

STRENGTH FOR THE INNER MAN

Ephesians 3:16.

"That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." Ephesians 3:16.

The word of God plainly teaches us that God is interested in our affairs. And we know that God desires the highest and best for our lives. In order that we may have the highest and best in life, He has designed inner strength for the realization of those ideals and of those things which are of most importance to our characters for time and for eternity.

Lack of inner Strength, lack of courage, and lack of heroism characterize the age in which we are living.

I. The Need of Strength.

In every sphere of life today there is an urgent demand for strength or efficiency. The region where strength is needed especially is that of the inner man. That is the region where we are the weakest, and where the might of the Spirit is needed most. The inner man is the seat of influence, but with us it is too often the seat of spiritual feebleness. Faith, trust, humility, love, patience, and kindred graces which belong to the inner man are what we are weakest in. The text is not a prayer for physical strength, nor for intellectual strength, but for spiritual strength. As our physical strength is renewed from day to day by food and rest, so our spiritual strength must be renewed daily. It is in the spiritual nature that re-inforcement is required:--

1. To resist temptation.
2. To stand steadfast.
3. To endure afflictions.
4. To perform our duties.

Every Christian needs to be strengthened with might in the inner man. To this end He wants stronger convictions and motives, clearer principles of action, and confirmed habits of well-doing. Perhaps you have been trying to change the outer man, your conduct, your way of speaking, your impression on others. There may be some sin, some outward inconsistency, or some bad habit that you have endeavored to overcome, but you must go much deeper than that, namely to the inner man.

Your conscience must be true.
Your motives must be pure.
Your thoughts must be correct.
Your affections must be right.

II. The Source of Strength.

This strength for the inner man is the gift of God. This strength is not derived by internal growth and development, or by adaptation of circumstances merely, but rather through direct influence of the Holy Spirit. This strength is conveyed through the agency of the Holy Spirit. He is the fountain of all

spiritual energy. The Spirit strengthens the believer by leading him to the fullness of grace that is in Christ, by shedding abroad the love of God in His heart, and by applying the promises of the Gospel. Nothing less can do it. The strength which the Christian needs is conveyed by the Spirit of God. And in answer to prayer. There must be a sense of need along with the spirit of entire dependence on the Lord.

III. The Measure of Strength.

"According to the riches of his glory." How sublime a conception! We are not to ask according to the strength of our faith, the largeness of our hearts, or the breadth of our thoughts, but "according to the riches of His glory." That is the measure of the giving. God's standard of giving is liberal, bountiful, and overflowing. In God there is an inexhaustible source of mercy upon which we may draw--the super exigencies of our lives. Faith believes in "the riches of His glory".

1. It believes in the riches of his power.
2. It believes of his wisdom.
3. It believes in the riches of his goodness.

There is both happiness and efficiency in strength. Our greatest usefulness depends on large supplies of spiritual strength. It is not enough just to have a sufficient supply of grace to carry us to heaven; we ought also to abound in the fruits of righteousness to the praise and glory of God. We ought, therefore, to pray earnestly that we may "be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man". Let us pray earnestly that we may become "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might," and that our inward man may be renewed day by day, even though our outward man shows signs of weakness and decay.