

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

A Call to Authentic Faith

A Reflection from 2 Corinthians 13:1–10

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ, As we welcome the month of June, we give thanks to God for His sustaining grace and ever-present help in our journey of faith. This year may be moving quickly, but every new month is a chance to recalibrate our hearts toward heaven and recommit our lives to the cause of Christ.

This month, the Lord has placed on our hearts a powerful and sobering portion of Scripture from 2 Corinthians 13:1–10, where the Apostle Paul delivers his concluding words to the church in Corinth. Though written centuries ago, this message remains incredibly relevant to the Body of Christ today.

Let us walk through this passage together and draw out four vital truths that can transform how we live and serve in the power of Christ.

1. A Serious Reminder (vv. 1–2)

“This will be my third visit to you. ‘Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ I already gave you a warning when I was with you the second time. I now repeat it while absent...”

Paul begins by reminding the Corinthians that his visit is not simply another social check-in. It is a serious spiritual visitation—one filled with concern for the health and holiness of the church. As a loving spiritual father, Paul is prepared to confront sin and protect the flock.

God often sends gentle warnings before judgment. The goal of discipline in the church is not punishment, but restoration. We must not treat His warnings lightly. God desires a people who walk in truth and integrity.

Reflection Question: Are we ignoring or responding to the gentle convictions of the Holy Spirit?



2. Examine Yourself (vv. 5–6)

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?”

This is one of the most powerful and personal calls in all of Scripture—a command to look inward and evaluate the sincerity of our faith. Paul shifts the focus from outward appearances to the inward reality of Christ dwelling in us.

Illustration: The Counterfeit Note

Years ago, a bank teller in a country was caught passing counterfeit currency. His notes looked real on the outside, but they lacked the special watermark and texture that only a trained eye—and a real test—could detect. Many people had accepted his fake bills, never realizing they were worthless until they reached the bank.

Likewise, outward appearances can deceive even ourselves. Without regular self-examination through the Word and the Holy Spirit, we may be walking with a counterfeit faith—one that looks convincing but lacks Christ’s life within.

Challenge: Take time this month to ask the hard questions:

- **Is my faith active or passive?**
- **Am I walking with Christ or merely talking about Him?**
- **Is there fruit in my life that proves Jesus lives in me?**

3. Christ’s Power in Our Weakness (vv. 3–4)

“He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God’s power. Likewise, we are weak in Him, yet by God’s power we will live with Him in our dealing with you.”

The Corinthians questioned Paul’s authority because he didn’t come with outward grandeur. But Paul responds with a deeper truth: real power comes through surrendered weakness. Jesus

was crucified in weakness—but now He lives forever in resurrection power.

Likewise, when we embrace our weakness and depend on God, His power is made perfect in us. Ministry is not about human strength or charisma—it's about yielding to Christ's strength in our limitations.

Story: The Little Preacher Boy

In a remote village, a 12-year-old boy named Reuben felt a burning desire to preach. He wasn't educated, didn't come from a ministry family, and stuttered when he spoke. One Sunday, the local pastor gave him a chance to share a five-minute word.

Reuben stood trembling, barely able to form sentences. But as he opened his Bible and began to read a verse about God's love, a visible presence fell on the congregation. People began to weep. Hearts were touched. That stuttering, weak boy became a powerful

vessel—not because of his strength, but because Christ's power rested on his humility and sincerity.

Encouragement: If you feel weak, weary, or insignificant—take heart. You are exactly the kind of vessel through whom God reveals His strength.

4. Building Up, Not Tearing Down (vv. 8–10)

"We cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth... Our authority is for building you up, not for tearing you down."

Paul closes with a reminder that his apostolic authority is not to tear the church apart but to build it up in truth and righteousness. Even his strong words flow from a heart of love and longing for their restoration.

The ministry of Christ is always meant to edify, encourage, and correct in love. Whether we lead, teach, parent, or serve—our goal must always be to build

people up in the truth.

Prayer Point: Ask God to make you a builder in His Kingdom—someone who strengthens others through truth, grace, and godly example.

Conclusion: A Call to Maturity and Integrity

Paul's heart in this passage is clear: he wants to see the Corinthians stand strong in faith, free from compromise, walking in the power and purity of Christ. His final words are a fatherly call to maturity—a plea for authenticity and inner transformation.

This month, let us heed that call. Let us test our faith, walk humbly in Christ's strength, and live as agents of truth and grace. There is no room for lukewarm faith. God is raising up a pure and powerful church—a people who live not by appearances, but by the indwelling presence of Christ.

Youth Outreach Through Sports

Introducing Our Saturday Teens Basketball Program

At Joel Lazarus Ministries, we believe that the Gospel can be shared not only from the pulpit but also through relationships, creativity, and meaningful community engagement. One such powerful avenue has been our Saturday Teens Basketball Program—a vibrant and life-changing outreach led by Mr. Shivantha Jayaranjan, our Youth Director and Ministry Treasurer.

Over the past decade, Mr. Shivantha has faithfully invested his time, heart, and energy into this ministry, and what God has done through it is nothing short of remarkable.

From Two Teens to Hundred + Lives Touched

What started over ten years ago with just two curious teens on a local basketball court has now blossomed into a dynamic and consistent gathering of over 50 youth every Saturday. What makes this ministry especially powerful is that 98% of the teens who attend are from non-Christian backgrounds. For many of them, this is their first encounter with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Each Saturday, the teens arrive excited to play basketball, but they leave having received something far greater—a chance to experience genuine love, community, and the life-changing message of Jesus.

