

## A Word For the Weak Can Make Me Strong

By Chris Maxwell

Words have ways of getting our attention. They whisper, they shout, they sing. They place us in a car for a long ride, board us on a plane for a bumpy flight or lure us toward an unexpected shore.

A word recently climbed into me and constructed a home in my life. I did not invite it. Now though, it is here to stay. The word? Epilepsy. Why the surprise? Oh, I knew it lived nearby. My illness of encephalitis resulted in brain damage and a condition that makes me a candidate for seizures. And, when you study available information about seizures, you find out the most by looking up that new word of my life: epilepsy. This time though, my doctors labeled me as having it or, as it having me.

When staring at such a situation, we have several options. We can live in denial. I know a person who would refuse to speak that word as if the power of the mouth has become a god itself. Another option is despair. Instead of denial or despair, I believe we should face the trial while held in the Mighty hands of our Healer. That declares available strength instead of becoming oppressed, depressed or obsessed by a word that rolls into town. Speaking of my “word of the weak,” I actually let it teach me a few things. On the medical side, it provided this information:

*-1.5 million Americans sustain traumatic brain injuries each year. That equals one every 15 seconds.*

*-80,000 Americans experience onset of long-term disability following traumatic brain injuries.*

*-Two and a half million Americans have epilepsy.*

Well, let me sound a little preachy and take us to an original meaning. The name epilepsy is derived from a Greek word, meaning “to possess, seize or hold.” When victims of disability notice the word “hold,” we often view our lives as “on hold.” Instead, maybe the perspective that regards us as the “objects being held” would help us move forward. Simply, let God hold us. Our limbs, our medication, our tests, our questions: let God hold us.

Think of the word “seize.” It means to snatch, grab, clutch, or grasp. By letting God have the privilege of holding and keeping us, we can seize each day in brand new ways. Opportunities to endure and enjoy await those clutched by their Creator.

Will He keep us? Or will He let go? Think of that other word: “possess.” If I chose to let God be the One who possesses me, then I can truly be free. While I swallow medication

to prevent seizures, when I struggle to remember a name, or when I visit that doctor for one more test. I can let my Holder seize a chance to possess me.

I guess Paul knew what he was writing about so long ago: He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me (2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV).

My mind and emotions are not always sure about the next move. But, my heart tells me, that is why God designed each of us anyway. Today, God can hold us. He will gladly seize the chance to own us. Such a response to weakness puts amazing muscle where we need it most. Let it happen this week as the weak become strong.