

It Matters

Nathanael Whisman – Mark 12:30

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Mark 12:28-30: “²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and **with all your strength.**’

What comes to mind when you hear the word **strength**?

The theme of strength is Perseverance

- “My own plans are made. While I can, I sail east in the Dawn Treader. When she fails me, I paddle east in my coracle when she sinks as I swim east with my four paws. And when I can swim no longer if I’ve not reached Aslans’ country or shot over the edge of the world into some vast cataract, I shall sync with my nose to the sunrise”¹

Application #1

- Where do I lose sight of Christ?

Practice Praying Scripture:

- Pray Philippians 3:13-14

1. Point One: Strength through YIELDING

- “Strength” - ἰσχύς (*ischus*)² = Capacity of one’s being, or the fullness of strength.
- Reading from the LXX (Septuagint), which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament.³
- δύναμις (*dynamis*) = power, strength⁴
- τὰν (*me.od*) = very, exceedingly⁵

¹ C.S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1952/1994), 231.

²Barbra Aland, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger, editors, *The Greek New Testament, A Readers Edition* (Stuttgart, Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2014), 137.

³M. Eugene Boring, *The New Testament Library: Mark* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 344.

⁴ Boring, *The New Testament Library: Mark*, 344.

⁵<https://www.stepbible.org/?q=version=ESV@reference=Deut.6&options=NHVUG>

⁶ Timothy Mackie, (The Bible Project), *What It Means to Love God With “All Your Strength”*, Published, March 17, 2016. Video, 2:29-

- “loving God with your “me’od” means devoting every possibility opportunity in capacity that you have to honor God and loving your neighbor as yourself. It’s the widest and most expensive word in the Shema.”⁶
- “If my heart were more content in you, O Lord, I would be less inclined to rage at others. Let my gauge be the Not in my gut, the poverty of my own understanding of the grace that I have received from a God who, loving me, chose rather to receive wounds and to give them. Take for me, myself, righteousness, and my ego-driven demands for respect. Overthrow the tyranny of my anger, O Lord, and in its place, establish a better vision of your throne, your kingdom, and your peace. Amen.”⁷

Application #2

- God, I yield _____ to you.

Practice Praying Scripture:

- Pray Matthew 6:9-10 or John 15:5

2. Point Two: Strength through CONTENDING

- Jude 3: “beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the Saints.”
- Contending = “Effort expended in a noble cause”⁸
- “The word translated “contend,” when verbalized, sounds like our word agonizing. It possesses the idea of athletes who, in an effort to win, find themselves intensely struggling, competing, even fighting with all their might.”⁹
- “Sin opposes every act of holiness and every degree of growth.”¹⁰
- As God calls you to contend for the faith, he promises to keep you. He is the supplier of all strength.

Application #3

- Is there anywhere I need to contend for faith?

2:40. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aaVy1AmFX4&list=PLOpVVheCA-kbvqQNAZ8OUiCXUJC_6n3U4&index=6

⁷ Douglas Mckelvey, *Every Moment Holy: Volume 1* (Nashville, TN: Rabbit Room Press 2017), 254.

⁸ David R. Helm, *1-2 Peter and Jude: Sharing Christ’s Sufferings* (Wheaton: IL, Charles Simeon Trust, 2008), 295.

⁹ David R. Helm, *1-2 Peter and Jude: Sharing Christ’s Sufferings*, 295.

¹⁰ John Owen, *Mortification of Sin In Believers: In Modern English* (Modern puritans), 13.

Practice Praying Scripture:

- Pray Jude 1-4 or 24-25

Point 3: Strength through SUFFERING

- John 16:33: "I have said these things to you, that in me, you may have peace. In the world, you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
- Romans 5:3-5: "3 Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us"
- "The wave of temptation may even wash you higher up upon the Rock of ages, so that you cling to it with a firmer grip than you have ever done before, and so again where sin abounds, grace will much more abound."¹¹
- 2 Corinthians 12:9-10: "9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."
- Horatio Spafford – It Is Well
 - “When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll—
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know
It is well, it is well with my soul.”

Application #4

- God, I trust you in/through _____.

Practice Praying Scripture:

- Pray 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

JESUS is our chief example.

- "While each of these terms expresses a distinctive aspect of human being, the threefold expression is not a dividing up or parceling out of the human self; it means "with all that you are." As God is one, so, too, is authentic love of God."¹²

¹¹ Charles Spurgeon, "Sin and Grace," (1874).

¹² Boring, 344.