

Foreword by Dan Dean of Phillips, Craig & Dean

*living in
the power*

OF MY

weakness

DAVE CLARK

Inspiration for Ministry Leaders

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ONE

When God Chooses You

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you (John 15:16, KJV).

April 16, 2007: The news of the day was dominated by a campus massacre at Virginia Tech. One lone gunman on a rampage ended more than thirty stories before the best chapters had been written. Cameras captured still-trembling eyewitnesses, grieving roommates, and parents learning how to mourn. Reporters, at a loss for new adjectives, resorted to the familiar ones, filling the silence with words like “senseless,” “tragic,” and “unimaginable.” Like most of the country that night, I wrestled with a heart that hurt for those I didn’t know as I searched for words I would never get the chance to say.

Our son, Sam, who was five years old at the time and oblivious to the nation’s heartache, occupied himself with his nightly baseball game. To him, all that mattered was one more successful trip around the base paths measured out on our green, infield-like living room carpet. First base was cleverly masquerading as a

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magazine rack by the window, while second was safely hidden behind the leather couch that doubled as the center field fence. Third base, obviously an afterthought, was only a few steps from second and close enough to home plate that a five-year-old could make it in one leap. As my mind jumped sporadically between the contrasting images filling my living room, I couldn't help but wish I could run to Sam's world and take cover, even for just a little while. To him, every hit was a home run and every run was a game winner. He never counted the strikes or the innings played, and every game ended with a celebration. I told myself it wasn't the innocence I craved, but the courage to swing for the fence on every pitch with the confidence that it's within reach. After all, that's one of the great things about being a kid. Worlds change, but the game doesn't. Or does it?

Something happens along the way. Somewhere between Virginia Tech and my living room, somewhere between second base and home, the realities of life settle in and compromise the "what ifs" of our lives. We become all too aware that we didn't hit the ball as far as we wanted and that we're not nearly the runners we thought. We're not even sure how we made it past first with so little ability. The worst part is the nagging fear that we are the only ones who feel this way.

If you're like me, everywhere you turn, there's some tall, self-confident, perfectly coiffed, Kodak-smiling salesman or preacher telling us that with enough faith, we can accomplish anything. But they can't possibly understand what it's like where we live. How can we hope to make an eternal difference in our world when we're not even the best singer in our choir or the best Sunday school teacher in our church?

And yet, God speaks! Sometimes it's just a whisper. My wife, Cindi, has been known to suggest that God is really yelling at me; I've just lost so much hearing through the years that I think

it's a whisper. Other times God speaks through silence. You've been there, haven't you? You pray and wait, then wait some more only to look around and see how God was speaking all the time. Then there are those times when God's voice is thunderous and it seems like he actually *is* yelling. For those of us who live in the shadow of insecurity, these can be the toughest times to deal with. It's almost like God's version of Newton's law of gravity. For every call there is an equal response expected. But more than the response, I fear exposing how weak I am.

Not only does God speak, but he reminds us that we have been chosen to be part of something bigger than we can imagine—something beyond what we could accomplish in our own strength. If I were to make a top ten list of my “heroes of the insecure,” Gideon would surely be in the top two or three. In fact, I'd like to think he and I could have been friends. Maybe he would have confided in me what it felt like to hide from the Midianites. I could have told him how scared I was the first Sunday I directed the choir at church. We might have swapped stories of sacred encounters with a holy God. I could have told him about how God answered our twelve years of praying for a baby, and I would have loved to have heard his account of the visit from the angels. I probably would have said, “C'mon, Gideon, this is me. Angels? You? Yeah, right. You're going to deliver Israel! You're as insecure as I am. Somebody's playing the ultimate practical joke on you!”

The truth is, Gideon was a lot like me. I love his vulnerability in Judges 6:15 when he said, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house” (NKJV). Here's a man who spent his days separating the chaff from the straw, yet God sees something in Gideon. If you remember the story, you know that Gideon's battle strategy wasn't exactly impressive. He and his small army came in and made a bunch of noise in the middle of the night, and scared the Midianites enough

that they all ran away. What I love most about the story is how God took Gideon's fear and transformed it into the very weapon he used against the enemy.

The scriptures bring us story after story after story of how God is able to use our weaknesses for his good; in fact, I would go so far as to say I think he enjoys it. He let a band of trumpet players conquer the city of Jericho and a boy with stones and a sling level a mighty warrior named Goliath. Gideon laid out a fleece before a God who had nothing whatsoever left to prove, yet this same God still reached down and met Gideon at his level.

Even now new chapters are being written in this ongoing account of God's strength on display through our weakness. How else can I respond but with surrender? I am still not sure exactly what I bring to the battlefield, but I am confident that the voice that calls me to write is not my own. I respond to that voice with trepidation, yet with courage. Even though I can't see home plate from where I stand, God reminds me that all I have to do is keep running. After all, he chose me for the game.

“Dave Clark writes with the same sensitivity that has made him such a renowned songwriter. His devotional thoughts are lyrics without music. Each entry drips with meaning and touches you deeply in your soul.”

—Chuck Wallington
President, Christian Supply, Inc.

“For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

—2 Corinthians 12:10

“When I am weak, then I am strong”? That doesn’t sound right. What does it mean to live in the power of your weakness?

It means you do not have to rely on your own strength. Your weakness doesn’t have the final say in who you become. But it does give you a good place to identify the true source of strength.

Relying on God as the source of your strength is a lifelong pursuit. It begins when you come to grips with who you are on your own versus who you can be in Christ.

Take a delightful journey with master storyteller Dave Clark. Listen as he weaves together experience and Scripture that illuminate what it means to rely on Christ’s strength rather than your own strength.



A multi-talented writer of both books and songs, Dave Clark has authored *Worship Where You’re Planted: A Primer for the Local Church Worship Leader* and has written twenty-five songs that have reached the #1 spot in the country on the Christian music charts. Dave Clark’s impressive songwriting credits include hits that cross musical boundaries from contemporary Christian music to southern gospel, including songs recorded by Larnelle Harris; Sandi Patty; Steve Green; 4HIM; Al Denson; Point of Grace; Phillips, Craig & Dean; Glen Campbell; CeCe Winans; Charles Billingsley; The Martins; and many others. Dave, his wife, Cindi, and their three children reside in Hendersonville, TN.

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