

she is challenged here of the peril and of the weakness.

What has been the work?

[First,] Weakness in evangelism she has had the responsibility of living before millions, and seeking to evangelize those people. It's gospel must be proclaimed to all men, and its destiny universal. This has been trusted with the church. The glorious harvest has been reaped as a result, but large portions of the earth have yet to be won to our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

When we think of the hundreds every hour that go out of this life and hasten on to the judgment without knowing God. The church had gone to sleep concerning this responsibility, and there were multitudes of Jews yet to be converted to the faith of Jesus Christ. There were hundreds of the seed of Abraham that had been scattered in various nations of the earth, without instruction in the worship of God.

[Second] Weakness in opposing the ways of error, and the teachings of Rome, in this society of ours, in which we live, which would corrupt all morals. We have work to do in seeking to fight against growing infidelity which the church confronts.

[Third,] Weakness in we must meet and resist a form of religion, which while it holds fast to the name of Christianity, it denies and denounces some of the most outstanding doctrines that

THE PERILS AND STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH - Isaiah 52:1

Intro: "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city, for henceforth, there shall no more come into thee, the unclean."

"Awake, awake". (Sleep) often too accurately describes the condition of God's church. Many are at ease in Zion. The prophets prophecy smooth things and the people love it, and enjoy it. And they cry, "A little more sleep." If you remember the (parable of the tares) it was while men slept that the adversary sowed the tares.

Here is a challenge to the first love of Jesus, Jesus loved to talk about my father, my sheep, my disciples, my father's house, and my church. He purchased it with his own precious blood, and brought it into being, and sent the Holy Spirit to vitalize it and to empower it.

"The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,
She is His new creation
By Spirit and the Word
From heaven he came and sought her
To be His holy bride
With His own blood he bought her
And for her life he died."

I want us to carefully look at this church and examine just two things. Here is an indication of weakness or peril in the church, and second, a recommendation for the putting on of strength. So we shall notice these two things in order. The weakness, or peril, and the strength of the church.

I. Indication of weakness

The very fact that Jesus and God the Father, through the Holy Spirit, inspired Isaiah to declare "Awake, awake," is an indication that here is a sleeping giant...that the church...in this language, that God directs to his ancient church is an image of a sleeping giant. The church of God had been a giant of power in the world, but at the time in which God speaks, it had relapsed into slumber. Hence, this arousing note of alarm "Awake, awake." The slumbering giant is not only summoned to arouse to consciousness, but to put on to put forth his strength for conflict and for victory.

In (all ages) many have been the times of such weakness as well as times of power. When the church went forth first from Jerusalem, a little flock scattered here and there in a time of persecution...it was a time of power. It was then that in those (infant) days that the church lifted empires and stirred nations, and met the hour but there followed a time

of weakness, which followed the era of power. We know, that of course in the morning of the reformation, the church heard the cry to awake, and to come forth from a period of weakness

This is a trumpet call. Upon her the spirit of slumber had fallen, but all are not asleep. The foundations of her faith were being threatened. The enemy was coming in like a flood as we note today, in the shape of intemperance, vice, greed, infidelity, horrible wickedness, enough to afflict our souls and to frighten the world. Is it not visible that the church has been drifting? There are traitors within as well as without? That we have drifted toward ritualism and other worldliness, which has taken its toll in our midst.

Isaiah here prophesied more than 100 years before the captivity of Israel. He was inspired with anticipation, and in the later chapters, he calls upon the exiles, under the figure of a captive female, to arise from the ground on which she has been sitting, to shake herself from the dust.

By a figure still bolder, he summons the holy land, and the holy city to clothe themselves in their best attire, and to get ready for the reception of the liberated captive. He is addressing the church.

(What work) has the church responsibility? In other words

ripe fruits that adorn the Christian life, Galatians 5:22-23, are unknown to many professing Christians in our day. For truly do we find the fruit of the spirit in love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law, and that are of Christ, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lust. Thus we see that the duty of the church is clearly here defined. And she need not seek power outside of her own resources, but she has power within.

Why do we have these periods of weakness and perils within the church? If the church is a giant that has power and divine power, and has a great commission, why is it that we have times of weakness and peril?

