

Deeper Call #61  
Our Resource of Strength  
July 28, 1019

Last week we talked about the debt that the accuser tries to put us in. To put us in a debt in the present and in debt for the future.

Today I want to look at the adversary's strategy to put us in that debt.

But first you need to know this rock solid truth.

You must first be prepared to for the enemy's accusations and his battle against us.

**Turn with me to Eph. 6: 10-12**

**(Read)**

First the basic truth.

**You do not want the battle to begin when you're unprepared.**

You don't want to be just sort of lollygagging around and all of a sudden you're halfway defeated before you wake up and realize you're in a war.

So preparation comes first and this is Paul's word in verse 10. "Finally" and he says that because it is the last of his major themes in the book, "my brethren" uses that term because he wants to identify with them in the struggle.

**"be strong in the lord and in the power of his might."**

"As a general principle in living depend on the strength of God." That's what he's saying. "As a way of life my brethren depend on God's strength." You'll notice two times he uses the word in, in the lord and in the power of his might. We are in Christ. We are one with him. His life is our life. His power is our power. His truth is our truth. We are one with Christ in Him and so it is in Christ that we are strong. It is in Christ that his might becomes our might.

And by the way no matter how strong our enemy is and we'll see how strong in a moment, Christ's strength is superior. The church at Philadelphia in Revelation chapter 3 is a good church. In fact it's one of the two out of the seven churches to which no condemnation was given. This was a righteous community of faith and our lord says to them **"you will have an open door before you; an open door which no one can shut."**

This church was blessed by God and then in verse 8 it says **"And you have a little strength (power) and have kept My word and have not denied My Name"**

You know what's beautiful about that is the fact that even a little strength preserves the church. God is so much more powerful than Satan that a little of his strength is enough to overcome all of the enemies.

**Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. 1 Jn. 4:4**

And so infinitely greater that the smallest amount of divine power can overcome the greatest amount of the power of hell and the enemy...This is the strength that is ours in the Lord.

**In Philippians 4:13 Paul says "I can do all things through Christ who's strength is in me."**

**Again the resource is ours.**

**The strength of His might is ours.**

Beloved I believe that we have that resource. To deny that to me is to deny a basic fundamental reality of the Christian life.

I believe at the cross Jesus Christ gave a death blow to Satan as recorded in **Hebrews 2:14-15**.

**(Read)**

Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death and I believe all we need to do is enter into that victory. Listen. If Christ defeated Satan at the cross and I was in Christ then Satan is defeated in my life because of Christ's victory. His victory is mine. Satan is now subject to Christ. That means that Satan no longer has free reign in my life. As Satan is under Christ's feet as Romans says is he under my feet.

I believe he is a vanquished foe. I believe he can lay no just claim against us as the beloved of God.

**Romans 8 says "Who shall lay any charge to God's elected, as God that justifies and if God has declared me just and if God has won the battle and if God has gotten the victory in Jesus Christ then that victory is mine and Satan has no power to withstand the resurrection resource that dwells in the life of every believer."**

The point is this. We are in a war but there is no reason to lose and there's no reason to be afraid. We need to be prepared. Divine resources belong to us.

In 2 Timothy Paul is encouraging a young Christian about to join the war. Paul is speaking to us as well.

Timothy as a young man in the ministry had grown fearful. He had grown timid. He had been attacked by people who were telling him false doctrine and they were pretty strong at what they were doing. He was being inundated by his own fearfulness so that he literally became ashamed of the testimony of Jesus Christ. He became ashamed of his companion in the gospel, the beloved apostle Paul who had disciple him and in the midst of these terrible feelings of timidity, of fear, a lack of love, shame, lust and all of these things the apostle **Paul calls to him in 2 Timothy 2:1 and says "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."**

"Timothy claim the strength that is yours."

**And in Chapter 1 Paul said "God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind."** The point is this.

God has given us in Christ the resource for victory.

**Turn with me to Eph. 3:16-21**

**(Read)**

That's the power we have.

I want to show you how that power is manifested in our world...and how the enemy is powerless to stop our Savior...the battle is His...

**Turn with me to Luke 7:1-17.**

**(Read Lk. 7:1-2)**

He is a Roman centurion—an officer in charge of one hundred soldiers, and these men were the backbone and strength of the Roman army. His slave, whom he loved, was about to die. He has run out of resources. He has no power against this enemy.

