

"STRONG IN THE LORD"

Eph. 6:5-10

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

V. 10.

The Christian has power for the day and its duties through the might of Christ.

1:19.

We begin where we left off last Sunday night in the study of Ephesians -- the setting is just right for this special (ordination) service.

V. 5 - Slaves, obey your human masters -- that's what Deacons are, aren't they?

Walter do you want to be a slave, or would you prefer to reign! Deacons are in things that affect the spiritual life of the church - A team, they can enrich every worship service - membership of the church looks to them for increase discipline & living & guidance -
Slaves - 60 million of them, were the work force of Ancient Rome.

It is said labor was beneath a Roman citizen - so every household was run by slaves.

Often there were good masters and bad masters. A slave in the law was a living tool.

Many of them were well-educated, cultured some were in charge of instructing children.

Doubtless the early church was made up of many slaves in the membership.

Amazing, but true, the Gospel does not advocate slave revolt but a Christian relationship:

✓ 15-7

"AS UNTO CHRIST"

As the servants of Christ,
doing the will of God from the heart,
as to the Lord,
with fear and trembling
in singleness of your heart.

Not with eyeservice (works when master watches)

As men - pleasures - please Christ

With good will doing service, as to the Lord and not unto men.

Hymn 394 - Stephen Acts 6; 7 - 1931 words (Tune 1815)

We will never make men good workmen by increasing pay / or bettering working conditions, or rewards.

The only secret of good workmanship is that it is done for God.

Paul has a word for masters too.

Simple: He is a master of men, but first he is a servant of God. All he does is in the presence of God.

V. 5 - 10 - is referred to as the (Gospel) of the (Christian Workman). It fits the special service tonight.

The slave excells in his service by doing it "as unto Christ". Doing the will

of God from the heart.

Don't you forget that in a greater sense you are Christ's slave, and in his eyes you stand equal and you serve one another. Christian slave and Christian master are confronted with love. Men are at peace and practice love.

The Lines of Florence Plumstead:

"In the quietness of Christ
who knows no conflict in His heart;
in the confidence He has
that He can never know defeat,
I can find the strength
to rest in Him and wait
until I can find some pieces
of my shatter life
worth the picking up.

Or let them lie - soiled, once-lovely things
it seemed I could not live without,
and be at peace as I let Him build
His victorious life through me."

All of Paul's epistles are divided into two parts. First doctrinal - he expounds the will and mind of God. Second practical admonition - long list of precepts, He has come to that passage now. V. 10.

I. WORDS FOR STRENGTH

Words he uses:

"Be strong in the Lord - command, presence tense. Be strong!

Literally - to clothe oneself with power.

Now some might say, do this by self-effort. That does (not) help us much. *Clear Evidence*
A Tramp said to Proctor "I am a praying man" Just look at Kenneth & Britches as Warnant from praying
too much - Proctor picked up the man's coat tail & said - "Yes, I see & I note the seat
& your Britches is worn from Backsliding"

We are to be "strengthened in the Lord". Paul in Acts 9 after being saved went to
Arabia - then returned to Damascus. Acts 9:19 - says that "He was strengthened"
that is the power of God came upon him.

Romans 4 used a word describing Abraham - who was 100 years old, his wife 90
years old. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief". (That he
would have a son by Sarah. In V. 20 He was "strong in faith". God helped him believe.

That is the word here in Ephesians - we are strengthened - it is something God
does for us, something that human nature in itself cannot do. We are strengthened
in the Lord and in the power of his might.

What is the (difference) in power and might?

Power is dominion.

I Peter 4:11 - To whom be praise and power, dominion.

Rev. 1:5-6 - Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood to him be glory and power - that is dominion. Manifest power.

Might - is inherent power. 2 Thes. 1:9 - Day when the Lord comes in "the glory of his power" inherent power.

Be strengthened in the Lord - in the dominion and in the inherent power of God.

"Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil.

Wiles - interesting word - like method, follow after a thing systematically, to learn it, to follow it, to write it down, to systematize it.

The word came to have an evil meaning to follow after evil, deceit, trickery. Systematic evil of Satan.

Temptation of Jesus. Satan asked - fall down and worship. Did Satan have the power to give him the Kingdoms of this world?

Yes, it was not a temptation if he did not have the power to offer.

2 Cor. 4 - Paul called Satan the god of this world.

Do you believe that? Look around you - do you see anything more universal than death?

Sin, pain, suffering?

II. WORDS ABOUT THE STRUGGLE

1- First there is a struggle in this world. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Names of evil angels - conflict and war in the heart of this universe.

We cannot escape it or flee from it, if we go to the moon - we cannot get beyond.

