you? Maybe you're trying to be kinder in how you talk to others, or let's say, you're at a gathering and somebody mentions a family that is struggling and you're tempted to join in and gossip.

Or you might struggle with fear—or perhaps follow through. Maybe you have a physical weakness that causes you pain or maybe a character flaw that seems to always get the best of you.

Perhaps your weakness could be a struggle to forgive others—or even God—for things that have happened to you. Or maybe it's for some hard trials you've been experiencing for what feels like SOMEONE WE ALL HAVE WEAKNESSES.

MOST OFTEN, OUR WEAKNESSES ARE HUMBLING AND TASTE SO VERY BITTER TO US.

Maybe weakness is a feature because our weaknesses, and those of others can help us learn valuable lessons. Elder David A. Bednar recounted being in a meeting that included President Gordon B. Hinckley, and Elder David B. Haight, an apostle then age 97, and in poor health. President Hinckley asked Elder Haight to say the closing prayer, but Elder Haight struggled to stand and offer the prayer.



That lesson only came because of a weakness.

Elder Bednar recounts,

"After several attempts to rise to his feet, President Hinckley courteously said, "David, it is all right"—suggesting, I believe, that it was permissible for Elder Haight to remain in his chair and offer the prayer. Elder Haight responded in a voice that was both firm and appropriate and said, "President, I must stand!"

There was simply no way that mighty Apostle was going to sit...as he communicated with his Heavenly Father. So once again Elder Haight worked to stand—and was successful. I shall never forget the spirit I felt as I listened to Elder Haight pray. I hope on that occasion I was quick to observe a powerful lesson about the dignity and the humility that should always attend our prayers."

That lesson only came BECAUSE OF A WEAKNESS.

WEAKNESS COULD BE A FEATURE

Another reason weakness could be a feature and not a defect is that it helps us to see God's power at work in our lives. When God called Jeremiah to prophesy, Jeremiah said,

"I can't speak for you! I'm too young!" (Jeremiah 1:6, NLT).

Because Jeremiah had this weakness, he was forced to RELY MORE ON GOD than his own natural abilities. Weakness is a feature, not a defect. So when you feel weak, maybe that's a sign that God wants to use you for his purposes. After all, CHRIST'S POWER WORKS BEST IN WEAKNESS.

TWO COMMON WEAKNESSES

Let's explore two common weaknesses we experience in this world and see how Christ might use them to work in us.

One weakness we struggle with is temptation. Paul understands what it means to be mortal and fight against sin. He said,

"The trouble is not with the law, for it is spiritual and good. The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate...

I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway..."

TEMPTATION

ST. PAUL / GETTY MUSEUM

Paul could be talking about life today.

A woman gets home from work and says,
"I gotta do my homework right now, but I'll just look at Instagram for a minute."

A return missionary says,
"I'm committed to waking up early to read scriptures, but when the alarm goes off, I always hit snooze."

A mother promises herself,
"For sure I'm going to the temple...in a few weeks."

PAUL WRITES

"I love God"—he calls it my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind.
"The power inside me is close to the sin that is still within me.
Oh, what a miserable person I am" (Romans 7:24-25)

PAUL'S DESIRE TO PUT OFF THE NATURAL MAN

THE NATURAL MAN

While there are a variety of meanings in this passage, the JOSEPH SMITH TRANSLATION adds some important insights.

One possible way to interpret this passage is that Paul at times felt a tug of war between the NATURAL MAN and his desire to come closer to Christ.

Neph may have felt this battle to put off the natural man too

"O wretched man that I am! My heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities. I am encompassed about because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me. And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sin."
(2 Nephi 4:17-19)

Neph BUILT A BOAT AND FOLLOWED THE LAMIONE. Paul traveled thousands of miles and STOOD FIRM in the FACE OF PERSECUTION

Neph and Paul were good, righteous people.

They like all of us, continued to face temptation, even though they wanted to do what was right.

Like Neph and Paul, we also struggle to resist temptation.

CONSIDER

PAUL'S WORDS

After describing his own inner battle between good and evil, Paul wrote:

Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord!
(Romans 7:24-25, NLT)

WHO WILL FREE ME?

JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

Perhaps weakness can be a feature as it helps us turn more deeply to Christ. In fact, Paul said:

"I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me."(2 Corinthians 12:9, NLT)

Weaknesses can give occasion for Jesus to work in us.

THE CO-FOUNDER OF AA

DR BOB SMITH

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

There once was a man who started drinking alcohol as a college student in the northeastern United States. By the time he started medical school, his drinking was interfering with his classes and he temporarily had to leave school.

For nearly 20 years he tried to juggle work, family and his alcohol addiction. Finally, after decades of struggle, this man, along with his friend, founded a group that now numbers in the tens of numbers in the millions. We are talking about Dr. Bob Smith, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

"There's no doubt that ALCOHOL WAS A WEAKNESS for Dr. Smith. But through Jesus Christ, this weakness became a strength.

