



STAY STRONG

It is hard to believe that we are over half way finished with our summer baseball experience. I trust this summer has helped you improve your baseball and more importantly your walk with God. Just as it is important to take care of ourselves physically by proper nutrition and rest, we need to take care of ourselves spiritually by staying strong with the Lord.

This week we will study together how to remain strong in our faith.

The Wednesday lesson this week will deal with putting on daily the armor of God.

Let's stay strong with God this week and every week!

Sunday: Read Judges 16: 23-31

Samson had been a disappointment to God and his people. At this point in his life, Samson was blind and without his God given strength because of his haircut by Delilah. He was nothing more than someone the Philistines could make sport of. Read this story of the end of His life by looking for how Samson regained his strength.

- 1. Why were the Philistines celebrating?**
- 2. What do you think Samson reflected on after his capture and blinding?**
- 3. How did Samson regain his strength one last time? What is a key for us to stay strong?**

Monday: Read Joshua 1:6-9

Joshua had just been commissioned by God to lead the people into the Promised Land after the death of Moses. One can only imagine what was going through Joshua's mind. Don't you think he might have been somewhat scared and a little nervous? God teaches Joshua and us a lesson on staying strong in these verses.

- 1. How many times did God tell Joshua in these verses to be strong and courageous?**
- 2. Do you think Joshua might have had a confidence problem? How does confidence help us stay strong on and off the field?**

3. **What did God tell Joshua to do to be successful as a leader for Him?**
4. **What is the real source of Joshua's strength and ours today? verse 9**

Tuesday: Read 1Samuel 30:1-20

At this point in David's life, he was still an outlaw from Saul. His band of men returned from a raid on the Philistines to their home base of Ziklag. It had been destroyed by the Amalekites and all their wives and children carried off with their riches. God's guidance and strength provided the ultimate victory.

1. **What was the state of David and his men after they returned to Ziklag?**
2. **Where did David find his strength?**
3. **What did David do before going after the wives and children?**
4. **How complete was the victory God gave?**
5. **What does this tell us about being strong on and off the field?**

Wednesday: Read Ephesians 6:10-18

Paul is writing these words about being strong in the Lord and putting on the armor of God while chained to a Roman soldier. Just like a Roman soldier has equipment to help them in battle, Paul sees that we need Christian armor to win the battle against Satan and to stay strong. Just as a soldier must stand his ground in battle, so must we stand our ground in the battle Satan wages against each of us. Paul takes the armor of the Roman soldier and translates it into Christian terms.

First there is the belt of truth. The belt was used to hold the tunic in place so the soldier could move quickly. It also was where the sword hung. A Christian can move freely and quickly because he knows the truth.

The breastplate kept the Roman soldiers' vital organs safe. It protected him in vital areas. For us to have righteousness is to have right living. Right living in God's eyes protects us from accusations the world may throw at us.

Next are the sandals. Sandals were a sign of being ready and equipped. The sandals of the Gospel of peace mean we are to be equipped and ready to share the Gospel with others at any time.

Along with all of this we are to take up the shield of faith. Paul uses the word for the shield that is the great oblong shield which the heavily armored soldier wore. This shield was used to extinguish the flaming darts that were a common weapon of the day. Faith can always deal with the darts of temptation that will come our way. To Paul, faith is complete trust in Christ that enables us to walk closely with Him, keeping us safe from temptation.

Now we have the helmet of salvation. The helmet was used to protect the head from injury. The helmet of salvation not only gives us the forgiveness of past sins, but also the strength to defeat any sin that comes our way.

Next we have the sword of the Spirit. Notice this is the only offensive part of the armor. The Word of God is the only weapon we need to win against the attack of the sins of the world. As William Barclay says, "We can't win God's battles without God's book".

Paul finishes this section by giving us a key to victory along with the armor of God. We are to pray on all occasions, not just when things are tough. God wants us to share the good times as well as the tough times with Him. Paul reminds us to stay alert, much like a soldier on duty would and to pray for all the saints.

- 1. What is the key to Paul of being strong in the Lord?**
- 2. Visualize putting on each piece of God's armor and what it means.**
- 3. How can we use the Word of God to defeat temptation and sin?**
- 4. Why is it so important to pray?**
- 5. How can we remain alert for God and stay strong for Him?**

Thursday: Read Isaiah 40:28-31

These words from Isaiah should be an inspiration to us as we strive to stay strong in the Lord. What a blessing to know that our hope is in the Lord!

- 1. How does it make us feel that the Creator of the Universe never grows tired?**
- 2. What does God give us?**
- 3. What are the pictures Isaiah paints for us when we hope in the Lord and renew our strength?**

Friday: Read 2Corinthians 12:7-10

Paul writes about his ‘thorn in the flesh’. He reminds us about the amazing sufficient power of Christ.

- 1. What is Christ’s power made perfect in?**
- 2. Why does Paul; boast about his weakness?**
- 3. How can Paul be both weak and strong?**

Saturday: Read 1John 2:12-14

John is truly a writer that loves his readers! Today he gives us the reason we can be strong.

- 1. What is the main reason John writes the children, the fathers, and the young men?**
- 2. How are the young men strong?**
- 3. How does God’s Word live within us?**