

September 6, 2015

Frailty is a Gift

Isaiah 40: 29-31 – He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Take a moment to meditate on the words of Isaiah. How do you react to your own weaknesses and frailties? Personally, I don't handle them very well. In my mind they are shortcomings, hindrances, annoyances. I have a feeling that many of you feel the same way about them. But, take a moment and ponder the above verse again.

When we see weakness and frailty as the enemy, as I do, temptation arises in a disturbing way. Desiring that no one sees our frailty, whether it is of mind or body, we hide it away, fake our way through a given situation, or just lie about it either to others or ourselves trying to convince someone that we are actually better off than we really are. But, take a moment and read the verses from Isaiah again.

Has it sunk in yet? In many ways, our weakness and our frailties are not the problem. I mean how can we blame ourselves for not knowing things we've never been taught or not being able to do things that we've never heard of or attempted previously? We can't. So, if the weaknesses aren't necessarily the cause of the problem what is? I think that part of the problem is our strength. Consider this: we live in a culture where skill and brilliance are so highly prized and exulted that when there is something that we are

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unskilled at or know nothing about, we feel deficient. Or, when our bodies begin to fail, internally or externally we feel old and useless.

More than we know, we tie our identity to our strengths. And, heaven forbid if someone with the same skills comes in and does whatever it is that we can do better than us!

We have been programmed to find ourselves in our strength. But, Isaiah hints at something different. In those verses I printed above, we are told that everyone at some point or another grows weary and fails. But, those that look to the Lord will receive his strength for the day and to eternity. Because of this, you should look for your identity in your weaknesses, because it is there that God's strength is perfected. Look at Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 right around verse 9. The thorn in his side is still there! God won't take the weakness, the frailty, the fault, the hindrance that plagues him away, because God wants Paul to know that his grace is enough for his servants.

Your weaknesses are where Jesus wants to meet you. And more than that, in your weaknesses he promises to give you *his* strength. So, drop the insecurity, stop hiding from your weaknesses and start hiding in them, because that is where Jesus promises to be. Instead of relying on your strengths, because they *will* fail one day, rely on Jesus always, looking to him for strength in every situation. In him you will walk, run, dance and fly without fail. Amen.

Pastor Carl P. Johnson