Dr. Smith wrote,

"I don't believe I have any right to get cocky about getting sober. It's only through God's grace that I did it. I may have contributed some activity to help, but basically, it was only through His kindness."

THROUGH HIS GRACE & KINDNESS
WE CAN BE EXISTED & HELPED IN OUR WEAKNESSES

Is CHRIST'S GRACE really all we need? YES!!! SI!

Is it more powerful than the WEAKNESSES of THE FLESH? YES!!! SI!

Paul writes,

"Where sin abounded, grace did MUCH MORE abound, through JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." (Romans 5:20-21)

IN OTHER WORDS, SIN AND TEMPTATION ARE REAL **BUT CHRIST'S GRACE IS STRONGER!**

Jesus Christ
HIS GRACE IS STRONGER THAN THE WEAKNESSES OF THE FLESH!

ONE WEAKNESS OF THE FLESH

AS WE STRIVE WITH THE HELP OF HIS ENABLING POWER TO OVERCOME OUR WEAKNESSES,

His grace covers us!

That sounds good. But emphasizing Christ's grace might make some of us a little nervous. After all, if there's so much grace and mercy, won't that tempt people to break the commandments?

Somebody might suggest, "It's good to sin so that you can be able to help others who are sinning." Or maybe a person says, "It doesn't really matter if I give into temptation. Because Jesus will pay for my sins anyway."

PAUL WAS AWARE OF THIS LINE OF REASONING

There were rumors in Paul's days that some Christians said that it was fine to sin because Christ would cover the cost of all their sins. Paul wrote,

"Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? BY NO MEANS!" In other words, just because grace is not doesn't mean we should keep sinning.

In Romans 6 is a WRAP. Paul is emphasizing that because of Christ's grace, you and I can become NEW PEOPLE—born again through Jesus Christ.

My old person was crucified. I died with Christ on the cross when I was baptized, buried in the water AND NOW I AM A NEW PERSON

Yes, I still struggle with temptation, but now through Christ's grace I can walk in newness of life. And the need to consistently "SUIN TO JESUS CHRIST on that journey is part of THE FEATURE of THE WEAKNESS OF SIN.

YOU MIGHT BE

THINKING

"Yes, grace is good for most people, but I'm different. I keep on sinning even when I know better. Does really isn't hope for me

IS THIS TRUE?

In Romans chapter 5, didn't Paul teach,

"Christ died for those who live really good lives."?

NO WAY! THAT'S NOT WHAT HE TAUGHT!

PAUL ACTUALLY WROTE,

"CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY."
(Romans 5:6).

Paul then emphasizes,

While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:8

Christ didn't wait and say, "Once you repent, then I'll die for you." No, no, no. It's WHILE WE STILL SINNERS. Christ died for us.

Think about what that means in your life. No matter what you or I do, we can never think, "I'm too far gone. It's too late." because Christ died for sinners.

ROMANS 5:6-8

reaching out to all

SIN IS NOT THE ONLY

WEAKNESS WE FACE

We've been focused on how Christ's grace is enough for the weakness of sin, but sin is not the only weakness we face. In addition to struggles with sin and thorns in the flesh, Paul experienced many trials.

He said:

"Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the city, in the country, in the sea. I have faced danger from false and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm."

HOW DID PAUL KEEP GOING IN THE FACE OF SO MUCH DIFFICULTY?

PAUL

WROTE

"I can do all things Christ which strengthenth me" Philippians 4:13

This verse reminds us that Christ's grace can strengthen us to be better and endure more than we could with our own mortal capacities. When our thorns in the flesh, when our trials, when our weaknesses are more than we can handle, we can pray to receive strength through the Savior's Atonement.

HIS GRACE

FOR OUR WEAKNESSES

Consider the following story .

Corrie ten Boom was a Christian who bravely helped many Jews escape from the Nazis during World War II. Tragically, she was caught and put in a concentration camp, where she endured unbelievable suffering. With the liberation of the concentration camps, Corrie would frequently travel to speak about her experiences.

WHEN SHE FELT TO BE THE BEST IN LIFE

She told people her story of God's forgiveness of sins, and of the need for people to forgive those who had harmed them.

Corrie was put to the test in 1947 while speaking in Germany. At the close of the service, a balding man in a gray overcoat stepped forward to greet her. Corrie Note

RAVENSBRÜCK CONCENTRATION CAMP

She knew this man well. he'd been one of the most vicious guards at Ravensbrück, one who had mocked the women prisoners as they showered. "It came back with a rush," she wrote. "The huge room with its hard-to-overlook lights, the pathetic pile of dresses and shoes in the center of the floor, the shame of walking naked past this man."

And now he was pushing his hand out to shake hers, and saying

"A fine message. Fraulein! How good it is to know that, as you say, all our sins are at the bottom of the sea!"

