

The Broadmoor Bulletin

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Strength

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13

Our weakness when we are without God is more than matched by the strength we can have when we are with Him.

If we can manage to avoid interfering with what God wants to do through us, wonderful things can be accomplished, things both great and good. We can be persons of extraordinary strength.

The key is our connection to God. Jesus said, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (**John 15:4, 5**). We begin to be strong only when we humbly acknowledge God’s sovereign right to set the terms of our fellowship with Him. It is God who determines what the gospel will require of us, and true strength on our part comes from respecting His requirements.

One of our deepest fears is that of insufficiency. We worry that when the time comes, we won’t have enough of something we truly need. We fear the prospect of having to do without any of life’s basic requirements, including those intangible necessities like love, appreciation, and understanding. If it’s true that we’ve been created by God, however, any “adequacy” apart from Him is simply unthinkable. If we’re creatures, there is no such thing as being “sufficient” without our Creator. Speaking of his apostleship, Paul enunciated a principle that holds true for all human beings: “Our sufficiency is from God” (**2 Corinthians 3:5**).

The glorious truth is that, if God is in us and we are in Him, we can do much more than just “get by.” Through us God can sweep away every obstacle that stands in the path of His purposes. “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (**Romans 8:37**). To be rightly related to God is to believe that He “has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (**2 Timothy 1:7**).

A wise Hebrew proverb says, “The soul of man is the lamp of God.” Man is a weak and miserable animal until the light of God burns in his soul. But when that light burns . . . man becomes the most powerful being in the world. Nor can this be otherwise, for what then acts in him is no longer his strength but the strength of God.

Leo Tolstoy

Gary Henry

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.

2 Corinthians 12:9

Access to God’s Grace

In three New Testament passages, Paul utilizes the word *prosaogoge*, translated “access” or “introduction” (Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12). This word literally means “a leading or bringing into the presence of” (Vine). In secular Greek, this word was used to describe a place where ships landed while approaching a harbor. It was a safe passageway, free of enemy vessels. Paul employs this word to describe the access believers have to the Father and into His grace (see Eph. 2:18; Rom. 5:2).

Common to the three scriptures which use *prosaogoge* is the concept of dependence on Christ. It is solely “through” Him and “in” Him that one obtains access. This accords with Jesus’ statement “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Since Christ is the mediator between God and men, He is the only way into the Father’s grace (see 1 Tim. 2:5 – 6).

“Access,” as described in the New Testament, is contingent on faith. In two instances, *prosaogoge* is connected with the phrases “by faith” and “through faith” (see Rom. 5:2; Eph. 3:12). While faith is not specifically mentioned in the other passage, it is implied by the phrase “access in *one Spirit* to the Father” (Eph. 2:18). Only through individual faith in Christ produced by the Spirit’s word will one benefit from God’s grace (see Eph. 3:12; Rom. 10:17). This kind of faith leads to righteousness and peace with the Lord and the hope of glory (see Rom. 5:1 – 2).

Prosaogoge is not the end. It is the passageway to the goal of grace and glory. Christians come “to the Father” and “into this grace” that they may “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Eph. 2:18; Rom. 5:2). Just as ships used the landing site to travel to the harbor, believers move through the access of Christ into grace. Grace justifies (Rom. 3:24), saves (Eph. 2:5), strengthens (2 Cor. 12:9), and provides comfort and hope (2 Thess. 2:16). As partakers of grace, Paul said, “In it we are making our stand” (Rom. 5:2).

A passive meaning is implied in the term *prosaogoge*. Christians cannot earn an introduction to the Father nor can they force their way into His grace. Believers are led, by God’s mercy, into His favor: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8 – 9). “Put no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3). Christians “have boldness and access with confidence” in the Lord (Eph. 2:18).

Jesus allows weak, ungodly sinners to gain entrance into divine favor (see Rom. 5:1 – 2, 6, 8). This does not mean, however, that once believers reach the “harbor of grace” they cannot “drift away” or “suffer shipwreck” (see Heb. 2:1; 1 Tim. 1:19; Gal. 5:4). Christians must always thank God for the access they have into grace and then continue to stand in it (see Rom. 5:1 – 2).

Marshall McDaniel

Should Mom & Dad's Beliefs Keep Me from Changing My Views?

