

Christian Combat - God's Strength and How to Get It

by David Guzik

To live a victorious Christian life, we must be strong in the Lord and tap into God's reservoir of power and might.

Duration: 41:32

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:3, Ephesians 2:8-10, Ephesians 3:20 - 4:1, Ephesians 6:10-11

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Christian Strength"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the topic of Christian combat in light of the book of Ephesians. He emphasizes that as Christians, we have a glorious standing, mission, calling, and place in Jesus Christ, but the devil wants to shake us from it. The speaker explains that God has given us something to accomplish, defend, and fight for in the Christian life. The sermon will continue to explore Ephesians chapter 6, which brilliantly describes the Christian combat we are called to engage in.

Transcript

This morning as we turn to Ephesians chapter 6 we've just finished up a series going through the gospel of Mark and Took us several months because we went through it chapter by chapter and verse by verse but now I've been wanting to do for many months now this series that I'm going to call the the two pillars of Christian combat I don't know I I Should perhaps call it something about spiritual warfare because that's really what we're going to be talking about But I'm always aware that you know when you use the same phrase over and over again in the Christian life sometimes it just kind of becomes dull to your ears and You've probably heard that phrase spiritual warfare a hundred times before and it's a good phrase I think it describes well the struggle and the battle that we face as Christians and the task that's before us But I maybe want to phrase it a little bit different. So it sounds different in your ears and call it Christian combat because as Christians God has something for us to accomplish He has something for us to defend and he has something for us to fight for in the Christian life and in this Ephesians chapter 6 passage it describes it so brilliantly that we're going to talk about it over the next six weeks together Let me read you the text. I'm going to focus on this morning Our whole series will be taken from Ephesians chapter 6 verses 10 through 20 But we're going to focus this morning on verses 10 and 11 where we read Finally my brethren be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil The Bible tells us that as we endeavor to live our Christian life That

there's opposition that comes against us and the opposition isn't flesh-and-blood Opposition its spiritual opposition now one of the things we really have to have impressed in our minds Is that the opposition that comes against us is no less real because it's spiritual Sometimes we convince ourselves that spiritual things Only have a vague reality about them Whereas material things are what's really real, you know the pencil that I hold in my hand We may feel very confident that this is real and this is something to be counted upon.

It's a pencil I can hold it on the other hand a Spiritual thing is even more real than this pencil because this pencil is going to pass away, but spiritual things aren't They're going to live for eternity But it's very easy for us to believe that spiritual things are less real than material things And so the the struggle the combat that we're in as Christians. We're fighting against very real things It's just that the spiritual instead of material and in this great passage at the end of the book of Ephesians The Apostle Paul writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gives us Incredibly sure and strong principles that we can use to equip ourselves To successfully live this Christian combat that we're in And I'm titling this series the two pillars of Christian combat because I think that there are two things that are so essential to Victory and success in this Christian combat, and I think one of those things is often neglected Now that the second of the two pillars is often Referred to and commented upon he mentions it in verse 11. Did you see it there? He says put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil Well if you've been a Christian any number of years or months You may have heard a dozen messages on the armor of God and what it is and how it operates in the Christian life And those are very important things to know and to learn and to take to our life And we'll be talking about them in coming weeks But I believe that the armor of God is only one of two pillars that is a foundation in the Christian life The second pillar may be the armor of God But the first pillar is right there in verse 10 where it simply says finally my brethren be Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might This morning.

I want to talk to you about how to be strong in the Lord What it means to be strong in the Lord and how to avoid things that will take away from our strength in the Lord I? Think though that perhaps we should even back up a bit more look at verse 10 the first word there is very important He says finally Now when Paul says finally he's writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit He's not saying finally just like a preacher says finally You know what it means when the preacher says finally means there's about 20 minutes left to the sermon But not for Paul. He's wrapping it up right here But when he says finally it doesn't just have the idea of well. I'm coming to the end finally also has the very important sense that Paul is putting a Conclusion at the end of everything else that he's spoken of previously in other words He's saying finally in the sense of on top of everything else.

I've told you consider this There's a very real sense in which I'm cheating you this morning, and I'm aware of it If we were really going to set this message up properly I would do a fairly detailed Exposition of everything else that Paul has spoken of in the book of Ephesians It's just we don't have 12 or 15 hours together here on a Sunday morning to do that But when Paul says finally he means it Consider what I'm going to say next in light of everything else. I've already told you in this book of Ephesians In other words in light of all that God has done for you That's what he speaks about in the first couple chapters of Ephesians. You know this book of Ephesians is so wonderful It's so foundational.