The power of the church (is divine) but it is (also human). What man can do, he must do. To roll away the stone from the grave of Lazarus was something that man could do, and Jesus commanded that it be rolled away, hence Jesus commanded

human hands to do it. This act of human strength must precede the word of power which raises the dead.

We have tried to make the Church more man entered than God centered.

If man's part in the warfare of the church is properly executed, God's part will never fail. But we know that as the terror of the iron chariots paralyzed the strength of Juda, so the human part that is wanting, paralyzes the

we have, especially the deity of Christ is disclaimed.

Fourth Weakness of It has a vast region of (indifference) to invade.

The church today, has work to do. There is spiritual death, among the multitudes, who care for none of these things which we have been speaking of. There are those today who say there is something good in all religions, and that no church is perfect, nor persons either, and it matters not what group a man belongs to, so that it has charity, and it matters not what doctrine a man believes, just so that he is honest in his belief, and this condition is complied with he may be an infidel and yet be saved. Now the church had to work against this which goes on unchecked and unopposed.

Weakness
Fifth it has certain tendencies of the age to keep in check, such as a growing worldliness of Christians and a

growing love for amusements and pleasures, which oftentimes leads to dangerous associations and a desecration of the Sabbath. These are real threats and perils to the doctrines of our church.

Weakness of
Sixth the church has lost ground to regain. We have

not kept pace in the progress which has been made in other things, when in some cases the external machinery of this

age has pushed forward beyond that of religion, and the requirements of the case cannot be met by feeble resolves, low aims, or weak efforts. A church asleep will not do for this hour.

(Why) then, did the prophet Isaiah, give this command to the church, and warn her and indicate the weakness and the perils, to talk about the low condition of the church in reference to her moral and spiritual mission. Here she is, asleep, symbolic of death, in many respects. I believed he warned her because the foundation of her faith was threatened.
I Cor. 3:11

① I think he warned her because there are elements within that were rapidly decaying. The injury received by the church from without compared with that done within, is very little.

When Joshua and his people had made many evils to withstand, and powerful enemies to conquer, in taking the fortified cities of Canaan, but they had a greater loss, and a more shameful setback in the action of Achan, in their own camp, than from all the enemies without. There are things still in the church that demand that it should listen to the alarm of the text. When we think about our ritualistic

tendencies, people think more of the form than they do the spirit of the service. When people think more about worldliness and the various forms of it in church life...there are some people who join the church for mercenary purposes, religion in our day is considered so respectable, that it might give a person reputation.

② It manifests itself also in the (lack of liberality) shown by many of its members in sustaining its fund, and in giving money to keep it going. This is a real peril of the church, for we find people enjoying all the luxuries of life and yet contributing meagerly towards the funds of the church of Jesus Christ, and feel that it is a duty that is not binding upon them, and this something that we need to deal with plainly. What converted Lot's wife into a pillow of salt? What was it that brought Haman to the gallows? What was it that sent Demos out of the church into the world? It was worldliness, and worldliness will again affect its victims in a similar manner, and will present to the church a great peril and produce much weakness.

③ Again, Isaiah preached this because of the (carelessness) of a (great number of its members with reference to the purity of life. The standard of Christian morality is certainly too low in the minds of thousands of our fellow Christians. The

new mission. We must enlarge our liberality if we are to gain strength. This is a part of strength. There must be more directness of aim from the pulpit. It is one thing to preach, it is another thing to preach to the point, that people will understand what it's all about.

There must also be more of a devout and teachable spirit in the pew, for we find often that people come to church for various reasons. Quite often those come to ridicule, and there are those who come, feeling that they are the Alpha and the Omega, and that they have the privilege of judgment of everything that goes on in the house of God, and they have not come to the house of God to be instructed, to be edified in the faith, and to be helped in the way to

heaven. But they sit in judgment upon preachers, and upon Members of John Henry Dewart's Ch. N. Y. Visited the little chapel in England where Dewart served. He thanked one of the men for the man of God they had sent to the W.S. "Give us 10 yrs more, and pronounce for or against what they have heard more, 'nephew, the layman & well give you another great man of God. The church makes great men of God." Spiritual growth is the last thing thought of and least of laymen are unspiritual. The church will be that way cared about by some Christians, but this must be altered.

before Christians will advance and the churches will work as they ought to do. When our people come to a right state of mind on this subject, then they shall gain strength.

