

Keys to spiritual strength

Oct. 18, 2020

Today we want to talk on the subject of spiritual strength.

There is a great storm coming in these days. We need divine strength.

Matthew 24:9 tells us that many will be offended in our times.

And hate and betray one another... that the love of many will turn cold.

In Revelation 2:8, Jesus said to one of his churches,

“You have a little strength, and have not denied my name.

But we want more than a little strength. Colossians 1:11 says:

Strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man.

Jesus is our greatest example. He endured that terrible cross.

He could have called 10,000 Angels, but instead, gave his life for us.

And that is because he had vision of eternity. Hebrews 12:1-2:

“...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, [lightly esteeming] the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1, 2, KJV. Having eternal vision gives us strength. He lightly esteemed the 6 hours on cross, compared to the eternal rewards.

We need eternal vision also, — this is a great key to spiritual strength.

Many Christians hear, but do not heed the word of God. Matthew 7:24-28:

To hear the word of God, and obey it, this is wisdom. This is building our life on a solid foundation. We will not collapse when trouble comes.

Obedience brings spiritual strength and confidence.

But many Christians hear, but do not obey the word of God.

They are building their life on a very poor foundation.

When trouble comes, they are going to collapse. A big collapse.

So, a great key to spiritual strength, is obedience, and eternal vision.

Perspective is important for spiritual strength. There is an account given in 2 Kings 6:15-18, that reveals this:

“And when [Elisha's servant] was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.” 2 Kings 6:15-18, KJV.

Elisha had peace. He saw the unseen world. Surrounded with horses and chariots of fire. His servant only saw the enemies, and was horrified.

Vision and perspective are important for spiritual strength.

Peace gives us strength. Remember the storm at sea. The disciples were horrified. Jesus, the Prince of peace, was sleeping.

They awakened him, and he walked over and commanded peace be still. And this storm was totally silent, it was a great calm.

Romans 8:28 assures us all things are working together for our good.

This promise is to those who love God, and are obeying him.

Isaiah 54:17 - “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 54:17, KJV.

**Wisdom is strength. Proverbs 24:5 - says, a wise man is strong.
“A wise man is strong; a man of knowledge increaseth strength.”
Wisdom and knowledge give us spiritual strength.
Wisdom knows how to respond in situations.**

**As a child growing up, Jesus increased in wisdom. Luke 2:40
“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the
grace of God was upon him.” Jesus himself is wisdom. We also need to
grow in wisdom and knowledge, and become strong in spirit.**

**Isaiah 33:6, tells us: “wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of the
times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure.”**

**What did the strongest man who ever lived, declare? - Mt. 11:28-30
I am meek and humble in my heart, Learn this from me, rest in your soul.
Proud people are very weak. Angry, easily offended, bitter. Weak.
Humble, meek people are very strong. No retaliation, no bitterness.
They are able to control their passions. Self-control.**

Power over temptation

**Let's talk about the difference between Samson and Joseph of Genesis.
Samson was strong physically, but very weak morally. Proverbs 16:32
“Slow to anger...rules his spirit is greater than conquering a whole city.”
Samson went from one woman to another. Could not control his passions.
On the other hand, Joseph was very strong. When he was tempted by his
masters wife, he ran out of the house. Paul says flee from fornication.
Run from fornication: 1 Corinthians 6:18, KJV.**

**“Flee fornication, he that commits fornication sins against his own body.”
Moral impurity is weakness, and you are doing evil against your own body.
Remember the difference between Samson and Joseph.
Samson played with temptation, Joseph ran from it. He was very wise.**

All the fruits of the Spirit

All the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, are divine strengths.

Joy is a strength. The joy the Lord is your strength - Neh.8:10b

Depression and sadness weaken our bodies. Joy strengthens us.

Peace gives us strength over worry and fears.

Love is the strength to be unselfish, to put others first. It bears all things.

Love is not easily provoked, it does not envy. Divine love is a strength.

Long-suffering strengthens us to forbear flaws and problems in others.

Meekness is the strength not to retaliate, not to strike back.

Faith helps us get through dark trials. Faith moves mountains.

Temperance (self control) helps us to conquer wrong appetites.

It helps us to control our temper, our anger.

Making the right sacrifices

We are to offer the sacrifice of praise, the sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

The sacrifice of a broken spirit...“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart...” Psalms 51:17. This is divine dependence.

These sacrifices reveal divine strength. It is right response to Injury.

When Paul & Silas were beaten, at midnight they praised the Lord in prison.

They were offering the sacrifice of praise.

It's easy to praise the lord whenever everything is going well.

But they had been humiliated, their backs were bleeding, yet praising God.

When Job lost everything, he fell down and worshiped.

He was offering the sacrifice of Thanksgiving. He defeated Satan.

He thanked God in the good times and in the bad times. This is strength.

Handling failure or looking like a failure, is a sign of great strength.

Isa 50:6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” Strength over reproach.

**Strength comes from the dependence on God. Full reliance on him.
We are to have no confidence in the flesh. Philippians 3:3**

**According to Isaiah 53:12, God divides the spoil with the strong.
Jesus won a full victory on the cross.**

**He shares that victory and all its blessings with those who rely on him.
Strength comes by relying on God, and obeying him.**

**People who are easily offended, are very weak. Even Christian brethren.
“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.” They don't bend. Proverbs 18:19.**

**The spirit of the world teaches that we have a right to be offended.
No, our right is to cry out to God for grace to help in time of need.
And offended brother is very weak. He refuses to forgive, is bitter.**

**A man of strength forgives others; but a weak person cannot forgive.
Pr 19:11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over (or forgive) a transgression.**

**Trouble is coming in our generation. We need great grace to endure.
Pr 24:10 says: If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.
Grace is always available in our time of need.
But Grace is only given to the humble, not to the proud.
Humble people depend on God. Proud people do not depend on God.
God's grace is always available. 2 Corinthians 12:9.**

**When Jesus rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven,
He poured out his Spirit on his Church, and gave spiritual gifts to man.
Psalm 68:18 reveals something very peculiar.
Sometimes God gives special gifts to very unstable people. Why?
To try to keep them saved. God does everything he can to save people.**

Let's read Psalm 68:18: Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

God gives very unusual gifts to very weak people, to try to save them. So sometimes people with very extraordinary gifts, are very unspiritual. Having usual spiritual gifts is not always a sign of being godly.

On the day of judgment, many will say; Lord lord, we have prophesied in your name, in your name we've cast out demons, in your name we've done all these wonderful works. And the Lord has to sadly say: depart from me, you who continually practice iniquity. Matthew 7:21-23.

Great gifts do not save us, we have to live godly lives.

Let's review some of the keys to spiritual strength:

- We need to eternal vision. This keeps us on course. Holy life.**
- We need an obedient life. Then we are building upon a solid foundation.**
- God's perspective. Then we'll react the right way to life's difficulties.**
- We need all the fruits of the Spirit. Each fruit is a divine strength.**
- Humility is strength. Being dependent and reliant on God.**
- Proud people are weak, they are confident in their own flesh.**
- We need to make the right sacrifices. Praise, Thanksgiving, broken spirit.**
- We need to be wise and forgiving, this is strength.**
- A weak person cannot and will not forgive.**
- Remember, unusual spiritual gifts are not always a sign of godliness.**
- On the day of judgment, God will have to say too many, depart from me.**
- Even though they have performed many miracles.**

Let's yield our lives in a new way to God, and become strong Christians.

