

Small Group Discussion questions

How does the concept of 'hitting the wall' manifest in your own spiritual life, and what signs indicate you may be running on empty rather than just experiencing temporary tiredness?

Paul received companions, converts, communion, and character as sources of strength. Which of these four do you find most lacking in your life right now, and what practical steps could you take to receive that gift?

The sermon challenges the idea of keeping Jesus in the 'private room' versus making Him Lord over all of life. In what areas of your life have you compartmentalized your faith, treating it as personally meaningful but not as ultimate truth?

Paul's character was so exemplary that even unjust people defended him. How does your character witness to Christ in environments where you face opposition or indifference?

The bishop in Les Miserables absorbed the cost of Jean Valjean's theft as an act of mercy. Can you identify a situation where you need to absorb a cost or extend mercy rather than demand justice?

Jesus experienced abandonment, rejection, and forsakenness so we could receive companionship, acceptance, and communion with God. How does meditating on what Christ gave up change your perspective on your current struggles?

The sermon describes hitting the wall as when 'the demand in front of you is greater than the strength you have in you.' How might God be inviting you to depend on His strength rather than your own in a specific situation you're facing?

Paul reasoned, persuaded, testified, and spoke about Jesus publicly despite exhaustion. What fears or cultural pressures keep you from sharing your faith with others in your sphere of influence?

The passage states that 'God strengthens you to strengthen others.' Who in your life might God be calling you to strengthen even while you feel weak yourself?

How does understanding that Christianity is 'not for the strong but for the weak' challenge common cultural narratives about self-sufficiency and personal strength?

5-Day Devotional: Finding Strength When You Hit the Wall

Day 1: The Gift of Gospel Companions

Reading: Acts 18:1-3; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Devotional: Paul's arrival in Corinth brought him face-to-face with Aquila and Priscilla—not by accident, but by divine design. When we're depleted, God doesn't always remove our burdens; instead, He sends companions to help us carry them. These weren't just acquaintances but gospel partners who shared Paul's faith, work, and mission.

Consider the relationships in your life. Are you isolated in your struggles, or are you allowing others into your journey? God never intended for us to walk alone. The courage to ask someone's name, to share your story, to admit you're struggling—this is where strength begins. Ecclesiastes reminds us that two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. Today, ask God to reveal who He's placed beside you, and have the courage to reach out. Your companion may be closer than you think.

Day 2: The Hope of New Believers

Reading: Acts 18:7-8; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

Devotional: Nothing revitalizes a weary heart like witnessing transformation. When Crispus and his household believed, Paul experienced renewed strength—not from his own accomplishments, but from seeing God's power at work. Every conversion is a reminder that God is still moving, still calling, still saving.

Perhaps you've been praying for someone to come to faith. Maybe you've invited, reasoned, and testified, yet see no fruit. Don't lose heart. God is working in ways you cannot see. Your faithfulness in prayer, your gentle witness, your consistent life—these are not wasted. They're seeds being watered by the Spirit. When harvest comes, it will strengthen not only the new believer but also you. Today, renew your commitment to pray for someone who doesn't know Jesus. Trust that God has "many people" He's drawing to Himself, and you're part of that beautiful work.

Day 3: The Power of Divine Communion

Reading: Acts 18:9-10; Psalm 46:1-11

Devotional: In Paul's darkest moment of fear and exhaustion, Jesus didn't send a message—He came personally. "I am with you," He said. Not "I will be" or "I was," but "I am." Present tense. Right now. This divine communion, this intimate presence, is our greatest source of strength.

The joy of the Lord truly is our strength, but joy isn't manufactured optimism—it's the relational reality of knowing God is with us. When you're afraid, when you want to give up, when the wall feels insurmountable, Jesus whispers the same promise: "I am with you." This means protection—not from hardship, but in it. Nothing can change your eternal destiny. This means purpose—God has people to reach, work to do, and you're partnering with Him. Today, quiet yourself before God. Don't rush to requests. Simply rest in His presence. Let "I am with you" sink deep into your weary soul.

Day 4: The Strength of Gospel Character

Reading: Acts 18:12-17; Romans 5:3-5

Devotional: Paul's character shone so brightly that even an unjust official recognized his innocence. This is the fruit of endurance without corruption—continuing in God's purposes without becoming like those who oppose you. Character isn't built in comfort; it's forged in affliction.

When you're exhausted, the temptation is strong to take shortcuts, compromise, or respond to anger with anger. But godly character means responding to wrath with gentleness, to injustice with integrity, to betrayal with forgiveness. This requires supernatural strength. Romans 5 shows us the progression: affliction produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. You're not just surviving hardship; you're being transformed by it. The difficult marriage, the challenging child, the unfair workplace—these are your character-building classrooms. God will give you strength not to binge-watch life away, but to love your neighbor as yourself. Today, identify one area where you're tempted to compromise. Ask God for character-strength to endure faithfully.

Day 5: Strengthened to Strengthen Others

Reading: Acts 18:23; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Devotional: God's strengthening always has a purpose beyond ourselves. After receiving companions, seeing converts, experiencing communion, and developing character, Paul "set out...strengthening all the disciples." The mercy we receive is meant to overflow to others. We're comforted so we can comfort; strengthened so we can strengthen.

This is the beautiful cycle of gospel community. The wall you've hit, the weakness you've experienced, the mercy God has shown you—these become your ministry to others. Your story of God's faithfulness in exhaustion gives hope to someone currently depleted. Your testimony of divine presence in fear encourages someone who's afraid. God doesn't waste our suffering; He redeems it for His purposes and others' good.

Who in your life needs strengthening today? Perhaps it's someone in your small group, a struggling parent, a discouraged coworker. You have something to give because you've received from God. The strength He's building in you isn't just for you—it's for the whole body. Today, ask God to show you one person you can strengthen, and take one practical step to encourage them.