— Again the hand came out — "will you forgive me?"

And I, who had spoken so glibly of forgiveness, fumbled in my pocketbook rather than take that hand. He would not remember me, of course — how could he remember one prisoner among those thousands of women?

But I remembered him and the leather crop swinging from his belt. I was face to face with one of my captors, and my blood seemed to freeze.

"You mentioned Ravensbrück in your talk," he was saying. "I was a guard there. But since that time I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. Fraulein" — again the hand came out — "will you forgive me?"

And I stood there — whose sins had again and again been forgiven — and could not forgive. My sister Betsie had died in that place—could he erase her slow terrible death simply for the asking?

The soldier stood there expectantly, waiting for Corrie to shake his hand. She said, "I wrestled with the most difficult thing I had ever had to do. For I had to do it—I knew that."

Standing there before the former S.S. guard, she prayed,

"Jesus help me! I can lift my hand I can do that much. You supply the feeling."

Corrie then thrust out her hand.

She wrote, "As I did, an incredible thing took place. The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into our joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes.

"I FORGIVE YOU, BROTHER," CRIED "WITH ALL MY HEART."

For a long moment we grasped each other's hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God's love so intensely as I did then. But soon so I realized it was not my love I had tried, and did not have the power. It was the power of the Holy Spirit."

Christ's power works best in weakness.

Weakness is a FEATURE, not a defect.

— Whether we're trying to conquer sin — or overcome horrendous trials, CHRIST'S GRACE IS ENOUGH!

This DOESN'T MEAN that everything will be easy and it doesn't mean everything will be solved in mortality. Paul wrote

"In this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all [people] most miserable" 1 Corinthians 15:19).

Our inner fights between good and evil, other difficult trials we face—these can be seen through Christ, but some of these battles may take time—perhaps a lifetime or even more to resolve. But with the Savior's grace we can keep going today.

In another context, on another continent, Jesus told Moroni,

— Thou hast been faithful; wherefore, thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast SEEN THY WEAKNESS,

thou shalt BE MADE STRONG, even unto the sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father"

Ether 12:37

NOTE

JESUS DIDN'T TELL MORONI

"You will be strong right now." In this case, being made strong was connected to the next life.

HOW GRACE WORKS

A FEW THINGS TO PONDER

PEOPLE VISUALIZE ACCESSING JESUS' GRACE IN DIFFERENT WAYS-

A FIGURE OF SPEECH, PERHAPS?

PONDER

THIS SCRIPTURE 2 Nephi 25:23 says,

"We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do."

WHAT DO NEPHI MEAN HERE?

We love these words from Sheri Dew, speaker, at Women's Conference. She said,

— WHAT IS OUR PART?

Becoming and behaving like true disciplines of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"As covenant women, I'm pretty sure we have a tendency to zoom right in on the "after all we can do" part of the grace-and-works equation, but then wonder how we can possibly do more than we already are—though we're pretty sure whatever we're doing isn't enough. Does that ring true to anybody? This scripture we quote so often is not about sequence, and it is not about literally working our way through an exhaustive list of good works.

JESUS CHRIST IS THE ONLY ONE TO WALK THIS EARTH AND ACTUALLY DO ALL THAT COULD BE DONE

Instead, doing all we can do is about becoming and behaving like true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is our part. That being said, make no mistake about it: and notwithstanding all we can do and despite the little we actually do, IT IS THE SAVIOR'S GRACE THAT WILL ULTIMATELY SAVE US.

We can never earn exaltation. But we can indicate by THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES that we want to be part of the kingdom of God more than we want anything else.

ULTIMATELY

BOTH OUR EFFORTS AND JESUS GRACE ARE IMPORTANT

As Paul taught in Philippians 2:12-13

"Work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

SEEKING JESUS

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all to help **F I N D** Jesus' Principles

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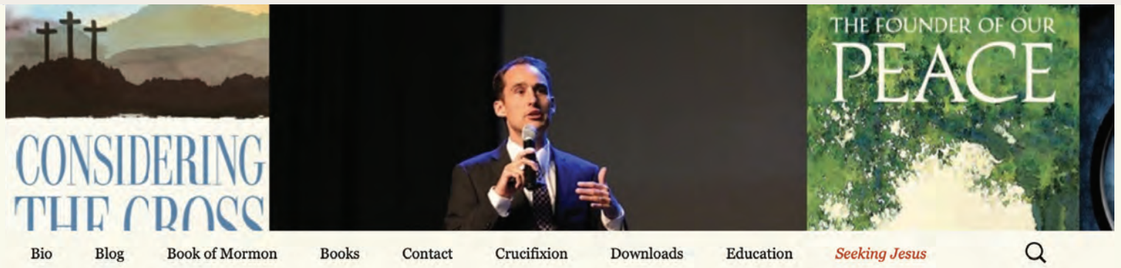

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