

International Conversation Cafe

Foxtrot English: Strength

Game: Meet a new friend. Find 2 things you have in common and two things you in which you differ. Introduce your friend to the group.

Idioms: Read the idioms and try to use it in your own sentence.

Tower of Strength- a description of someone or something strong. *My father was a tower of strength for me when I felt weak.*

Brute Strength- someone who has physical strength. *He knocked the door down by brute strength, without any tools.*

The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.- a description of someone who wants to do the right thing but physically or emotional, cannot. *I tried to get up when the alarm clock rang, but I could not. My spirit was willing but my flesh was weak.*

Bible Story: Strength in Suffering

Paul was a great man. Of the 27 books in the New Testament, Paul wrote 13 books. He was responsible for the spread of Christianity throughout the Mediterranean, taking the message of Jesus from Jerusalem to Turkey, Greece, Italy, and perhaps Spain. The growth of the early church points to the leadership of Paul.

Too often, people in leadership and power become **corrupt**, using their position to gain wealth and **prestige** for themselves or their own family. Sometimes they **take advantage** of people.

Can you name some examples of people like that?

Paul was not corrupt but remained loving and kind to people. He never took advantage of them and never forgot that he served the Lord and not himself. He was a picture of **humility**. How did he do this? The following Scripture gives us insight into his thinking and life. Paul speaks of an illness he suffered with and wanted to be free from.



II Corinthians 12:9 Three times I begged the Lord to take it (an illness) away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.”

So I am very happy to brag about how weak I am. Then Christ’s power can rest on me. Because of how I suffered for Christ, I’m glad that I am weak. I am glad in hard times. I am glad when people say mean things about me. I am glad when things are difficult. And I am glad when people make me suffer. When I am weak, I am strong.

REMBRANDT Harmenszoon van RijnApostle Paul in prison.c. 1627. Oil on oak panel, 73 x 60 cm. Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart

Look at the second paragraph of II Corinthians 12. Name 4 areas in which Paul suffered.

Describe Paul's attitude about his suffering in the second paragraph. What do you think about his attitude?

Is personal suffering ever good? What kinds of things do people learn because they suffer?

"Grace," means love and favor. Paul found he could endure difficulty because he knew that God loved him and would help him.

How does knowing your family and friend's love for you help you through hard times?

How could knowing God's love for you help you through hard times?

How is God's power seen through our weakness? Why do you think this is important?

What are the hard things in your life right now?

How can a person become confident that God loves and cares for them?

Look at the painting on this page. Discuss with each other what you see, questions you have, and what might the story be.

Song: He is Good

Music and arrangement by Steve Green <http://www.stevegreenministries.org>

He is good, he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good. He is good, he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks for he is good.

Repeat 1 X's

For His unfailing love and his wonderful deeds give thanks, give thanks to the Lord. He is good, he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks for he is good.

For His unfailing love and his wonderful deeds give thanks, give thanks to the Lord.

He is good, he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

He is good, he is good. His love endures forever. Give thanks for he is good. Give thanks for he is good.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS3VzA1E8rI>