Strength comes from devoting oneself entirely to the work which it has to perform. Entirely devoted to the Lord's service in personal interest and sacrifice.

Today 63.4 per cent W.S. pop. is Church connected - 13 Civil War days -

church. Judges 1:19. So we may conclude that Isaiah in this Church meant to lead, yet today being led. text indicates a weakness in the church. Instead of being a good to society the church tends to be at peace with society. Thus we use the church as a sleeping tablet, a tranquillizer.

II. Recommendation for strength

In the second part of this text, he would challenge the church to put on strength and to wake up to a sense of its past neglect, and to wake up to a sense of its present duties.

The church's love to Christ must be carried out by these disciples of his. The love of Christ constraineth us. It was love...we would find this strength.

There must be an (increase of faith) Our warfare is the fight of faith, and our work is the work of faith. The natural exclamation of conscious weakness is, "The work is too great for us." Too great indeed, it would be if we had to do this church work by ourselves, but we must have faith in that promise...going forth, stronger in the power of faith.

We also must (increase our prayer life.) Fervent prayer prevails with God. The Holy Spirit is given in answer to prayer, to the early church, and what steam is to the engine

and what the wind is to the sails of a vessel, so it is that prayer moves the church.

We must also depend upon a sense of personal responsibility. When we see the neglected past sin, we must not attempt to shift the blame from ourselves and fasten it upon others, but we must say I've sinned and done evil in thy sight. And when we speak of the church's work and responsibilities, we must not give the least indulgence to the idea that we are speaking of some imaginary being and body, altogether distinct and separate from ourselves. The church is composed of individual Christians and the only responsibility of the church as a whole is that which is brought into it by the individual responsibility of its separate members.

We must go daily to the throne of God with the prayer, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" and be willing that God should answer it and give us work to do in the church if we are to receive this strength.

There also must come in large liberality, but what is giving now, in a general way, we bear a small portion of what we need to meet the requirements. Or we may give to the poor, but there were sacrifices in that early church and they were willing to give.

Today, the church, this church, is put to shame by people who worship false gods and who make great sacrifices, and our small ordinary rate of offering is an insult compared to people who worship false gods. The cause of God lags, and it dies for want of support. The church's work will not be done until those who are his servants discover that we must give it something better than just the crumbs which fall from our own table.

A modern parable of how this works in a church can be cited in reference to Princess Anne Plaza. We invited the men of our church to purchase the property, to buy the land for the new mission which we shall establish this year. It was generally known, it was publicized through the Messenger, a little appeal was made one Sunday morning, and the majority of those present responded in a magnificent way, and yet when we consider just how many have responded, when I think about 42 men responded with a gift and gave over \$5,000, toward this new mission, I think that's magnificent. And yet when you consider it, you feel like Isaiah saying, "Awake, awake," for there are more than 42 men who have luxuries and then to spare who could well give to this worthy goal which we have set in our church. We need other men who will give \$100, \$500, \$1,000 to this cause of this

use, and perfect functions of this giant arm, weakens the effectiveness of the church, and whatever weakens the ministry, hinders the effectiveness of the church.

Thus, those who minister the gospel must first of all have felt the gospel truth in their hearts. Now a person who knows what it is to be a saved sinner can tell of it with such power as to make others feel that there is nothing between them and eternal death but the blood of Jesus Christ. But the ministry must be more than a source of weakness, it must be power.

And the church's power may be found in the Holy Spirit, as he causes the earth to bring forth and bud by showers from heaven, so he causes the church to abound. A revival is the day of the Spirit's power, when the enemy is repulsed, when sinners are made willing, when doubts and unbelief disappear.

Dr. W. O. Carver said, "Missions is the expression of God's will that none should perish but that all should come to repentance. 2 Peter 3:9. It is the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the troubled waters of men's souls and speaking the divine words, 'Peace be still!'"

Missions, God-given, man-conducted, divinely commanded, and Holy Spirit empowered; we attempt to do great things

Strength comes in meditation. there is nothing so effectual to inspire the minds, as to think, to meditate upon the Lord's dealings with his children.

