

Standing Your Ground

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Ephesians 6:10

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

Be Strong in the Lord

The Scriptures clearly tell us to be strong in the Lord. No place do we find it telling us to be strong in ourselves. Why is this important for us to know? Because those who feel they are strong in themselves see no need for God in their lives. They feel they can get along perfectly fine without Him.

This false teaching of Self is very prevalent in the church world today. It is nothing more than an invasion from hell, a strategy of Satan intended to cause many to lose out with God. It is nothing more than a doctrine of devils:

I Timothy 4:1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

We are to be strong in the Lord! Not in self!

It is pride speaking when someone boasts - *I! - I! - I can accomplish it! I'm great! I'm powerful! I'm capable! I can do it!*

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

We cannot accomplish anything worthwhile without the help of the Lord. Without Him we can do nothing — John 15:5. Without Him there is no hope. We are helpless apart from Him. We can do all things through Christ Who strengthens us — but it is only through Him.

Be Strong in God's Word

Be strong in His Word! When you are, then nothing can shake you, nothing can lead you astray. Those false prophets and teachers, with their doctrines of devils, will not be able to deceive you when the Lord is your strength and when you are strong in His Word.

II Samuel 22:33

God is my strength and power: and He maketh my way perfect.

He is my strength and power!
And He makes my way perfect!

Psalm 29:11

The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

That's what David said, and that's what we can say. Know that the Word of God is our means of resisting the opposition of the evil forces of hell.

Psalm 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.

You need to cling on to Scriptures like this. You need to do more than know them, more than memorize them — you need to put them into practice.

Too long the devil's blinded many of God's people. They think it's sufficient to just read these Scriptures, to just memorize them, to just know something about them. But they fail to apply the Word of God to their lives, fail to put it to use, fail to know it from firsthand experience.

Ephesians 6:10

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

That verse sends the doctrine of being strong in oneself right down the drain. It's not by our might, nor is it by our power, but only by the Spirit that we can do anything worthwhile.

Put on the Whole Armour of God

We're living in a day and hour when nobody wants to submit to authority, nobody wants to be told what to do.

Ephesians 6:11

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

Here we are being told to do something — and this is right where many of God's people fail. Nobody is going to tell them what to do. They're often so strong-willed that not even God can tell them what to do.

Don't tell me!

I'm going to live my life just the way I please.

Nobody is going to interfere . . . NOBODY!

You find this attitude right in the church, with many of God's people not wanting to be told what to do — even if it's from the Bible. They fail to realize when God's servants preach His Word, they are merely relating what He has already said. His Word is filled with things He has told us to do.

And one of these things is that we put on the whole armour of God.

Realize that there is a battle raging over your soul, and the armour of God is your protection from the wiles of the enemy — from his strategies, from his deceits, from his lies.

When sinners get saved, the devil doesn't give up in his attacks against them. He works night and day to take their souls back, doing all he can to draw them away from God.

One of his strategies these days is to use this doctrine of being strong in self — thus having no need for God. But if we are in the Word of God, we don't have to be deceived, for we are not ignorant of the devil's devices.

II Corinthians 10:4-5

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

II Corinthians 2:11

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

The Bible lets us know that we have been given spiritual weapons in order to fight a spiritual battle.

The armour of God is the equipment we need to have on, in order to resist Satan. When we have on the whole armour of God, we are then able to stand.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood . . . 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 — see Ephesians 6:12,13.

Standing your ground in the midst of danger, standing your ground when troubles rise. Not running! Not moving!

We're in a spiritual warfare; thus we must carry spiritual weapons, and we must stand our ground!

Stand Your Ground

Let's look at the example of someone who stood firm when everyone else fled. We find the account of Shammah in just two verses of II Samuel 23, but what a lesson those two verses give us concerning our warfare!

The Philistines were gathered against the Israelites and were ready to take a piece of ground filled with lentils. Everyone fled from the enemy — everyone, that is, but Shammah.

II Samuel 23:11-12

And after him was Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentils: and the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines: and the Lord wrought a great victory.

Shammah wouldn't move! He stood in the midst of the lentil field and would not give in, though he was greatly outnumbered. It was this one man against a troop of soldiers. Shammah guarded that piece of ground, standing all alone to defend it. If he had fled, then the enemy would have taken it.

That may not seem important to you, but it was to Shammah. He wasn't about to give in to the enemy and run.

Sad to say, many of God's people have given in to the adversary; and they find themselves bound, no longer free to enjoy the peace and blessings of God. They no longer have that joy and happiness which Jesus purchased for them.

Why? Because they let the adversary steal it from them.

Jonah 2:8

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

Listen, the devil will get right on you. If you're not careful to stand your ground, he'll take it from you. The joy of the Lord will be gone. The devil will have you in depression, and you'll find yourself in a melancholy way.

John 10:10

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

When you don't receive answers to prayer, immediately you begin to believe that God doesn't care. You begin to think that the Word of God is just an ordinary book.

