

# Where My Strength Lies

This is the Faith I live by: Faith is my strength

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Thursday, June 6, 2019

Audio Link: <http://bit.ly/ThoughtsinWorship>

## Theme Text

*"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible. By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks. By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, "and was not found, because God had taken him"; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."*

Hebrews 11:1-10

## Life is Laborious

I must admit. This life is no cakewalk. There are so many obstacles that litter our paths everyday. We encounter unreasonable people, difficult assignments at work, bill collectors, flat tires, road rage, and so much more. We have internal struggles with low self-esteem, overwhelming guilt, feelings of anxiety or depression, sometimes we feel unappreciated by loved ones, and sometimes it's just hard to get through the day. And to top it all off, we have to deal with our sin problems. Some of us are addicted to food. Others of us are addicted to questionable entertainment. Some of us have questionable relationships. And others of us have pride and other dysfunctions to process. Honestly, if left to our own devices our lives would be a mess.

## Are God's Expectations Unrealistic?

It doesn't help that God has lofty expectations of us. He said that we should be holy because He is holy. Then He added that we should have the mind of Christ. Not to leave out the part about not esteeming others higher than ourselves. Oh yeah! And don't forget, never lean on your own understanding, and make sure to seek Him first and everything you need will be added to your life.

How? How in the world can we have such odds stacked against us. From the moment we begin developing in our mother's womb God has these desires for us.

How in the world can we ever measure up?

Faith. The answer is faith. I admit this may sound like a cliché answer. It may even seem like it's missing something. But it's the truth. If the Bible says that it is impossible to please God without faith, it stands to reason that with faith, we can overcome all of our human inadequacies and ultimately please our heavenly father.

## **Faith Makes Up For Our Inadequacies**

But what is faith? The Bible defines faith in our theme text cited above. I'd like to rephrase it in this way: ***Faith is the conduit through which God's power to live according to His will comes into our lives.*** Remember I introduced us to this concept yesterday. Whatever is impossible in our own strength, God makes possible through faith. When our faith lays hold of God's power we can overcome every evil tendency, doubt, weakness, and poor thinking pattern.

So my encouragement to you today is this: ask God to increase your faith. Ask Him to reward your tiny, mustard seed faith with His limitless power from Heaven. Take some time this morning to ask God to originate, nurture, and blossom the kind of faith that pleases Him. The kind of faith that can remove any mountain that stands between you and God's ideal for your life.

By God's grace, this is the faith I live by. Let this be the same for you, in Jesus' name.

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## **Drama Files: Sex And The Saved Single Sex. Sexy. Sexiest. Man Alive, Am I The Only One Not Doing It?**

Monique was a bright, outgoing, young lady, and her teachers and classmates loved her. She was popular, attractive, a great dance student, and very kindhearted all through high school. After graduating from high school with honors it was now time to enter into college. Monique carried her pleasant personality with her.

After returning home with a degree in business, and accepting a new position

within a major utility company, Monique met a very nice young man at a company function. They exchanged email addresses and soon thereafter, Monique and Jason were a couple. As they grew closer, after a year they began a sexual relationship. Neither one was a Christians, nor, did either attend church services.



One weekend Monique's coworker invited her to church to hear her speak and Monique asked Jason to join them, but he had a meeting to attend. The Holy Spirit convicted Monique's heart, and she really enjoyed the service. She gave her life to Christ right there and then. Her excitement bubbled over, and she could not wait to tell Jason of her new found relationship with the Lord.

## **Jesus at The Center of It All**

"I'm not interested in serving God or attending church," Jason stated flatly in response to Monique's "Good News." He told her their relationship worked because they were not Christians. She tried to explain it to him, and continued to pray and invite him to church. But, after one month of refraining from sex and other things that contradicted her new beliefs, the couple decided to break up. Monique had decided not to have sex outside of marriage, and Jason was not going to accept that.

Monique moved out and continued to work at the utility company while attending church every week. She never had any further interaction with Jason, but found peace in her new found faith and obedience to God. However, as time went on she met several nice, single young men at the church fellowships who were attracted to her. Each of them, at one point, tried to persuade her to have sex with them after a date.

