

Look around you

When did you last visit a ruined fort or castle? How did it feel?



Imagine

You are walking up a steep, slippery hillside outside Corinth, in the late afternoon heat. You are on your way to the temple at the top. You are carrying a small soft metal sheet, rolled into a scroll. Inside are written the things that worry you and the things that you want to happen. They are prayers.

You bring the metal scroll to the priest. You light a clay oil lamp and burn some incense. You hope your prayers will be answered. Many people made this kind of journey at the time that Paul visited Corinth to ask different gods for help.



When Paul needed help, he prayed to Jesus. He felt that he heard an answer to his prayer: Jesus was not going to make him strong, but show him a new kind of strength that could only be felt through being weak. Whether Paul was strong or weak, he chose to live as God's servant. Perhaps his weakness helped other people feel that they could talk to him about their problems.



Paul's second letter to the Corinthians

A nugget to explore with children:
Chapter 12, verses 9b-10

Did you know?

There were more than eight temples around the Forum (the main square) in Corinth. The gods people worshipped included Apollo (the god of the sun) and Aphrodite the (goddess of love). Calling on the gods for help was part of daily life, but this kind of prayer did not give people a new identity or make them part of a new community.



So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.