

LIMITATIONS

- Do you ever feel frustrated or discouraged because of limitations you may have?
- What limitations do you live with?
- How do they keep you from doing the things you'd like to do?

Moses felt he had limitations that made him ill equipped for the work God asked him to do. He pleaded his lack of eloquence as his excuse not to obey.

Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." The LORD said to him, "Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say." But Moses said, "Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else." Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and he will be glad to see you. You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do. He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him."

Exodus 4:10-16

This reminds us that God can use all of us. We are weak. We feel inadequate. But God can take weak and inadequate people and work miracles.

The apostle Paul complained three times about "a thorn in the flesh." He felt it was hindering his ministry for God. Eugene Peterson's *The Message* explains very well what happened:

...so I wouldn't get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me,

*My grace is enough; it's all you need.
My strength comes into its own in your weakness.*

Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

- Are you able to consider your limitation a gift?
- Can you let Christ take over in your weakness, making you stronger?

The best servants of God are often the most unexpected. In spite of handicaps and adversity, many have accomplished more than anyone would have dreamed.

Beethoven was totally deaf during the last 8 years of his life. But it was during those years that he wrote his Ninth Symphony, which has been acclaimed as his greatest work. He himself never heard it.

John Milton wrote his magnificent epic, *Paradise Lost*, after some 10 or 12 years of total blindness. He turned tragedy into triumph.

God is adequate for every challenge He calls us to meet, every task He calls us to perform, every duty He assigns, if we would step forward and salute our Command-in-Chief and say, "Yes Sir, I'm ready!"

God is looking for people who will take what they have in their hands, and put it in His hands! God will do unbelievable things with all of us if we make ourselves available to Him!

(Prepared with the help of a sermon by Dr. Harold L. White)

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13