

Stronger Empowering your future – part 8

Strong like Jesus

Text: John 8:13-19; 25-30

Chapter 8 of John describes the relentless attack from the Pharisees to discredit Jesus, to prove Him wrong, to find fault in Him and eventually to condemn Him. In fact, the Gospel of John opens in **1:11** with the statement that *“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him”*.

Reading through chapter 8 we see that in spite of all the attacks, Jesus remained such a picture of strength, boldness, so uncompromising, so focused and confident. He showed no weakness or fear!

What’s the secret of the strength of Jesus? How do you remain strong in the face of rejection and false accusations? What was the secret of Jesus? – Last week we looked at the secret of the strength of the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11 but today we will look at Jesus Himself.

What can we learn from Jesus in order to live strong lives and keep an overcoming attitude?

Prov. 18:14 AMPC – *“The strong spirit of a man sustains him in bodily pain or trouble, but a weak and broken spirit, who can raise up or bear?”*

Jesus is indeed the picture of someone strong in spirit. What was His secret?

1. He knew the Father was with Him

Verse 16b: *“I am not alone, but I am with the Father, who sent Me”*

I am not alone. One of the most difficult emotions of the human soul is loneliness – the sense of being disconnected from others, isolated or deprived from their contact, with no one to turn to.

- a) The man by the pool of Bethesda is an example of someone who had experienced abandonment and felt lonely.

John 5:7 - *The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”*

Loneliness can be caused by physical separation but also when one is being misunderstood, attacked or rejected. Jesus could have succumbed to any of those emotions. After all, the very people He came to save, rejected Him. However, He did not succumb to those feelings because He knew He was not alone - the Father was with Him.

Verse 29: *“And He Who has sent Me, is with Me. The Father has not left me alone, for I always do those things that please Him”.*

The Bible is filled with so many statements where we are assured of God’s presence, of His good plans for us and of the fact that He will never leave us nor forsake us:

b) Hebrews 13:5-6b: *For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”* ⁶ *So we may **boldly** say: “The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me?”*

I will never leave you – according to Kenneth West’s Word Studies, in the original language there are three negatives that precede the verb – *never, never, never leave you*. That is why, the **Amplified Bible** (AMPC) translates it like this:

... *“I will not, I will not, I will not leave you helpless”.*

Jesus wants you to know the Father like that!

Isaiah 49:15 - *“Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet **I will not forget you**.*

Our Father God wants you to know that even if people abandon, betray, attack or reject you, He will not – never, never, never!

2. Secondly, Jesus was strong because He never sought the validation, affirmation or approval of people

Let us look at **verse 29** again:

“And He Who has sent Me, is with Me. The Father has not left me alone, for I always do those things that please Him”.

He could have chosen to please His opponents. He could have feared them. However, He always chose to please the Father. That is why the Father also said of Him: ***“This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased”***

Jesus said in verse **18b**, *“The Father Who sent Me bears witness of Me”* – in other words, *He affirms me, He confirms Who I am and the validity of what I do.*

I believe that if we want to have a strong spirit, we need to make the decision that we are going to please God, rather than man, fear God rather than man, to think lightly of the approval of man - their applause or their rejection.

This is why Jesus was so strong.

- He knew the Father was with Him - He knew He was not an ‘absent’ Father but one always present,
- He knew He had His approval and affirmation. Lastly,
- Jesus knew He was a Son. He knew His identity

3. Jesus knew Who He was

He knew where He stood. He knew His identity. He was God's Son.

Verse 25a: *"Then they said to Him, who are you?"*

They questioned His identity. He replied firmly and clearly about Who He was.

One of the things the enemy will always question is your identity. He did that to Jesus in the wilderness:

Luke 4:3 - *"If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread"*

Jesus was certain of where He stood with God. He was His beloved Son.

Great power comes from knowing God as your Father and that you are a son and or a daughter.

John 1:11-12 - *11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*

1 John 3:2 - *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.*

That is your identity, that is who you are.

Conclusion:

In the passages we read today (and in many others) Jesus demonstrated over and over again that the source of His strength was His relationship with the Father.

That is why He came to introduce us the Father.

V.27 – *They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.*

(John 14:9 - *Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?)*

Our strength ultimately comes from our walk with the Father – from knowing Him intimately, knowing His power and His promises, and knowing where we stand in Him – our identity.

Know that you have a Father Who will never leave you – never, never, never!