It could be that this slave had been like a father to him through the years, or if he is younger, like his own brother. Either way, this soldier can't just sit and watch his dear friend die.

But what can he do? Although he is a mighty centurion of Rome, powerful and feared, he has no power over death.

In the meantime, about twenty-five miles away in the village of Nain, another person stands on death's crumbling ledge. A widow. She has been here before to watch the depths consume her husband. But now she is back, this time with her only son. In horror, she watches him slide over the edge. With him goes her last, tattered vestiges of hope. It is the day of his funeral when she stumbles across a Savior.

**(vs 11)**

The centurion of Capernaum and the widow of Nain—two people groping for hope in the darkness but finding nothing to hang on to...until they meet Jesus.

**With the stage set; let's go back and focus on the Centurion.**

Hearing that Jesus is in the area, the centurion decides to risk his reputation by going to a Jew for help. He's a Roman, a soldier in the imperial army, yet before Jesus he becomes a child.

Feeling unfit to approach Jesus himself, he formulates a plan:

**(Read vv. 3-5)**

The city elders vouch for their Gentile friend. He is a man of integrity and well liked by the Jews. More importantly, he is a man of faith.

**(Read vv. 6-8)**

Unlike the Pharisees, the centurion doesn't ask for His credentials. He doesn't even ask to meet Him. Respectfully, he kneels before the divine authority. All Jesus must do is say the word, and it's as good as done.

Now let's turn our gaze toward Nain, where the characters and circumstances differ from those in Capernaum. The widow knows nothing of Jesus; her world is limited to a darkened sphere of grief. Unlike the slave, her loved one has already died. Unlike the centurion, she doesn't approach Jesus with an eloquent request. She's too torn even to pray. Passing by, Jesus sees the shattered pieces of her life heaped in the coffin and strewn along the funeral route. His heart filled with compassion, He extends a tender touch.

**(Read vv. 11-13)**

Don't you see the Lord reaching out and putting a strong arm around this woman, and brushing aside a tear, He whispers; "Don't cry". Almost as if to say; "don't cry, it's going to be all right. I'm right here."

The two situations are as different as the characters themselves. In one scene, there is a confident, clear-thinking soldier; who looks for One who can overcome his despair.

In the other, a vulnerable widow, drowning in her sorrow. In one, unquestioning faith, in the other, grief as if there is no tomorrow.

In one, there is eloquence and protocol; in the other, unbridled pain and enough tears to dissolve the strongest prayers.

But there is Power in Christ.

Our God is the kind of God who helps the helpless, gives hope to the hopeless, and breathes life into the lifeless. His river of compassion never runs dry. It's always overflowing. Always.

**The Response:**

The way Jesus extends His help varies in each situation. Notice that in response to the centurion's initial request, Jesus simply starts walking.

**(Read vv. 6-10)**

Concerning the widow, Jesus could have simply served up a word of comfort, and that would have been enough. But out of the depths of His mercy, He produces an incredible miracle.

**(Read vv. 13-17)**

Do you see what happened? Jesus with one hand, dries the tears of a woman left alone, and with the other He touches the coffin and speaks. "Young man; arise" and he sat up and began to speak. I wonder what he said.

Surely, the first word from his parched lips was one that the widow thought she would never hear again... "Mother"

Luke's description of what happened next is captivating.

**Vs. 15 "and Jesus gave him back to his mother."**

In the midst of a world of sorrow and grief, Our God does what we cannot do, bring hope into our hopeless world. You see to me, the fact that the grieving widow never asked for a miracle is what makes this miracle so incredible.

God's power revealed causes the crowd of funeral goers to be "gripped in fear".

I believe the enemy...silenced by the Son of God...was gripped in fear as well.

What greater enemy is there than death? And Jesus brings life and the enemy could not stop Him...and the enemy can't stop us...for we are in Christ.

"When we find our all in Him, our lives will be marked by an unshakable confidence that lies beneath the surface tremors of our daily activities. This is the confidence that only comes when we are connected to the fact that He will be all that He says He is; that He will be there for us, whether we feel it or not; and that He cannot deny either His character or His promises. This sense of intimate sustenance comes to those who by faith connect to a God who will never leave them or forsake them. This security that comes with intimacy with God is marked by an undaunted sense of courage...

(Joseph Stowell "Far From Home" pp. 180)

Selah.