Another source of strength is prayer. With this, the church on earth, is able to command the forces of heaven, to move in her behalf. II Chron. 20.

Another source of (strength is wakefulness.) Sleep of the body up to a certain point is needful and wholesome, but beyond that it is harmful. The drowsiness and sleepy men are easy prey for false teachers.

Strength also comes from activity. Slothfulness is a secret in the cause of the spiritual weaknesses that abounds in our churches. Who

It is not a matter of if you have only one talent that Jesus is going to condemn you, but have you neglected to make use of it. God promises to help the well-directed endeavor. You remember that Jesus said to the man, "Stretch forth thy hand," and the obedient man obtained his reward, because he believed the promise. He put forth and put on strength through activity, and therefore we can do the same thing through our church.

This

This strength in the church that we are to put on may be summed up in two or three things, the gospel preaching and the Holy Spirit. We notice that the gospel, the one element for our work, and the weapon for our warfare is the power of God. Just so, the church looks out upon its work, it is commissioned to bring the world to captivity and to obedience to Christ. How is this to be achieved? By the gospel, God has given us this, and nothing else to save the world. It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save the world. The Word of God has real power, and for every work which the church was sent to do, this is the instrument of power. Very feadily you can see that from this standpoint, this strength may put off the power gives place to weakness, and to neglect and to withhold and to misuse this power is an indication of peril.

When this truth depreciates, for example, when we let the gospel become just become morality, or we talk more about the duties of life and less about the doctrines of the cross, we are likely to miss the power here.

Whenever we allow the gospel to become subordinate to human beings, and we allow philosophies, politics and science and essays upon history to take its place, then we have lost

our power.

Our strength is crippled when the gospel attracts less attention and we belittle the sacred doctrines of the cross. The church can only put forth half its strength when the gospel is but half told. If it sets out to in full light the divine love while it keeps back divine justice, if it tells of Christ's teachings and is silent about Christ's sacrifice, we may point out about Christ's life and not point out about his blood. We may set forth man's freedom and not talk about the freedom Christ can give. Surely it is no marvel that men turn away from a belittled gospel and a belittled and that the church sits in weakness today.

Another element in getting strength here is the ministry. The church is a giant, the gospel is the implement of this work, the weapon of this warfare, but what about those who use this weapon? What is the arm and what is the weapon? Now it is not all original power, but it is delegated power. It is the power of an agent. It is the instrument of power put into its hand. It is not the power itself to forgive sin. A teaching power...go teach all nations...preach the gospel to every creature. It is the power to reprove, to rebuke and to exhort with all long-suffering, and whatever weakens this or cripples this or interferes with the right

ary responsibility. Since then we know that missionary Baptists have grown by leaps and bounds, for it was at that time that Baptists became divided into missionary and anti-missionary groups.

Phillips Brooks once said, what would he do if he should become pastor of a dead church, and wanted to resign it, "I would call the people together, preach a sermon, and take up an offering for missions." For truly he knew the secret, we save our lives by losing them, we live by dying, and we will, dear friends, save our church by saving the world.

Let us allow God to call our church to put forth her strength. Put on thy strength, O Zion. An army puts on its strength when it goes forth to battle. A fireman puts on his strength when he enters a burning dwelling and plucks out those people that he would save. This is strength to save and the glorious thing about it is that we put on this strength. Physical strength is put on in one way, and spiritual strength in another. Some seem to imagine that they have only to arouse and to stir themselves and to put forth a little effort.

Remember (Samson) arose, shook himself, and thought he would go forth and smite the Philistines as afore time, but alas the strength was not there, and it had departed from him.

for God, as we face a needy, sinful, and hostile world.

There are (those who say) that Christianity has failed, that the church has failed, there are others who look upon the missionary task as hopeless, but there are others who know that we have all authority. It is not that we need to re-vamp our program, but that we may awaken the missionary enthusiasm of our churches...the instruments of God that will carry out this redemptive plan of the lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. 1 Peter 1:19-20.

