

MESSAGE.

True power is often found in deceptive packages, much like a powerlifter disguised as a janitor who easily outmuscles larger athletes. In the same way, the Gospel does not require impressive or celebrity-like figures to be effective; rather, it relies on the transformational power of the Holy Spirit. While human culture often prioritizes theatrics, charisma, and intellectual persuasion, these traits serve only to create emotional reactions rather than genuine spiritual change. Mature faith rejects the idolization of leaders and recognizes that the Spirit's work is evidenced by conviction of sin and repentance. Ultimately, God does not call for individuals to become impressive, but to remain dependent on Him, acknowledging that the greatest display of strength was the apparent weakness of Christ on the cross.

PRAYER.

Father,

You are the Creator of the universe. You are the Giver of life. You are just and loving. You are Sovereign. Speak to my heart, Lord, as I spend time in Your Word.

Amen.

ENGAGE.

Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Paul reminds the Corinthians that God chose the foolish, weak, and lowly things of the world to shame the wise and strong.

- When you first came to faith, did you feel "impressive" or "qualified"? How does Paul's description of the "foolish and weak" in verse 26 challenge our modern obsession with status and credentials?
- Where have you seen God use someone who seemed "unlikely" or "unqualified" to do something powerful?
- Looking at v. 31, what are the things we are most tempted to "boast" about in our church or personal lives today, and how do we redirect that credit to God?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Paul explains that he didn't come with "eloquence or human wisdom" but in "weakness and fear," relying solely on the Spirit's power.

- Why are we naturally drawn to leaders who are charismatic, theatrical, or persuasive? What are the dangers of following a "celebrity" leader rather than a servant-hearted one?
- Paul says the proof of his ministry was a "demonstration of the Spirit's power" (v. 4). How do we distinguish between an emotional reaction (feeling moved by music or a speaker) and true transformation (change in character/sin)?
- God doesn't want you to become impressive; He wants you to become dependent. In what areas of your life are you currently trying to "impress" God or others rather than depending on the Spirit?

DAY 1: The Secret Strength: God uses the “weak” to show His “strong”

- **Read Together:** 1 Corinthians 1:26–27
- **The Big Idea:** In the world, people usually pick the biggest, fastest, or smartest person first. But God loves to pick the "underdog" so that everyone can see it is *His* power at work, not ours.
- **Object Lesson:** *Show your child a small, plain-looking tool (like a tiny screwdriver or a small AA battery) and a large, flashy toy that doesn't work. "Which one looks more important?" Then, show how the small tool can actually fix things or the battery can provide power.*
- **Discussion:**
 - Have you ever felt like you weren't "enough" to do something for God because you're just a kid or you aren't "good" enough?
 - How does it feel to know that God chooses you exactly as you are?
- **Prayer:** "Lord, thank You that I don't have to be the strongest or smartest to be used by You. Please use my life to show others how great You are."

DAY 2: Heart Change vs. Goosebumps: True power is transformation, not just a feeling

- **Read Together:** 1 Corinthians 2:4–5
- **The Big Idea:** Sometimes we go to church or hear a song and we get "the feels" (emotions). Emotions are great, but the Holy Spirit's real power isn't just a feeling, it's a change in our hearts that makes us want to be more like Jesus. Let's compare:

Just a Feeling

Crying because a story is sad.
Getting excited during a loud song.
Feeling “good” for a few minutes.

The Spirit's Power

Forgiving a sibling who was mean to you.
Choosing to tell the truth even when it's hard.
Having a new heart that loves God every day.

- **Discussion:** Can you think of a time when God helped you change your mind about a bad habit or a mean thought? That is the Holy Spirit at work!
- **Prayer:** "Holy Spirit, help me not just to have 'good feelings,' but to have a 'changed heart' that obeys You."

DAY 3: The Upside-Down King: The Cross looks like weakness but is actually total victory

- **Read Together:** 1 Corinthians 2:1–2
- **The Big Idea:** Paul told the people that the most important thing he knew was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified". To the world, a King dying on a cross looks like He lost. But to us, it's the greatest victory in history because it defeated sin and death.
- **The "Anatoly" Story:** Remind them of the "janitor" who looks small but can lift the heaviest weights. (Search “Anatoly gym pranks” on YouTube.) People laughed at Jesus on the cross because He looked "weak," but at that very moment, He was doing the "heaviest lifting" ever—carrying the weight of the whole world's sin.
- **Discussion:**
 - Why do you think God chose a cross instead of a gold throne to save us?
 - How does Jesus' sacrifice help us when we feel weak or embarrassed?
- **Activity:** Draw a cross. Inside the cross, write words like "Love," "Power," and "Victory."
- **Prayer:** "Jesus, thank You for the Cross. Thank You that Your 'weakness' is stronger than any human strength. Help me to trust in Your victory today."