

## “Glorying in My Weaknesses So That the Power of Christ May Rest Upon Me”

Judges 7:1-2 *Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, **lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.***

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, **lest I should be exalted above measure.** For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.** Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Mark 2:17 *When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: **I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.***

~~~

How many times have I fallen into the trap of wondering why my children don't perform in this or that area as well as someone else's child? How many times have I doubted my own ability to home school my children based on that unfair comparison and others like it? How is it that I have forgotten that the Lord has made us all different, and that He has reasons for doing so, whether or not I can see them? If only I were more organized, more disciplined, more consistent, or less of a procrastinator, well then, my children could and would be perfect, and I would be more pleasing to God.

I think that, in general, mothers are most vulnerable to this kind of thinking—although, having never been a father, I can't be sure. When I was coming of age in the turbulent 60s and 70s, the cry of most parents was, “Where have I gone wrong?” This tells me that I am not the first parent to take the blame for all my children's—well—humanness.

Now, if mothers in general do this sort of thing to themselves, homeschooling mothers have got to be even harder on themselves. After all, the world has told them that their decision is somehow just not healthy for their children—it just won't work—there is bound to be some bad effects from this—and now, these moms are out to prove the world wrong. We have decided to show the world that homeschooling, by its very nature, is not only as detrimental as they say, but far superior to the alternatives, and we think this means that it should naturally produce superior children. Then comes that moment when our child does something totally thoughtless or rude, or worse yet, rebellious. We are sure it is something we have overlooked, never considering that our children are simply just as human and in need of a Savior as we are.

Christian homeschooling moms can also fall into this trap, despite our recitation of the fact that we all fall short of the glory of God.

Now, we are dedicated to homeschooling our children, but we are Christians first—homeschoolers second. For many of us, the decision to homeschool was simply the fruit of one's relationship with God—it was something done in obedience to His call—it was ordained by Him. For the rest of us, well, God ordained our decisions, too. We just may not have realized it at the time.

So, because we are Christians first, Christ should be first in every area of our lives. What we read in God's Word also applies to our homeschooling.

Often, when we think things are going well, suddenly things take a detour and we end up flat on our faces. At times like this it is natural to think that we have failed God, but we need to remember that in our human natures, this is all we CAN do. Now, I am not recommending that we do a half-committed job of raising

our children—absolutely not—they are a heritage of the Lord. We aren't to relinquish our responsibility in this charge that God has given us. However, we do need to try to avoid the thinking that we are doing this ourselves, under our own power. We simply need to remember that if we WERE perfect parents, we might begin to think that we raised these children by ourselves. We might forget that it is God's grace that is sufficient for us, and that it is a blessing to remain dependent upon Him. Having said that, let us receive the occasional disappointment in ourselves as a loving reminder from God that we need Him. It is God's goodness that turns us toward Him every time we fail in our own eyes. And it is His goodness that allows us to fail in the first place, so that we don't fall into another trap—self-exaltation.

Therefore, even in our homeschooling we should be aware of our total dependence upon Him.

But aren't we to be perfect? Doesn't He say we are to be perfect?

It is HIS holiness, setting us apart, HIS faithfulness, completing what He began in us, which makes us perfect or complete—it is His perfection. If we COULD be perfect parents, wouldn't we be at risk for occasionally thinking that we don't need our heavenly Father?

Besides, the heart--the focus--of Christianity is more about how we think than what we do. The Lord Jesus brought all of His teachings to this deeper level, teaching us that lustful looks equate to adultery and cruel words equate to murder. He constantly pointed to the hearts of men as being the problem and the deeds simply the fruits of those dark hearts.

So may we look to Him in ALL things—even homeschooling—especially homeschooling--since the very reason we are doing this, whether or not we will admit it, is that God has ordained us to it.

Therefore, on our bad days, when we wonder why we are not more organized, more disciplined, more consistent, or less of a procrastinator, let's think of the thorns in our respective sides as God's goodness in keeping us humble and in need of Him. Let's remember that guilt is simply the flip side of pride.

It's all right if our army has a handicap. After all, we have not saved ourselves.

May His name be even more glorified in our weaknesses, as we continue to rest in Him, the Lord of the Sabbath, and may we make Him first in all things as we prepare to begin another school year.