More Than a Game

Every session is intentionally designed to be more than just sport. It includes:

- Skill-building basketball games
- Short but powerful Bible studies
- Snack time for connection and fellowship

This three-part model creates a safe and welcoming space where barriers are broken down, and hearts are opened to receive the truth of the Gospel. Many of these youth return each week not only for the game—but because they sense something different, something real.





Lives Transformed

Over the years, many teens have given their lives to Jesus through this outreach. Some have joined local churches, others have invited their families to attend Christian events, and a few are now growing in their walk with God and even helping lead the program. It's a beautiful picture of how God uses simple tools—like a basketball—to accomplish eternal purposes.

“I came for basketball, but I found purpose.” – .

This is the testimony fuel our passion to keep going, knowing that every dribble, every pass, and every shared scripture is sowing seeds of eternal value.

How You Can Partner With Us

- Pray for continued favor and protection over the Saturday program and for every teen to encounter Jesus.
- Support the program financially as we continue to provide snacks, Bibles, and resources for the youth.
- Serve if you're in the area and have a heart for youth or sports ministry.

In Closing

The Saturday Teens Basketball Program is a reminder that **God can use anything—even a basketball court—to build His Kingdom.** Through the faithfulness of leaders like Mr. Shivantha and the power of the Holy Spirit, lives are being changed week after week.

Let's continue to pray for this next generation—that they would not only hear the Gospel but become messengers of it to their own communities and beyond.

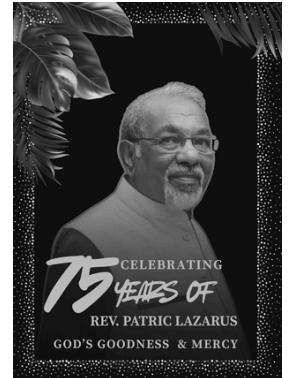
Prayer Request: Mission & Milestones in Sri Lanka

Dear Family in Christ,

At the end of this month, my family and I will be traveling to Sri Lanka, and we humbly ask for your prayers over this meaningful journey.

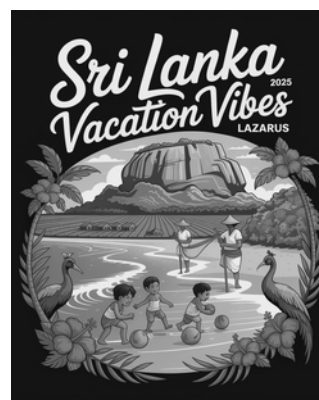
A Milestone Celebration

We will be celebrating the 75th birthday of my father, Rev. Patric Lazarus, a faithful servant of God who has labored in the Lord's vineyard for decades. This milestone is not only a family celebration but also a moment of honor and thanksgiving for the legacy of faith and ministry he has passed on.



A Month of Ministry

While in Sri Lanka, I will also be ministering in close to 15 services across different regions, preaching the Gospel and encouraging the body of Christ. We are believing God for a fresh move of the Holy Spirit, healings, salvations, and renewed strength for the churches we visit.



A Time of Refreshing

As a family, we are also looking forward to visiting some of our relatives who doesn't know Christ. Trusting God to open doors to share the Love and hope to them. Also will be visiting some places across the island to rest, reconnect, and be refreshed in God's creation.

CORRECTION IS NOT REJECTION—IT'S GOD'S INVITATION TO RESTORATION

www.Joellazarusministries.org

Please Join Us in Prayer

We ask you to stand with us in prayer for:

- **Traveling mercies and divine protection over every journey.**
- **Physical strength, spiritual clarity, and anointing for every ministry engagement.**
- **God's presence and joy during the celebration of my father's 75th birthday.**
- **Divine appointments and open hearts in every service and region we minister.**
- **Refreshing and restoration for our family as we spend time together.**

"The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore."

— Psalm 121:8 (ESV)

Thank you for lifting us up before the Lord. Your prayers fuel the mission and carry eternal impact.

In His Service,
Joel Lazarus & Family



Send your Prayer Requests

Prayer is more than a spiritual habit—it is our direct connection to the heart of God. It's in prayer that we pour out our hearts, receive divine wisdom, and align our lives with God's perfect will. Throughout His time on earth, **Jesus lived a life anchored in prayer**, constantly withdrawing to commune with the Father and teaching His disciples to do the same.

Prayer brings peace when life feels chaotic, strength when we feel weak, and assurance that we are never walking alone. It is in these moments of communion with God that we are reminded of His love, His power, and His promises.

But prayer isn't just powerful personally—it's also transformational when we come together as a community of faith. **There is divine power in agreement.** Jesus Himself said in

Matthew 18:19–20 (NIV):

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

This is why we value united prayer at Joel Lazarus Ministries. We believe that when we lift each other up before the Lord, He hears us—and He responds.

If you're facing a need, burdened by a situation, or simply desire someone to stand in faith with you—we invite you to reach out. **Our dedicated prayer team is ready to intercede on your behalf**, trusting God with you for healing, breakthrough, provision, and restored hope.

You can share your prayer request by emailing us at joellazarusministries@gmail.com
Or visit us online at www.joellazarusministries.org

Whatever you're walking through, know this: **you're not walking alone.** We are here, standing with you—and more importantly, God is with you.

GOD'S POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN OUR WEAKNESS WHEN WE WALK IN OBEDIENCE AND INTEGRITY

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