

Week 8 Day 3 | *Promises in the Bible: Help in Our Weakness*

In the introduction of the book, I said the following in regard to this 13-week fitness journey: “. . . this is first a spiritual issue and that honoring God with our bodies begins by honoring God with our hearts.” It’s for this reason we frequently talk about the heart and what our reliance on the Holy Spirit, our heart pilot, should look like.

Yesterday, we talked about the power of praying confidently and with a clean heart. Tomorrow, we’ll talk about God’s plans for those with a clean heart. Today, we’re going to talk about the Holy Spirit’s willingness to help us, because without the Holy Spirit involved in this process, we will end up focusing on the wrong things. We will rely on the wrong things, strive for the wrong things, and pray for the wrong things.

Have you ever felt helpless or ill-equipped for something? Maybe you feel that way with your fitness at times. Maybe it’s with a parenting issue, school assignment, handyman project, or a job task. I mention those last four things because I’ve had firsthand experience struggling with all of them.

As a parent, I’m constantly challenged on how to rear our children to have grateful and submissive hearts.

Back in college, I had to take ancient Egyptian history. For my final, I had to write a paper on Queen Hatshepsut. Never heard of her? Neither had I. I was lost enough in this class as it was—a course that had no bearing on my writing degree whatsoever. (She was the first female Pharaoh, if you were wondering.)

About 10 years ago, a clogged sewer line backed up the plumbing at our old house. A smart homeowner would call for professional help. Instead, I thought I’d put my writing degree to use, which had no bearing on the plumbing issue whatsoever. I figured I’d snake the emergency overflow drain myself, measure the distance to the blockage, and dig a hole to fix the issue. I would have found China before finding the offending pipe.

Another time, I had the audacity to try and write a 90-day fitness devotional. I just wanted to guide people through the ups and downs of a fitness journey. I wanted to speak some truth into their lives in a brand-new way. I only wanted to reveal 90 profound and unique spiritual insights that could change their lives forever. I have a writing degree, after all!

In all four of these areas, I was and am ill-equipped. I have weaknesses. Here’s the funny little secret: in relation to our heavenly Father, these aren’t my only four areas of weakness. That’s why I take great comfort in these verses:

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”—Romans 8:26–27 (NIV)

When Paul wrote this, he was undergoing great spiritual and physical suffering. If the Spirit can help Paul during the hardest of persecutions, can He not help us in our everyday lives? As The Living Bible puts it in verse 27, “. . . the Holy Spirit helps us with our daily problems and in our praying.”

You see, right now, weeks 8–10 of this journey are arguably the hardest and can weaken us emotionally. As we’re struggling with our “daily problems,” we might earnestly seek Him. When we do, we often times unknowingly pray for the wrong things. We pray, “Lord, help me find time to work out” or the ever-popular “Father, help the numbers on

the scale to go down.”

Fortunately, I don’t think that’s what God hears. According to Romans, the Spirit searches our hearts and acts on our behalf. He takes our aching groans and makes our prayers presentable to our Father. Since the Father searches our hearts and knows the Spirit, God’s will is orchestrated through His people.

Instead of “God, help me to be healthier,” perhaps the Father hears, “Lord, help me rely on your Holy Spirit within me to be obedient to Your Word and bring You glory in all areas of my life.”

Understand that our strength lies, in part, in acknowledging how weak we are. Then, in that weakness, the Holy Spirit works to empower us.

So keep approaching the God of all creation with your requests. Keep trusting that the Spirit is intervening on your behalf. There is great encouragement in this truth: in comparison to the perfect Holy Spirit, we are all weak; but, *by* the Holy Spirit, we are all strong!

Prayer

Father, thank You that in my weakness You are made strong. Will You forgive me when I underestimate the power of the Spirit? Please help me to rely on the promise that Your Holy Spirit is alongside me, helping, and prevailing. Amen.

Meditation

The Holy Spirit intercedes and empowers in my weakness.

Daily Spiritual Exercise

Today you are going to meditate for three to five minutes on Romans 8:26–27. Break each verse into its parts and pause to focus on what that means for your life.

For instance, in verse 26 we read, “. . . the Spirit helps us in our weakness.” This means we are weak. We cannot do it on our own.

It also means we have the Spirit. Not only do we have the Spirit, our Spirit helps us in our weakness. Because of our weakness. Through our weakness. In spite of our weakness.

Furthermore, this means we are not alone. Not only that, but the one we are with, the one who lives in us, is able and is willing. How reassuring!

Proceed through the remaining passage in the same manner, applying these great promises to your life. When you’re finished with verses 26–27, you can’t help but to be more encouraged and empowered. In turn, verse 28 becomes not only more believable but more exhilarating:

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (NIV)