
Words of Truth

Be Strong In The Lord

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Throughout the Scriptures, in various contexts, we read of how God expects His people to be strong (Deuteronomy 11:8, Deuteronomy 31:6, Deuteronomy 31:7, Deuteronomy 31:23, Joshua 1:6, Joshua 1:9, Joshua 1:18, Joshua 10:25, I Chronicles 22:13, I Chronicles 28:10, I Chronicles 28:20, II Chronicles 25:8, II Chronicles 32:7, Ezra 9:12, Isaiah 35:4, Ezekiel 22:14, Daniel 10:19, Daniel 11:32, Haggai 2:4, I Corinthians 16:13, and II Timothy 2:1). This subject could go in many different directions. You can see that if you look at the passages above in their contexts.

We could talk about the differences between strong and weak consciences in relation to authorized liberties we have in Christ (Romans 14:1-15:7). We could talk about how physical weaknesses can lead to spiritual strength (II Corinthians 12:7-10). We could study about having strong faith (Romans 4:13-25). What I am aiming to do is to focus on spiritual strength that we have to use to fight through life in this present evil world.

In one context we read this regarding being strong: *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”* (Ephesians 6:10-17).

After reading that context do you get the picture of spiritual battle the text should draw for you? We are in a spiritual battle. Paul told Timothy: *“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare... Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses”* (I Timothy 1:18 and I Timothy 6:12). As the text written to the church in Ephesus states, we are not engaged in a carnal battle. Furthermore, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (II Corinthians 10:1-5). So, think about how being spiritually strong, with strong faith, equips us in our fight.

Strength In This Battle

In April, I preached a sermon about how the flesh is frail (<https://www.wordsoftruth.net/thefleshmighfail2020.mp3>). The timing of that lesson surrounded what we were going through locally concerning the Covid-19 Virus. I preached that sermon because of the spreading fears throughout not only our country, but the whole world. Fear is dangerous. In that sermon I referenced some passages in the book of Revelation. The book of Revelation was written to seven congregations in Asia (Revelation 1:11). Those seven congregations, like most Christians in the first century, were facing tribulation [affliction; trouble; persecution] (Revelation 1:9). The congregation in Smyrna was told: *“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”* (Revelation 2:10).

How important was it for Christians not to be afraid of what they were facing? Consider these Scriptures: *“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell... But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled... But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”* (Matthew 10:28, I Peter 3:14, and Revelation 21:8).

When you think about not being in carnal fear, doesn't strength come to mind? Strength should come to mind when you think of not being in fear. If you go back and look at a few of the Scriptures mentioned at the beginning of this article, you will find that being strong was how to overcome fear (again; Deuteronomy 31:6, Joshua 10:25, I Chronicles 28:20, Isaiah 35:4, and Daniel 10:19).

We are fighting a battle that, if we don't raise the white flag, we will surely be victorious [spiritually speaking] (Romans 8:28-39). We can believe that! We can hope in that! We can trust in that! So, brethren, be strong. Fight to win the prize (I Corinthians 9:24-27). At the end of your physical life, be able to know that the award awaits you (II Timothy 4:6-8).

Conclusion

At the conclusion of a context about the resurrection, we read this: *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord”* (I Corinthians 15:55-58).