There was once a man who operated a general store. On his counter top he had nailed a yardstick. He measured yard goods, rope, etc. by that yardstick. Eventually, the man died and his son moved back and took over the operation of the little store. One day, an employee of the Dept. of Weights and Measures came by, examined his "yardstick" and pronounced it a full inch less than a yard in length. All those years the gentleman had honestly thought that his measuring stick was accurate, but he was wrong. His honesty did not make him right.

Now the son was faced with a decision. He could refuse to admit his father was wrong and, therefore, be wrong himself - or he could say, "My father honestly thought he was right. I know something my father did not know. If I do not live up to the knowledge I have, I will not be as honest as he was." (No doubt, most people would make the second decision.)

Strange as it may seem, many reason differently in religion. Some learn "the way of God more accurately" than their parents. However, they refuse to make any changes because they fear any change from their parents' religion would cast upon the father and mother an unfavorable reflection.

Let us say that a man's God-fearing parents taught him to reverence the Bible. Yet they were misinformed on some vital points. His parents were honest. If they had understood the truth as he does, would they not have obeyed it? If he turns his back on recognized Bible truth, is he as honest as they were?

The apostle Paul was one who had to make this decision. In Galatians 1:11-14, we find Paul's life before Christianity was one of a Jew, which his parents had taught him. He advanced greatly in that religion and was very zealous in teaching what he believed to be the truth. But in Galatians 1:15-17, when Paul was taught that what he believed was wrong, he changed and began to preach the truth.

Paul did not (as many do today) say, "My parents have been Jews all their lives and so have I, and I will die a Jew" or "If that is true, then that means my parents are lost." Just because we may have been something religiously does not make that religion right, and just because my parents believed a certain way about the Bible does not make it so. Paul was honest and sincere enough to change his life and live right. We need to constantly compare our beliefs with the Bible. Are we as honest as Paul was?

Roy Fenner

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." And they were glorifying God because of me.

Galatians 1:13 – 17, 22 – 24

Why Be Baptized?

Many religious people today deny that obedience to the command of the Lord to be baptized "for the remission of sins" is necessary to those who have heard, believed the truth, and repented of their sins. The amazing part of this is how such a conclusion could be drawn in the face of all that is taught in the New Testament on the subject. Why does one have to be baptized for the "remission of sins"?

Man cannot decide this question; it must be done by the word of God. Following are some of the reasons given in the New Testament regarding the reason for baptism:

1. It is commanded by Christ (Mark 16:15, 16; Matt. 28:19; Acts 10:48).
2. It is in answer of a good conscience (1 Pet. 3:20, 21).
3. It is in order that one may rejoice in the forgiveness of sins (Acts 8:39; 16:33, 34).
4. It is to get into Christ (Gal. 3:27).
5. It is to get into the death of Christ where remission is found (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12).
6. It is to be raised with Christ to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4).
7. It is to wash away sins (Acts 22:16).
8. It is to be saved (Mark 16:15, 16; 1 Pet. 3:21).
9. It is for or unto the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

H. E. Phillips

Church Problems

We can state categorically that every church has problems. This has been true ever since Pentecost. There's plenty of information in the New Testament about a host of problems that plagued the first century churches. Congregations today still struggle with a variety of problems. What should we do when these problems arise? Here are some suggestions:

1. Seriously analyze the situation. Don't just grumble and complain. Don't engage in sinful gossip and tale bearing. Really try to understand the problem. And, never forget that there are always two sides to every story! Be sure to get all of the facts before jumping to a conclusion.
2. Determine the proper solution to the problem:
 - Is it a matter of doctrine? Is something false being taught or practiced? Are there specific individuals who are not behaving properly? If so, then go to the source and address the issue directly (Matt. 18:15-17). If you fail to do this you are compounding the problem and actually sinning by disobeying the commands of God. In other words, you become a part of a bigger problem!
 - Or, is this problem a simple matter of judgment? If so, then it may be best to simply submit to the judgment of others (1 Pet. 5:5) so that peace and unity can be preserved (Eph. 4:1-3).
3. Give your brethren "the benefit of the doubt." True brotherly love requires this (1 Cor. 13:4-7)
4. Pray. Faithful servants of God have always relied upon the power of prayer to deal with serious problems. Let's imitate their pattern.

Yes, there will be problems. The real question is - will we handle them according to God's will?

Greg Gwin