

# BATTLE PRIMER

## *Stories that show-off God.*

By Paul Klassen, Executive Director

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### **Why Broken Strength?**

Everybody has their own unique story. There's probably certain words that come to your mind when thinking about your story - hard, blessed, hurtful, roller-coaster, beautiful, boring, etc. All of us share at least one thing about our stories: imperfection. Whether it's from our sin or the sin of others, simple mistakes or huge missteps, we have all been

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affected by what we call “life.” There is much to be said about how God can use all of us, how each of us can gain victory, and how important accepting and practicing grace is to all of it. I plan on addressing the plethora of ways that the Bible communicates this, but for my first communication I’d like to focus on the core biblical message that spurs me on to help men, churches, and families regain their sexual integrity.

## **It’s all about Jesus**

In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, the Apostle Paul reminded those young believers that when he came to them (about AD 51), he came without lofty speech or wisdom, “in weakness and in fear and much trembling,” and that his very words were “not in plausible words of wisdom.” He wouldn’t last long in many churches today and certainly wouldn’t be invited back to speak at your next men’s event! All he came to do, he said, was to proclaim Jesus and him crucified! That’s it! What a résumé! As a result, their faith did “not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”

We are broken and needy, and we mess up plenty of times, yet God is perfect, powerful, and snatches victory out of lives of defeat. Romans 6 (see a later edition of the *Battle Primer*) describes this ongoing realization of our natural limitations and the fruitful, wonderful life that there is in serving and obeying God.

## **His grace is sufficient**

By the time Paul wrote the book of 2 Corinthians, it was probably 4-5 years after his initial visit to Corinth mentioned above. He was likely more confident by then, yet God gave Paul a “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:8-10) to keep him from being conceited. Paul pleaded with God for that “thorn” to be taken away. They must have been some pretty intense conversations! Now, pay close attention to verse 9, as Paul seemingly hears Jesus say something directly to him as a result of these prayer sessions: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” No matter how wise Paul became, or how much he improved his public speaking, God’s power wasn’t meant to end with Paul’s “maturity”, but with God’s glory being seen in Paul’s ongoing weakness. Just like with Paul, Jesus wants to be seen THROUGH us in order to bring others to Him, not just IN us so for our own maturity, though that certainly happens. May verse 10 be our strategy to keep our

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story about Jesus as well as our ongoing prayer of commitment: “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weakness, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Prayer Items:

**Praise God** that my first days “on the job” have been filled with great conversations, additional contacts, and the joy of the Lord.

**Pray for** the prep and prayer work to be done for three fall purity events that are already scheduled:

- Friday, Sept. 15, Jubilee Community Church
- Saturday, Sept. 16, Milaca Evangelical Free Church
- Saturday, Oct. 14, Northwest Bible Church, St. Michael

**Pray for** potential for the following churches/communities: Grace Point, Pine City, Trinity E. Free, Alexandria, Veritical Church; Hastings, Centennial E. Free, Bunde, Clara City, Chisago Lakes Baptist, Owatonna E. Free, Real Hope (Lake Mills, WI), Fergus Falls.

**Pray for** perseverance in the battle, as men seek to get right with God and others, as churches seek to fully disciple their men and women in their sexual integrity, and as we seek to resource, encourage, and spur them on.