

Intro. The Christian life is full of such paradoxes.

Foolishness of God wiser than wisdom of men.

Strength in weakness. Losing life to find it. *Stronger weakness*

Giving away to still possess. Keeping a thing to lose it.

Paul's thorn:-- Given that

1. He should not be exalted overmuch.
2. It was a state in the flesh.
3. It was a messenger of Satan to buffet him.
4. He prayed thrice that it might depart.

## I. When Am I Weak?

1. When facing something out of the ordinary.  
Lack of experience is the same as lack of strength.  
Not having had experience before makes for weakness.  
The power of habit is here seen. Yet the text means  
a great deal more than this.

2. When taken off one's guard.  
As the body balances itself, so the spirit may be  
braced against temptation and sin. Peter as an illus-  
tration. Even Paul fell before the Sadducees and  
Pharisees -- off guard.

3. When I endeavor to do spiritual work with ordinary means.

- (a) When I have the form instead of the Spirit.
- (b) When we talk of Bible and do not read it.
- (c) When we talk of prayer without praying.

4. When I look to difficulties around rather than to God.  
We need the Spirit of Elijah. Heaped up with  
difficulties.

## II. When Am I Strong?

1 The first lesson in being strong is an experience of one's own weakness. Jno. 15:3. Phil. 4:13  
This is manifest in our Christian experience.



2. The next lesson is that of casting ourselves upon the mighty power of God. Overcoming by His power.

Israelites. Ramshorns and pitchers and lamps --  
beat Midianites.

Obediently walking round Jericho -  
Walls fell.

Scottish girl had strength to over-  
come all the power of Rome.

Conies are but a feeble folk, but  
they make their nests in the rocks.

3. The Christian's contribution is weakness. God's  
is the strength.

### III. Weakness made Strength.

1. Individual drops of water. -- Water wearing away  
mountains, Geologists tell us --

Then the ocean. Breaking the strongest cable by  
a little dew.