

**One of the wonderful things about following Jesus is that He promises to give us His strength.**

Isa 40:29-31 (KJV below)

Isa 40:29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength.

Isa 40:30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

Isa 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

Ps 18:32

Psa 18:32 *It is* God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

Ps 28: 7-8

Psa 28:7 The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Psa 28:8 The LORD *is* their strength, and he *is* the saving strength of his anointed.

Ps 29:11

Psa 29:11 The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

Eph 3:16

Eph 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Col 1:11

**Col 1:11** Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Phil 4:13

Phi 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

2 Tim 4:13

2Ti 4:17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

We run into trouble though when we try to live in our own strength. You can live a natural life in your own strength (although many people struggle to do so), but you can't do in your own strength the **GOD SIZED THINGS** we are called to do. That's why it says in Eph 6:10, 'Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power'.

**'When I am weak, then I am strong'. Huh?**

Paul who wrote those words and Eph 6:10, knew the reality of this: **2 Cor 12: 7-12**

He felt weak! God did not take away the cause of that weakness. God was willing for Paul to feel weak so that he might not become conceited and that he might rely on Him.

### **From self-reliance to God-reliance.**

1. Don't let weakness stop you from serving God / doing what He wants you to do. Our weakness forces us to rely on God and not on our own ability, talent, or skill. Think of Moses' excuses for not wanting to serve God (Exodus 3,4).
2. Self-sufficiency can be a problem in life and in our relationship with God. When we feel self-sufficient, we tend not to sense our need for God, and we can easily become conceited (**12:7**) - 'overweening pride'. 'God resists the proud but gives grace (strength) to the humble' (James 4:6; Prov 3:4). Paul had to be dependent upon God. He had to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. And he had to give God the glory.
3. When God supplies His strength in our weakness, He gets the Glory. You see, God has an overall purpose for our witness in the world - That His fame be made known, not ours. That people would get the message that we cannot save ourselves ultimately; we need God to save us; that Jesus is the only ultimate answer to humanities ills.

\*\* This can be clearly seen in God's dealings with Ancient Israel. God left them in no doubt that only through Him could they find deliverance and a place to dwell and live. I.e., Deliverance out of Egypt and conquest of Canaan; and their restoration after the exile. **That was the OT witness.**

### **The church and each Christian now is to be a witness of Christ and His saving grace.**

Jesus raised up followers/disciples, who witnessed His life, ministry, teaching, and His death and resurrection. His purpose is that they would become to the world what Israel should have been to the world in their day - a living witness and testimony of Jesus, and a model of how to live in relationship with God. A living letter for all to read.

When he appeared to the believers after His resurrection, he gave them certain instructions = to be a witness to the entire world. **Luke 24:45b – 49.**

### **And yet, they were not to attempt anything until they had received power from on High.**

This is how we find strength in God to do His will: **Acts 1:7-8.** By the empowerment of the Spirit of God.

The NT verses cited above convey the idea of God's supernatural empowerment through the Holy Spirit.

God gave His promised gift on the Day of Pentecost after Christ's death. We too are to receive The Father's gift. It is a free gift; we do not earn it. But there are some things we must do if we want to use that gift. (Illustrate: I can give \$100 to you, but it is useless unless you use it)

### **The power of prayer to find strength in God.**

In closing let me talk about one often neglected aspect of prayer: praying in Tongues. **1 Cor 14:1-4.** Let us rely on the LORD and pray and we will find His mighty strength rising from within.