

True Strength

Christians are required to be strong - 1 Cor 16:13-14 - 13 Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; ***be strong***. 14 Do everything in love.

WHAT IS TRUE STRENGTH

God is our strength!!! -

Ps 18:1-2 - I love you, O Lord, my strength. 2 The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Ps 28:8 The Lord is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

Waiting on God is an extreme strength –

Ps 27:14 Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

1 Peter 5:6-7 - 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

It's up to us to recognize our true strength and access it - Eph 6:10-13 - 10 Finally, be strong IN THE LORD and IN HIS MIGHTY POWER. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Elements of True strength is wisdom and knowledge - Prov 24:5 A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength;

Recognize true strength to get behind what's truly strong - Eccl 9:16-18 - 16 So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength." But the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are no longer heeded. 17 The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools. 18 Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good.

Learn from the strength of the "weak" animals - Prov 30:24-28 - 24 "**Four things on earth are small, yet they are EXTREMELY WISE**: 25 Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer; 26 coneys are creatures of little power, yet they make their home in the crags; 27 locusts have no king, yet they advance together in ranks; 28 a lizard can be caught with the hand, yet it is found in kings' palaces.

True strength will be in Line with God's Word - Ps 119:28 My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

We must realize we are all weak until the transformation - 1 Cor 15:42-44 - 42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; 43 it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; 44 it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

Those that are strong by world standards WILL fall - Ps 52:6-9 - 6 The righteous will see and fear; they will laugh at him, saying, 7 "Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others!" 8 But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever. 9 I will praise you forever for what you have done; in your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints.

Our Spirit is strong and our flesh is weak is why we need to be spiritual - Matt 26:41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

WHAT KEEPS US WEAK

The weakest are those that are strong (in the world) - 1 Cor 1:26-31 - 26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are, 29 **SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST BEFORE HIM**. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "**LET HIM WHO BOASTS BOAST IN THE LORD**."

Where you are based on the worlds measure of strength is meaningless - Eccl 9:11 I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.

Worldly strength leaves us vulnerable - Luke 11:21-23 - 21 "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. 22 But when SOMEONE STRONGER attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man TRUSTED and divides up the spoils. 23 "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

We must consciously NOT depend on the flesh - Phil 3:3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who PUT NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH—

Don't be deceived when it looks like the worldly strong seem to win, because it's not because of their strength - Ps 33:16-22 - 16 No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. 17 A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength **IT CANNOT SAVE.** 18 But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, 19 to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. 20 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. 21 In him our hearts rejoice, for **WE TRUST IN HIS HOLY NAME.** 22 May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

A stubborn man, if not changed, will be weak to death - Prov 29:1 - A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed — **without remedy.**

Using our circumstances as a bases for our strength is a huge mistake - Prov 10:15 The wealth of the rich is their fortified city, but **poverty** is the ruin of the poor. ***Understand, this is not a good thing for the rich or the poor.**

False teaching will weaken Christians who are not alert—

Heb 13:9-10 - 9 **Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings.** It is good for our hearts to be strengthened by grace, not by ceremonial foods, which are of no value to those who eat them. 10 We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat.

Hos 4:6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

God gives True strength to those that fear HIM not to them that are strong based on the world - Ps 147:10-11 - 10 His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse, nor his delight in the legs of a man; 11 the Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

HOW DO WE ACCESS TRUE STRENGTH?

If we recognizing we are weak, and Trust in God, He will give us True strength - Isa 40:29-31 - 29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

We must be broken in order to become strong - Ps 34:18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

A true dependence on God will be displayed by brokenness - Ps 51:16-17 - 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17 The **sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart,** O God, you will not despise.

We are to devote all of our strength to God and allow him to be our strength displayed - Mark 12:29-31 - 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with **ALL your strength.**' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

All ministries and gifts are to be used totally depending on and glorifying God - 1 Peter 4:10-11 - 10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, SO THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE PRAISED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Churches need to be strengthened in FAITH - Acts 16:5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

The entire purpose of the church service is to strengthen the church - 1 Cor 14:26 What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. **All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.**

When we realize Christ (God) is our True strength we can learn to overcome and do anything - Phil 4:11-13 - 11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 **I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.** NKJV

The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness - Rom 8:26-27 - 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

We must realize our true strength is our weakness - 2 Cor 11:30-31 - 30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever, knows that I am not lying.

Jesus became weak to become strong - 2 Cor 13:4 For to be sure, he was crucified in weakness, yet **he lives by God's power.** Likewise, we are weak in him, yet **by God's power we will live with him to serve you.**

God will allow us at times to become weak in order to become strong –

2 Cor 12:7-10 - 7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But 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. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For **WHEN I AM WEAK, THEN I AM STRONG.**

2 Cor 1:8-9 - 8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, ***far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life.*** 9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But **THIS HAPPENED THAT WE MIGHT NOT RELY ON OURSELVES BUT ON GOD, WHO RAISES THE DEAD.**

Jesus fully understands and experienced our weakness - Heb 4:14-16 - 14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. 16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.