History is full of Hittites, Elamites, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Caesar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Hitler, Tojo - nothing unusual in the story of conflict in world.

"In the day of peace you prepare for war! That story is tragic - pride - "Is not this the great Babylon which I have built for my glory and for my excellent majesty "so said Nebuchadnezzar.

Hitler had a youth of Germany - raise their hands and salute, Hi Hitler.

Why is war so universal. Yearning of national supremacy. Hannibal as a little boy was taught by his father to hate the Roman Empire.

Japan fought for a place in the sun.

Clovis, king of France, had his army baptized. His warriors held up their fists above the water to wield their battle axes as never before. The unbaptized arm and they fought furiously.

2 - Second, there is a struggle in the heart of man. Conflict and Civil War is also in the Christian life and Christian faith.

Finally, my brethren be clothed in the power of God and put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand.

For our conflict is not against flesh and blood. Not something we can seize with our hands and choke it to death. Or mow down with a machine gun.

Christian warfare is internal in us - our souls.

Gal. 5, Rom. 8 - describe two natures on the inside of you. You are two natures - warfare - worldliness.

This is an influence - reaches into the spirit world - within us.

III. HOW TO BE STRENGTHENED

Presenting the conflicts Paul said here is what to do in the family. V. 1-4. Parents and children accept responsibility. V. 5 - Christian workman you are slaves.

V. 10 - Finally my brethren be strengthened. How?

How does a Christian servant wage a war and how does he stand up against enemies.

Could he do it with physical strength?

A Boy said to a Friend - The 1st thing I'm going to do when I get to heaven is to feel Samson's muscle.

Exploits of Samson thrilled people of his day - I used to remember boys talked about who could whip whom. Even adults were sometimes like that.

Just ball coach, dejected, losing, looked at his substitutes, yelled, Jones - go in there & get ferocious!
But physical powers pass to nothingness. *Jones jumped up, sure coach, glared on his headgear - what's this number?*

The Prussian monarch, with his seven foot soldiers today would make a better machine gun target.

I looked at the walls in Jerusalem - what physical strength would that be against the atomic bomb? nothing.

Could we wage war with intellect and the mind?

Knowledge is power the Greeks taught.

Socrates taught if one actually knew, he would be perfect, he would make the right decisions. Do you not wish that could be so.

The mind is nothing - how do beautiful flowers appear out of mud and mire?

Water lilly.

You see it but do not understand a mystery.

A lamp stand cannot give light - only hold up the light.

How am I to be strengthened in the warfare of the soul and of the life and of the world?

Be clothed in the might and in the power. In the dominion and in the inherent strength of the Lord.

Our strength must come from God. Our victory is not something we can achieve for ourselves in our weakness and fallen natures.

A strong muscle can tunnel through a mountain - a good mind can solve math problems - but facing the warfare of the soul, we need God's help.

It is beyond human ableness. If we win the victory - it comes from God. If God is to do it - how?

Scripture - plain - power belongeth to God. All authority, all power is given unto me in heaven and earth.

That Dominion; inherent strength, God gives.

John 1:12-13 - "But as many as received him believe in Him, trusted him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God. Born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

It is strength from the outside from Heaven. Strength in the Lord.

It endures - it kneels to pray - it searches the word - it appeals to us in the work of the Lord. We get a call to be servants - slaves.

The humblest, most unlearned, untaught, the poorest, the finest, the most gifted.

All need - be strengthened in the Lord.

Admiral Nimitz stood and made a marvelous address, on the Battleship Missouri, in Tokoyo Bay - Sept. 2, 1945. Japan had capitulated and the war was done.

He was the head admiral, chief of all the Naval operations in the Pacific.

Closed his wonderful address words some what like these: "Alone to my headquarters in Guam, ^{looked out} a little green valley, there is a military cemetery. I look out my window on that little valley and I see those ordered rows of white crosses. I walk among those fallen comrades, soldiers, marines, and sailors - and I read their names." Then he named a long list of men - ordinary American boys and he said --

"They fought together as comrades in arms. They died together. And now they sleep together in death."

This is a day of victory, our triumph, is the fruit of their dedicated lives.

That is exactly what God calls us to in the warfare of the Lord.

We are humble, ordinary people locked together in a common determination - brothers in the arms of Christ.

Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
On flow'ry beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize
And sail thro' bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign,
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy word.

Finally, my brethren be strengthened, be clothed in the dominion and in the power of the Lord.

*I have the strength to face all conditions by the Power
that Christ gives me — Phil. 4:13.*

This is your invitation from God. Join hands with Christ and march to glory and to victory with Him.