

# Power Up!

2 Corinthians 13:4

(2 Corinthians 4:7-11; 11:21-32; 12:5, 7-10)

Dr. Paul Cannings

## A. Christ Weakness God's Strength (vs. 4a):

1. He was crucified – Christ once and for all had His flesh nailed to the cross allowing Himself to be subdued to humiliation because of His love for God and mankind. He was obedient even to public humiliation and death because God so loved the world.
  - a) The Roman practice of crucifixion was a gruesome and agonizing form of capital punishment, typically reserved for slaves and noncitizens. The ordeal began with the flogging of the condemned, who was then forced to carry the cross-beam to the place of execution. The victim's wrists would be nailed or bound with cords to the horizontal cross-beam, and the feet were similarly bound to the vertical beam.<sup>1[1]</sup>
  - b) The victim would not die from the wounds inflicted during the crucifixion, but from exhaustion or suffocation. As a portrait of "weakness," no more of a potent image could be offered than the humiliating spectacle of a victim of crucifixion.<sup>2[2]</sup>
  - c) His death on a cross was his own choice and not to be understood as submission to alien powers, such as satanic-demonic forces, as in gnostic ideology (see W. Grundmann, *TDNT* 2:316, 317).<sup>3[3]</sup>
2. Weakness – When Christ allowed Himself to be nailed to the cross, He permitted Himself to be fully human, lacking strength and yielding Himself to depend on the power of God.
  - a) With God's power at His disposal (Matt. 26:53) Christ nonetheless followed the course of weakness to the cross. In the Resurrection the magnitude of

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<sup>1[1]</sup> Arnold, C. E. (2002). *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon*. (Vol. 3, p. 256). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>2[2]</sup> Arnold, C. E. (2002). *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Romans to Philemon*. (Vol. 3, pp. 256–257). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>3[3]</sup> Martin, R. P. (1986). *2 Corinthians* (Vol. 40, p. 475). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

that untapped power was displayed (Eph. 1:19–21). This side of the grave, Paul like Jesus followed the path of “weakness” but as in Jesus’ life, a glimmer of God’s power showed through (e.g., Matt. 4:23; 2 Cor. 12:12). Paul wanted this power to be used for constructive rather than punitive purposes (cf. 13:10; 10:2–6), power that would enable him to serve them.<sup>4[4]</sup>

3. Weakness – It took the mighty power of God to endure such an injustice. He was innocent of all charges but guilty for our sin.
4. He lives – Christ consistently lived independently from any source of aid from other human beings. He was solely dependent on God’s ability and capacity. God responded to Christ’s obedience and to His will.
5. He lives - Zao – God sustained Christ on the cross, so Christ had to give up His life because God is life and therefore no one can take it from Him. While His body was in the grave Christ condemns rebellious demons to remain in hell (1 Peter 3:18-20). He rose from the grave by His own power and the power of the Father (John 10:15-18). So even though the flesh died, in the power of God Christ lives.
6. The power of God – Christ had the inherent ability to overcome any obstacles that He encountered, because He possessed the ability and mighty capacity of the totality of whom God is comprehensively.
7. The power of God – In Christ’s death, God’s power is manifested leaving Satan powerless from ever separating man from God.

## **B. He Became Weak so we Become Strong (vs. 4b):**

1. We will live – We will actively experience the spiritual influence of the Holy Spirit as we interact with life’s issues each day and sow to the Spirit by surrendering to His direction through the Word of God.
  - a) Just as Christ in His humanity experienced weakness, so will we in our humanity. So, Christ’s life is a model of how we should live while in this weak flesh (Romans 6:12-14), knowing that we too can experience the power of God.
2. We also are weak – Whenever we have a cross to bear, we must continually deny

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<sup>4[4]</sup> Lowery, D. K. (1985). [2 Corinthians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 584). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

ourselves (the influence of the flesh; Romans 6:6-12; 7:24) because to not do so is to live in weakness because we follow its desires and its lust (we can be in our feelings rather than following the Spirit of God). There is nothing good in the flesh (Galatians 5:19).

3. We also are weak – Christ carried the cross to Calvary and was nailed to Calvary because He modeled crucifying the flesh in obedience to the will of God.
4. We will live – We will actively experience the spiritual influence of the Holy Spirit as we interact with life issues and commitment to live holy (1 Peter 1:13-16). Practicing the truth is a powerful transformation (Hebrews 5:14). It blesses us to live in the Spirit and not in the flesh.
  - a) The power of God which directed Christ, is the same power that directs us (Philippians 4:13; 1 John 4:4).
  - b) We live with Christ (Col. 3:1-4; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:12-17) and because we do, we have the power even though we live in the flesh (1 John 4:4; Romans 8:37).
5. Because of the power of God – Because we possess the presence of the Holy Spirit in us (Titus 3:4-8) we live based on the ability and capacity of God (1 John 4:4) to overcome all obstacles (Romans 8:37). When we spiritually function, each day, we gain the ability to overcome all the attacks of Satan (Ephesians 6:11-18; Phil. 4:13). We should work out this power that we possess with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12-13) as He works within us.
6. Because of the power of God – Putting on the armor of God gives us power against the fiery darts of the Devil (Ephesians 6:11-18).
7. Directed towards you – The direct object of God’s power is purposefully focused on providing us strength when we are weak. This is the constant movement of God directed to power us up. This is because Satan is constantly on the attack (Revelation 12:10; 1 Peter 5:8-9).
8. Directed towards you – When we grow weary (Gal. 6:9-10) we can sow to the spirit by walking in the truth of God’s Word. This blesses us to “Power Up” from the inside out (1 John 4:4). The Spirit is the Spirit of truth (John 14:16-17) and came to guide us into truth (John 16:13) by illuminating God’s word (1 Corinthians 2:10-15), and reminding us of it (John 14:26). So, He is constantly working for us so that we live each day “Powered Up”.