

John 15:5 (NLT2)

Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

As a Christian, for us to try and do things under our own strength, apart from the Lord, is like trying to push a car that is running perfectly fine and has a full tank of gas.

Have you ever seen those ultimate strong man competitions, where these guys are doing all these feats of strength, and one of them is having a chain tied to a car or truck and pulling it a certain distance. So think about my first statement again:

“As a Christian, for us to try and do things under our own strength, apart from the Lord, is like trying to push a car that is running perfectly fine and has a full tank of gas.”

Now once again, think about these strong guys pulling a car for what, 30, 40, 50 feet? We think, “Wow, that guy is super strong.” But if you really think about it, his strength is in his own ability, and under his own ability, how far did that car move? Really, the stronger one is the one who designed and made that car in a way that we don’t have to use any efforts to make it move, because if you think about it, this strong guy in his own efforts was able to pull the car a few feet. But a car with a full tank of gas will go how far? Three to four hundred miles on one tank of gas, and the driver does not have to use any of his own strength, other than pushing on the gas pedal with his foot or turning up the volume on a radio with his hand. Most cars even have cruise control, so we don’t even need to push on the gas pedal. And today, most cars have audio controls on the steering wheel, so we don’t even have to move our hand too far.

Now I know this all-sounds kind of crazy, because who in their right mind would pull or push a perfectly good running car when all they have to do is get in it, sit down, start it up and drive away?

Well, think of Jesus’ words in today’s devotional, which is something we are all familiar with and we even quote it. “***apart from me you can do nothing***” Yet how often are we trying to do things in our own strength because we think “I got this”? Yet, in all our efforts we are like that strong man pulling a perfectly good running car a few feet, rather than praying and seeking the Lord’s direction, which is usually, just get in the car, turn the key, press on the gas, because I will do this through you by My (Jesus’) own strength.

We are also familiar with these next words of Jesus.

† ***Matthew 11:29-30 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.***

But let's read it from the Message bible.

† **Matthew 11:29-30 (MSG)** *Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.*

We are so used to doing things on our own, and when we fail, then we cry out to God for help. But what if we cried out to God first, before we did anything, and asked for His help, strength, and guidance? But not only that, what if we also waited on the Lord for His guidance and His help?

† **Psalm 40:1 (NLT2)** *I waited patiently for the LORD to help me, and he turned to me and heard my cry.*

We seem to forget that when we cry out to God, He hears us, and He is never ignoring us. The real problem is that we, in this fast-paced life and times that we live in, truly don't know how to “*wait patiently for the LORD to help me*”. We want to treat the Lord like we can place our order to Him through Amazon, with just one click, and I can have it the same day or even in a few hours.

We all love this next verse, and we say that we want to live it.

† **Isaiah 40:31** *But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.*

Well, maybe most of it, except for that waiting part, because we are all eager to “*mount up with wings like eagles, run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.*” As long as we can do it with no waiting required (*But those who wait on the LORD*). Because if we must wait for the Lord to hand us the keys to the car, we would rather try and pull or push it under our own strength, instead of waiting for His direction. Then we wonder why we don't get that far in our walk with the Lord or why we fail so many times when we try to do something for His glory.

Jesus prayed many times, all night, and God directed Him. How much time are we spending in prayer verses how much times are we trying in our own efforts and getting nowhere?

† **Lamentations 3:25** *The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.*

† **Jeremiah 33:2-3 (MSG)** *This is GOD's Message, the God who made earth, made it livable and lasting, known everywhere as GOD: 'Call to me and I will answer you. I'll tell you marvelous and wondrous things that you could never figure out on your own.'*