She sought support through Christian counseling regarding her choice to remain celibate.

## **Nice Church Girls and Boys**

"I can understand men in the world wanting sex before marriage," she told me during one session. "But being in the church, knowing that this is a

violation against God's Word," well, that was very disheartening and confusing. These men hurt Monique by their actions and hypocrisy. One even told her "It's alright to have sex. We all have needs. We are in the church, and God will forgive us".

At that moment Monique shook her head, turned to him and replied: "Same dance, but different partner."

As single Christians face many different temptations in their lives, it is important to remain focused on Christ, and His Holy Word. That is where we find the profile of a holy life. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.

## **Sex for Saved Singles?**

Through my 36 years as a therapist and counselor, 85% of my single clients had sex before marriage by the age of 40. They concluded that almost all Americans have had sex before marriage. Abstaining from sexual intercourse is not the norm in our culture. Being sexual and sensual before marriage is the norm.

We are overwhelmed with "Bigger, Better, More," in the headlines. And seemingly every product and program gets moved on the often successful philosophy that sex sells. Sexy images, videos, songs, hot topics on reality tv, and news about celebrities and their sexy lifestyles pervade the media and our minds. If you want to be part of the 15% you will have to know your redeemer Jesus for yourself and have an honest and open relationship with Him.

If you realize that you are in the 85%, it is not too late to turn to Christ. The Lord can and will restore you. He will help you remain single, and celibate.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Corinthians 10:13.

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## **Victory Coaching**

The Gospel According to Paul: Victorious and Glorious! Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Thursday, June 28, 2018

[Listen to "Thoughts in Worship 06.28.2018" on Spreaker.](#)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:11-14).

## Timely Teachings

It takes just under two minutes to read Titus, chapter 2. What is impressive about this is how much practical wisdom is written there from which to draw. The Bible writer communicated jewels of wisdom. Paul encouraged prudence, love, faithfulness, soberness, goodness, and self-control. He advocated integrity, submission, faithful work, fidelity, and general righteousness. He spoke to the necessity of the elder men and women to be holy. They are to teach the younger ones how to live pleasing lives in the sight of God. He spoke to the blessing of women being of model characters in their households. Paul encouraged employees to give complete and perfect fidelity in their work. With a commitment to their employers, they would be worthy representatives of God.

Paul gave the comprehensive advice communicated in this short chapter for two principal purposes. First, our Father wants us to know that even in this present evil age, we can live godly in Christ. Unfortunately, so many people feel like the outward influences are too enormous to overcome, and that we



and victorious. The focus in this is always skewed. However, the matter is not whether we can accomplish holiness, as much as it is whether our God is able to keep us from falling. Thus, it is our privilege to focus our attention on Him and receive His strength to overcome any difficulty. He is able.

## Victorious Hope

The second purpose of the chapter is to show how victorious people, who live godly in this present evil age, have what is called the Blessed Hope. This hope is the realization that God places in His people in every generation that He could quite possibly return in their lifetime. This is encouraging, because we who love Him, want nothing more than to see Him. So, He places that sense of expectation in our hearts. And, one day, friends, He will burst the clouds and with jubilant trumpet sounds, He will keep His promise to take us to that place where there is no sorrow, crying, poverty, sin, or pain. We look forward to that day.

“For the grace of God (His unmerited favor and blessing) has come forward (appeared) for the deliverance from sin and the eternal salvation for all mankind. It has trained us to reject and renounce all ungodliness (irreligion) and worldly (passionate) desires, to live discreet (temperate, self-controlled), upright, devout (spiritually whole) lives in this present world, Awaiting and looking for the [fulfillment, the realization of our]

blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus (the Messiah, the Anointed One), Who gave Himself on our behalf that He might redeem us (purchase our freedom) from all iniquity and purify for Himself a people [to be peculiarly His own, people who are] eager and enthusiastic about [living a life that is good and filled with] beneficial deeds" (Titus 2:11-14, AMP).

I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, are you?