



For when you've fallen short

Gather:

Consider incorporating these questions into your check-in time to help your group start thinking about this week's topic.

What is something weird that you're good at?

What do you admire in others that you wish you were better at?

What can you not get right, no matter how many times you try?

Reflect:

We may encounter God through his Word, but also through the words of others. Invite the Spirit to help you encounter God as you read the following poem together. Note scriptural themes and movements of the Spirit as you consider this week's topic.

Weak (1) (Paul David Tripp)*

Today I am very weak --
weak body,
weak heart,
lacking ability,
devoid of resolve,
little anticipation,
waves of discouragement,
whispers of fear,
dreading a sleepless night,
expecting the pain of the morning,
wishing to run,
nowhere to hide,
feeling sentenced to what I cannot survive.
Wondering, "How long?"
Questions --
no answers.
But I have come to understand
that my weakness is a grace,
that hopelessness is not a prison.
Hopelessness is a doorway.
There is no shame in weakness.

I was created weak,
designed to be dependent.
To confess weakness
is to own my humanity.
To own my humanity
is to embrace my need of help.
To embrace my need of help
means to open the door to God's
warehouse of
protecting,
providing,
comforting,
confronting,
strengthening,
hope-giving, and
motivating grace.
Today I am weak,
but I will boast in my weakness
for when I am weak,
for me, you are strong.

Connect:

Choose one or more of the following scriptures to read together. How is reading these scriptures the same or different from reading the poem? How is God reflected differently or similarly?

2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Respond:

Take time together to think about how you have encountered God in community, the words of others, and in scripture. Consider the following questions or activities to conclude your time together.

Where and when do you feel weak or powerless?

Do you see God in those instances of weakness? Why or why not?

Provide your group with leaf-shaped cut outs (template provided) and colored pencils/markers. Invite them to cover one side of their leaf with words and drawings of times they feel weak, and to cover the other side of their leaf with words and drawing that represent God's strength in those times of weakness. Suggest placing their person somewhere they will see it regularly, with the God's-strength side out OR placing them on the coffee kitchen window where you can see both sides of the person, to remind them of God's strength manifest in theirs and others' weaknesses.

Prayer:

Close your time in prayer for each other. Consider asking each person to write down their prayer requests on a 3x5 card and switch them with someone else in the group. Pray for each other throughout the week.

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