Isaiah in the first 39 chapters is condemning and warning with respect to Judah's sin, but the last 27 chapters he deals with them in the way of comfort and trying to arouse them into activity. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak you comfortably to Jerusalem." Isaiah 40:1-2.

With boundless grace he invites "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat." "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread and your labor for that which satisfieth not." Isaiah 55:1-2.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." 55:6-7

The church must wake up. It cannot be anti-missionary without sinning against God the father in heaven. There are many churches that do not believe in carrying out the mission of Christ. (I read of a church) missionary in name, but anti-missionary in practice. There was a deacon in that city who was invited to teach the Sunday school lesson to the men's class of the church, and it was a missionary lesson, and the deacon not wanting to stir up an argument, prepared a list of scripture verses dealing with missions. He asked the ring-leader of the anti-missionary element merely to read the passages without comment. In compliance with his request, he read the first, cleared his throat, and read the second, and after reading a number of them, the man looked up, took off his glasses and said, "well, I just swan fore goodness, de furder you go, de worsser it gets." Yes, if you attempt to use the Bible to disprove missions the further you go the worse it will get, for the Bible is a missionary book, and Isaiah was challenging these people to wake up to the opportunities of the day and to get the church moving. When a church refuses to use its powers, then it is weighed in the balances and found wanting.

Dr. George W. Truitt once said, "The church that refuses to be missionary does not deserve the ground upon which it stands, for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof

the world, and they that dwell therein." We know that the church at (Jerusalem) suffered this tragic fate because they steadily refused to be missionary minded. They were commissioned to witness both in Jerusalem and in Judea, and in Samaria and in the uttermost parts of the earth, but it was not until those which were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word, and when (Philip) preached among the Samaritans, those who were half Jews, and the church heard about it, they sent Peter and John to investigate. Later, (Peter) preached to the household of Cornelius, a Gentile, and upon his return to Jerusalem, the church called him into account.

You will remember that it was the church at (Antioch) which sent forth Barnabas and Saul. Upon their return to Antioch from their first missionary journey, they had to go down to Jerusalem to settle a controversy over Gentile churches and Gentile missions. And on Paul's second missionary journey, he saluted the church in Jerusalem in an interest to get her enlisted in missions, but he had to bring an offering from the foreign mission field to the church at Jerusalem and aid that church.

It was (Luther Rice) who left Adoniram Judson in Burma and returned to America and covered the whole of the United States seeking to arouse American Baptists to their mission-

The church may shake herself and advance to the conflict but the strength is not there. The Philistines are upon her, and she wist not that the Lord has departed. But one who is spiritually strong is conscious of nothing but weakness. It is strange, but this is the first note and the first element of spiritual power.

No man ever put on spiritual strength except on his knees. We know that when Peter stood and preached to the multitude on the day of Pentecost it was the Spirit's power, but how did the apostles put it on? Upon their knees in days of prayer.

God was calling them to put on their (spiritual beauty)
Put on beautiful garments, O Jerusalem. The church had provided for her a spiritual wardrobe, with garments of meekness and holiness, of heavenly zeal, and she was not just to awake, but she was to journey from Babylon to Jerusalem in the putting down of the enemy, and the restoration of the Holy city, and it would require some strength. Put on thy beautiful garments. The church is to be attractive. The unloveliness of Christians is often apparent. We have the believers wardrobe of righteousness, humility, the garments of praise and of gladness, and he tells them that no uncleanness then, shall come into the city. We would do

well to look to the perils and the strength of the church.

In what way are we as individuals contributing to our church?

Are we aiding her in strength and in power? Or are we de-

laying her?

A young couple - Chicago - member of Princeton
Baptist. - a church ask to join the Bap.
Preacher seemed surprised - had clear the pool
out.

Pastor not Evangelistic - how is it you
never give people a chance to accept Christ
in this church? Why - Why don't give
invitation - I've been talking to a man about
Christ, he would come forward if given a
chance.

Preacher yielded + the young man
responded - Beginning of influence James
L. Craft - close cooperation - + this church
developed to a large membership 2500 members.

Strength in Evangelism -

J. S. Rogers

Hand 5.5. Man + Know Brok Blk. St. 5.7 -

Teaching Results by Memory - Ridgway,
ready to serve a God. -