

Strong in the Lord

Intro

- **In this series, we are going to be walking slowly through Eph 6:10–17 and learning:**
 - The real nature of the battles we are facing
 - Why we need to stop relying on our own assets (understanding, skills, competencies, experience)
 - And how to do battle in the Spirit

Today's Scripture

Ephesians 6:10–17 CSB

¹⁰ Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. ¹³ For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand. ¹⁴ Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, ¹⁵ and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God.

- **Lots to explore there and today we are starting with the foundation laid in verses 10–11**
- It is God's strength and His power that enables us to take a stand against the enemy
 - This excludes our own strength as an option

Our common problem...

- **We all prefer to use our own assets/our own strengths**
 - ***Because they are familiar to us and they give us a sense of control***
 - Our experience
 - Our understanding
 - Our abilities
 - Our resources
 - ***Because of our pride***
 - We don't want to admit weakness, because vulnerability makes us feel afraid
- **But our assets come up short – we regularly face the sobering reality that we can't handle many situations in our own life...**
 - Lose a job/income
 - Go through relationship troubles
 - Face a tragedy
 - Battle an addiction

What we must admit to...

- ***“I am not enough”***
 - We must face the sobering reality of our insufficiency in light of the struggles of life
- ***“My pride is holding me back”***
 - We must humble ourselves and let go of our need to be enough (self-sufficient)
- ***“Only Jesus is enough”***
 - We must full accept that only Jesus can be all the things we have been desperately trying to be for ourselves

We must make a conscious daily choice...

- to reject our desire to be self-sufficient
- to rely on Jesus' sufficiency, power, and strength

The challenge for you today...

- **Identify at least one area in your life, where you know you are relying on yourself rather than God**
 - Maybe it's because you're afraid to give up control
 - Maybe it's because you just want your own way
- **How can you identify these areas?**
 - ***Questions to consider:***

- Where in your life do you feel like you're hitting a brick wall, like nothing is changing, running in circles, etc.?
- Where in your life do you feel frustrated or hopeless?
- ***Common areas where we rely on ourselves and not on God:***
 - Managing finances
 - Job/Career choices
 - Handling family relationships/arguments/problems
 - How we relax, de-stress, or entertain ourselves

If we can learn to reject self-sufficiency and choose to rely on God...

- We're going to have less striving – less wasted efforts, less despair, less dead-ends
- We're going to have more progress and victory
- We're going to have more peace in our present circumstances

REFLECT

Let's take a moment to pray

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide our attention and lead our conversation, helping us see and understand what He wants us to apply in our lives.

APPLY

Process the passage together with these questions:

- Which of your personal assets—such as experience, logic, or financial resources—are you most tempted to rely on during a crisis?
- Where in your life are you currently hitting a "brick wall" or feeling like you are running in circles?
- What does it practically look like to "be strengthened by the Lord" in your daily routine?

Where we want to “land the plane”

- We often exhaust ourselves trying to navigate life's struggles using our own limited understanding, control, and resources. However, the scripture reminds us that our true battle is spiritual, and our own strength will always come up short against the schemes of the enemy. We must make the conscious, daily choice to humble ourselves, admit our insufficiency, and stop striving in our own power. By surrendering our need for control and relying entirely on Jesus's sufficiency, we move from frustration and dead-ends to a place of lasting peace and spiritual readiness.