

What Does It Mean To Be “Spiritually Strong”?

Part One: What is
Spiritual Strength?

Spiritually Strong

- What is your goal in Christ?
 - Heaven?
- How do you expect to get there?
 - The same way Jesus did?

Phil. 2:5-12

- “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

1 John 2:3-6

- “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

Understanding What It Means To Be Spiritually Strong

- What is spiritual strength?
- What are its characteristics?
- How does one obtain it?
- How do the strong conduct their lives?

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- The scriptures speak of three different kinds of strength:
 - absolute strength,
 - momentary strength,
 - relative/doctrinal strength.

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- **Absolute strength**: the state of being mature in the faith and the practice of it.
 - Rom. 15:1 - “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”
 - Heb. 5:14 - “But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- Requires knowledge of the will of God
 - 2Tim. 2:15 - “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
 - 2Tim. 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- His faith is made manifest in his work.
 - James 2:14-18 - “What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- His faith is made manifest in his work.
 - James 2:21-25 - “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- ***Momentary strength***: the state of a high point in one's relationship with God.
 - 1Cor. 9:24-27 - “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- ***Momentary strength***: the state of a high point in one's relationship with God.
 - Phil. 4:11-13 - “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.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- Whether weak or strong, we all go through high and low points during our walk with God.
- We feel strong during the high points, whether we are strong or weak in absolute terms.
- These are important and positive times; however, momentary strength should not deceive us into thinking that we are always or absolutely strong.

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- *Relative/doctrinal strength*: believing that God has given liberty for Christians to engage a particular activity.
 - Rom. 14; 1Cor. 8
- The strong believes he has liberty to perform an action.
- The weak believes it would be wrong for him to participate.
 - If the strong despises the weak or causes him to stumble, he is strong in doctrine, but weak in the practice of it.
 - The weak brother who forgoes the liberty is weak in doctrine but strong in his practice of it.
- Therefore, doctrinal strength is not the same as spiritual strength.

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- Rom. 14:1-3, 12-13 - “Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. 2 For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. 3 Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him... 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- 1Cor. 8:1-4, 7-10 - “Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. 2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. 3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him. 4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one... 7 However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. 9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. 10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?”

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- Spiritual strength is absolute strength; the state of being mature in the faith and the practice of it.
 - Each person has strong and weak areas.
 - One can be strong in the faith and have some weaknesses in practice that need strengthening.
 - One can feel strong at any given moment and not necessarily be spiritually strong.
 - We all have our gifts/talents and must work on cultivating those without neglecting our weaker areas.

What Is Spiritual Strength?

- The Lord gives us abilities, knows our strengths, and tasks us accordingly. He expects us to use our abilities to increase our strength and expand our usefulness.
 - Matt. 25:14-30 - We must use what we have been given.
 - Rom. 12:3-8 - We must use what we have been given to the best of our ability.
 - 1Cor. 12:14-24, 27-30 - We must use what we have been given to the best of our ability for the well being of the whole body.