



Worship at home' Sunday July 7th 2024



We come to worship today knowing that when we dwell in Christ, the Spirit of God dwells in us. In Christ, we are enough.

Opening: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Therefore I am content with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

New Revised Standard Version

Reflect on your own strengths, gifts and skills.

How and when have you been able to use them to show love and serve others?

Also reflect on your fears, weaknesses and insecurities.

Have there also been times when you have found these being used to show love and serve others?



Sometimes God uses our vulnerability and experiences of powerlessness in order to reach out to others. When we minister out of our own strength, we are doing what we do well. However, when we put ourselves aside and allow God to guide and empower us, we know this is truly God's spirit at work in and through us. It is in our weakness that we find God's strength.

Mark 6:1-6a

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. “Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s

son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honour except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their lack of faith. *New International Version*



People found it hard to recognise the Spirit of God in Jesus – they saw him simply as Mary’s son, one of the young lads of the town.

When have you experienced God through another person unexpectedly, or in a surprising way?

Mark 6:6b-13

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. These were his instructions: “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there

until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.” They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

New International Version

I tend to pack for every occasion... just in case. If I am travelling, I always take too many books, jumpers, and pairs of shoes. My handbag contains an assortment of notebooks, puzzles, snacks and other bits and pieces which are rarely needed...

Jesus told his disciples to travel lightly, trusting in God to provide.



Too often we hang onto our baggage. Too often we hold tight to what we think necessary, or place too much importance on our own skills and abilities and find ourselves limiting the work of God's Spirit. Too often in our careful planning we forget to be open to what God might have waiting for us.

God's Strength *in our* Weakness



We don't need any particular qualifications in order to show love and serve others, but we are called to put ourselves aside and allow God to guide and empower us. It is in our weakness that we find God's strength.

*I hoped for strength that I might achieve;
I became weak and learnt humbly to obey.
I hoped for health that I might do greater things;
I became infirm and able to do better things.
I hoped for riches that I might be happy;
I became poor and able to see things in a new way.
I hoped for power that I might have the praise of men;
I became weak and felt the need of God.
I hoped for all things that I might enjoy life;
I became more alive and able to enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I hoped for, but everything I needed;
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.*

How do you hear the call to travel lightly?

What might you leave behind in order to allow God to guide and empower you?

How might travelling lightly allow you to be open to receiving the gifts of those you meet along the way?



**MY GRACE
IS SUFFICIENT**

FOR MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS
2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

Prayer

- Give thanks for the many ways in which we experience the Spirit of God at work in our lives and our world
- Pray for reconciliation of First and Second people as we celebrate NAIDOC week
- Pray for the on-going journey of the Uniting Church to be a truly intercultural church, where people from different races, languages and cultures are brought together in Christ
- Ask for open hearts, respectful discussion and wise discernment for the upcoming national Assembly meeting
- Pray for those struggling with homelessness, with finding money for food and bills, or facing ongoing illness and uncertainty



Closing

Go now, and wherever people will hear you, proclaim the life-changing love of God.

Do not fear your weakness, for when you are weakest, Christ's strength is known.

Travel lightly, live simply, and honour those who welcome the gospel.

May God be your protection and safe haven;
may the power of Christ Jesus dwell in you;
and may the Holy Spirit be your guide forever.

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