

**Matthew 28:20** “I am with you always.”

What is it about being alone that makes most of us weaker?

Have you ever taken a walk alone at night? It can be pretty scary when you are all by yourself. What was that sound? What is making that noise? But go with a friend and all of sudden we feel much braver. Kids especially have fears of the dark.

When we (my wife/I/kids) lived in a two story house, and we would tell our kids to go upstairs and get ready for bed at night, they often asked if we would go with them. Why? Because they were scared to go up by themselves. We reminded them that there was nothing upstairs to be afraid of, but they were still hesitant. Many times one child would start heading upstairs only if their sibling will join them. They felt more courageous when they were together. Many times they walked up the stairs slowly and turned as many lights on as possible on the way, but eventually they went up.

It is quite a different scene if mom or dad were to go up the stairs with them. Their steps were more sure. Their confidence was high and the fear factor was low. They felt safer. And acted noticeably stronger.

Together We're Stronger.

Growing up in Kansas with my sisters we had a dog. We got him as a puppy and he was a good companion for us as kids. He always hung around our yard (we grew up in the country with no fences, just wide open fields). One day, a family friend gave us their dog. Now we had two dogs. We soon noticed something very different. When there was only one dog, he stayed around our property. But now that he had a friend (another dog), the two of them would disappear for days at a time. Sometimes they were gone for more than a week. Often they would come back with their ears torn from running under a barbed fence or some other minor injury. We would invent stories to explain their wounds and make up in our minds the adventures they must have encountered during their absence from our house. But we never worried much because they were always ... together. They had each other.

Whether its animals or people, we are stronger when we are together.

Something happens when we are together that gives us more courage. Makes us more confident. Motivates us to be stronger. Bolder.

Maybe that is why Jesus promised us that he would be with us always. To make us stronger. Knowing that we are never really alone and that Jesus is always with us should make us bolder, more willing to dare to do bigger things, to accomplish more for Him, His kingdom.

Together We're Stronger. Stronger because we are not alone. Stronger because God and others are with us.

*How About You?* – Do you feel stronger when someone is with you? Especially if you are in the dark or facing a tough situation? Wouldn't you rather have someone with you than face life alone? Who around you could use a friend? Who around you needs someone to help them be stronger? How could God use you to help someone be the person God planned for them to be? Keep your eyes open for God to bring friends into your life to help you.

**Pray** – God, thank you for always being with me. Help me to be brave and bold for you. Help me to stand up for you. Give me the courage to do what is right so that others can be stronger because of my decisions. I want you to use me to motivate others to be strong. Please put people in my life that can help me to be strong too. Amen.