Yes, the enemy knows just how to rob you of your joy — if you let him. He'll come along with his lies but you don't have to believe him.

Why listen to the lies of the devil? Why let him rob you? Why not do what Paul told Timothy to do?:

II Timothy 2:3

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Good soldiers of Jesus Christ are able to stand up under stress. They are able to stand up under persecution, able to stand up when it seems like all hell is raging against them. And if we obey the Word, we too can stand our ground and be a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

When we send our armed forces out to battle, do we send them to the battlefield unequipped?

No, they don't go unprepared but are provided all they need in order to fight.

So what makes you think you can fight this spiritual warfare unprepared, unequipped? What makes you think you can stand without having all your armour on?

The trouble is, God's people let the devil take the blessings of God from them. They let the devil take their money, take their health, steal their joy and peace, steal their faith (what little faith they seem to have).

But Shammah stood his ground, and he got the victory over the Philistines. The Lord was right there to help him. Yes, Shammah stood firm when all others ran away. He stood his ground and wouldn't allow the enemy to take that lentil field away from him.

What about you? Are you standing your ground against the devil? Or are you turning your back and running away?

You need to stand your ground and wait for the Lord to move. Shammah didn't turn and run. He stood his ground, and the Lord wrought a great victory that day.

Patiently Wait on God

As soon as you get down to business and begin to call on God to teach you to be patient, the better off you will be — and the quicker things will be fulfilled in your life.

Psalm 27:14

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.

Many learned to be impatient when they were children. They were brought up to think that when they wanted something, all they had to do was put up a fuss. They kicked and made a lot of noise, knowing that mother would give in.

And that carried right over into their Christian experience. They don't want to wait on God. *If He doesn't move right now, forget it!*

The Scriptures don't say to get in there and kick up your heels: *I've got to have it now, Lord! If You don't give it to me right now then I won't believe You!*

We have seen in Shammah a good example of standing one's ground until the Lord moves — a good example of refusing to turn the blessing over to the enemy.

David and Goliath

Now, let's look at another example of standing one's ground — we find this in I Samuel 17:

I Samuel 17:11

When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

The Philistines were getting ready to fight Israel; and for forty days, twice a day, the giant Goliath came out to defy the army of the living God. King Saul and all his men were greatly dismayed by the giant's words: Send a man to fight with me; if he kills me, then the Philistines will become your servants; but if I prevail and kill him then you will become our servants — 1 Sam 17:8,9.

I Samuel 17:33-35

And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

What would you do if you saw a lion running towards you? or if you saw a bear coming after you? I'll tell you what you'd do: You wouldn't let any grass grow under your feet! You'd run just as fast as your legs would carry you — with your heart pounding and pounding in fear.

But David wasn't like that. He had learned from experience to trust in the name of the Lord.

I Samuel 17:45

Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

Now, David didn't go out in his own might, nor in his own strength or power. He came out against that giant in the name of the Lord. He wasn't about to let that giant destroy the armies of the living God.

Though he was merely a lad, we find that David was a man who stood his ground. On the other hand, King Saul and all his army weren't standing their ground — they fled from the giant! We are told that they were greatly afraid, and they ran!

I Samuel 17:24

And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

Yes, they all ran — except young David.

David was just a teenager, a young shepherd boy, but he rose up to stand against Goliath. Like Shammah, he was willing to stand alone in order to prevent the enemy from taking over.

We are told in I Samuel 13:14 that David was a man after God's heart. He had great faith in God. He loved the Lord with all of his heart. When he watched over his father's sheep, he ministered unto the Lord out there on the hillside.

Whatever we are doing, we too can minister unto the Lord. We can keep in sweet communion with Him all day long. Like David, we can make up songs in our heart to sing unto the Lord.

Now, let's look again at what happened when the giant, Goliath, stood before the army of Israel to challenge them: Everyone fled — but David.

David's father had sent him to check on his brothers, who were soldiers in Saul's army. When he got there, he heard Goliath's challenge and he took up the challenge. He stood his ground against that great big giant. The giant had asked for a man — and all he got was this young shepherd boy!

see I Samuel 17:43-45

And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? . . . Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord!

This young shepherd boy went right out there to meet the challenge in the name of the Lord. All he took with him was five smooth stones and a slingshot — but he wasn't afraid. He knew it was not by might nor by power: it was by the Spirit of the Lord. What confidence he had in the Lord!

Putting a stone in that sling shot, he pulled it back: and when it went into the air, it hit that giant right on target, and he was put down.

The victory was David's; and not only was it his, but all of Israel gained a great victory that day. And it was all because one lad stood his ground and wouldn't give in to the enemy's threats.

How about You?

Is that you? When trouble comes, when danger comes, when persecution comes, do you stand your ground? Or, like Saul and the children of Israel, do you run? Do you turn back?

Listen, it doesn't matter how big that mountain is! It doesn't matter how big that giant is in your life! Glory to God! Stand your ground! Don't let the devil take control; stand your ground! In the day of danger, in the day of trial, in the day of persecution, don't turn back. Stand up and face that giant! Face that mountain — in the name of the Lord Jesus!

We need men and women, boys and girls, who will stand their ground. We need those who won't get shaky knees, those who won't get weak ankles, who won't tremble nor shake. They will simply stand their ground.

If you don't get anything else out of this message, I trust you will begin to stand your ground! Stand firmly in your place. Don't move out of place because of the attacks of the enemy. Gird your loins with the Word of God — and stand.

Stand by the Word of God

Ephesians 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God

The Word of God is our means of resisting attack, of resisting the aggression of the devil.

My friend, we need to be in the Word. We should be reading it, memorizing it, obeying it. We should be so filled with the Word of God that we will be able to stand firmly in our place, no matter what comes our way.

Romans 8:37

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

Realize that we don't have to give in to the adversary, but we must stand our ground if we are to be conquerors.

Ephesians 6:14

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness

Stand therefore . . . and having on the breastplate of righteousness. The teaching of the New Age Movement would cause a person to lean on their own righteousness: but such teaching is

definitely contrary to the Word of God. It is not *our* righteousness; it is Christ's righteousness *in us* that makes the difference.

Isaiah 64:6

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags . . .

We must have our feet firmly planted in the Word of God, being prepared with the Gospel of peace.

Ephesians 6:15

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Rightly Divide the Word of Truth.

II Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

False teachers will find a new believer who hasn't learned yet to rightly divide the Word, and they will twist the Word to try and get them to believe a lie.

Know that it is God we have to answer to, not man. We need to study to show ourselves approved unto God, not unto man. And we need to rightly divide the Word of Truth.

False teachers quote Scripture after Scripture, taking verses out of context to prove their point and deceive many. But we should rightly divide the Scriptures — taking time to search them out and comparing Scripture with Scripture — that we might gain a soundness to keep us from being deceived, from being ashamed.

Ephesians 6:16

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

As you take the shield of faith (faith in the Word of God) then you can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. You will be able to quench all his strategies, all his plans, all his lies.

Ephesians 6:17,18

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Notice that the Word of God is the only weapon we have been given — not *our* words, not *our* thoughts, but the Word of *God*.

We are told to be praying always — in the Spirit. We're not just to pray for ourselves but for others as well, interceding for the saints of God. Also we should be watching, be alert.

This chapter in Ephesians tells us what spiritual tools have been given to us in order to fight this spiritual warfare. We cannot fight in this battle without having on the whole armour of God. We cannot gain the victory except we become strong in the Word of God, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Apart from doing this, we will not be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We will only fall victim to his lies and to his plots.

Face the Devil

It's about time that God's people began to do what the Scriptures would tell them to do: Stand against the wiles of the devil.

None of God's children should ever be seen with their head hanging low. They have no reason to be depressed, no reason to worry, no reason to fret.

God's children should be facing the enemy with their eyes on Jesus and their feet firmly standing on the Rock.

Listen, when your head is down then the enemy is able to sneak up and take you off guard.

God Fights the Battles

Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world — 1 John 4:4. We have the whole Godhead with us, behind us, in us, and all around us. What great protection we really have. He is underneath us, round about us, over us, and in us! So why worry? Why get discouraged and down?

II Kings 6:12

And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

The king of Syria was warring against Israel. He was getting frustrated because someone was telling the king of Israel every time he was moving his camp!

God was revealing to Elisha the king of Syria's plans. And you know what Elisha would do? He would go right to the king of Israel and tell him exactly where the enemy was located.

The king of Syria told his men to go seek Elisha out. When they found him, the king took a host with him by night and compassed the city where Elisha was. Now they had Elisha! They had him surrounded. There would be no escape!

That's what they thought! But God was with Elisha. Elisha was in danger that day — yet he stood his ground. The enemy host had encamped against him and surrounded him, yet he stood his ground.

He didn't try to do anything in his own strength; he merely stood his ground.

II Kings 6:15-17

And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And today there are still more with us than with the adversary. Did not God say that He would fight your battles? There's no need to run. He'll put your enemies to flight — therefore, stand and guard your ground!

Some stand and face the enemy — they guard their ground without giving in. But others lose sleep, crying all night. They fret night and day over the enemy's attacks.

And that's just what the devil wants, that he might rob them of all that God has for them.

Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. Elisha knew the Lord had horses and chariots of fire encamped round about him.

Your Trust Must Be in the Lord

I trust that you can see from this message that there is no benefit in putting your confidence in the flesh. The victory lies in putting your confidence and faith in the Lord.

Psalm 27:3

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

Psalm 34:7

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.

Each battle we go through strengthens us to stand in the next battle that comes our way.

Isaiah 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.

We go from strength to strength in our walk with the Lord.

Ephesians 6:13

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.**