I believe the principles within are so foundational for a right Godly strong Christian walk if I could give a prescription to any one of you if you want to strengthen your Christian life Read the book of Ephesians Read it every day for a month. I mean look at it. It's only six chapters It wouldn't take you more than a half hour to just sit down and read through the whole book if you read through the whole Book every day for a

month think of what God would show you You know in those first couple chapters he would impress upon your heart so mightily all that God has done for you How he saved you how he's rescued you how he's brought you to a place And he's done it by his plan and by his glory and so Paul when he says finally in verse 10 of chapter 6 He means in light of all that God has done for you do what I'm going to tell you to do now When he is finally he says in light of the glorious standing you have as a child of God because Ephesians talks about that It says that we're seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus That's our standing before God.

Well. We're not low earth dwellers We're heavenly sitters so to speak with Jesus right there Think of how the father Considers the son do you think God the father sees any fault in Jesus? Do you think God the father looks at God the son and is irritated or annoyed with him in any way no not at all Well friends since we are in Christ Jesus. That's our place position as well We're seated in heavenly places with him so when Paul says finally in verse 10 here He means in light of the glorious standing you have as a child of God He means in light of his great plan of the ages that God has made you a part of You know when you read the book of Ephesians and when you read the previous chapters Paul talks about God's great plan of the ages That he's revealed now Since the work of Jesus Christ and how every one of us have a crucial role in it You can't read the rest or excuse me the previous part of the book of Ephesians without knowing that you have an important place in God's plan So what you're reading here is finally it's in light of that When he says finally he means in light of the plan of Christian maturity and growth that he gives to you He means in light of the conduct that God calls every believer to he means in light of the filling of the spirit and the Walk in the spirit that God commands us to live as Christians Finally in light of all that he's written before in the book of Ephesians Finally now I want you to address this issue of Christian combat And there's a sense in which it's an appropriate ending for the book Because you see God has given us a glorious standing God has given us a glorious mission a glorious calling a glorious place in Jesus Christ and the devil wants to shake us from it The devil wants to distract us from it Paul says no finally I Want you to be aware, and I'm going to establish two pillars for the Christian life Finally in light of all of that There's a combat in the Christian life, and you need to counteract it by having two pillars of strength in your life Now the second one that he mentions in verse 11 there is the armor of God but first Before you apply the armor of God you have to do what's in verse 10 take another look at it with me Please let these words really sink down into both your mind and your heart where it says finally my brethren be Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might You see first you must be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might Then you must put on the whole armor of God and the two are essential.

I Think that much of Christian teaching on spiritual warfare wrong Christian combat it neglects the first pillar And I think it makes weak Christians because of it You know if you take a weak man who's just out of the hospital He can barely stand you know he barely has the strength in him to stand up if you put on him the best Armor in the world and send him out to battle. He's gonna lose Well, he said wait a minute. He's got the best armor on look.

He's fully equipped. Yes, but he's so weak that he can't fight So equipping for the Christian combat must begin With being strong in the Lord and in the power of his might and God helping me I'm gonna remind you so many times at this over the next six weeks That you're gonna be able to finish the sentence for me when I start it I Think it's so essential Nothing about that soldier who who goes to basic training there? He is let's say it's years ago when when it wasn't just a volunteer army in the United States But you were drafted in the military service, and so you open up your mail one day and there it is It says greetings from Uncle Sammy you realize I've been drafted and you go down And you know they're gonna equip you

because you know soldier has equipment He has that helmet he has the bulletproof vest and he has the gun that he carries And he has special boots boots, and he has that utility belt that he wears and all those different things You know he has all that equipment, but before they give him any of that they send him to basic training They say we're going to condition this soldier physically first It's as if the army says soldier we're going to give you the best weapons and the best armor possible But first we have to make sure that you're strong First we have to make sure that you have the capability of using the armor that we give to you And so how do you do it? How do you be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might? Well might I say that it is not done just by saying the words It's not an incantation or a spell. We don't believe in that as Christians You can't just walk around and say Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might you Can't just do that We don't believe in that It Christianity isn't one of those self-help things We just go around and say to yourself Every day and in every way I'm getting better and better You know if you say it to yourself, and if all you're gonna believe it now What's funny about it is those kind of mental games they can accomplish something can't they? They work after a fashion don't they because they can kind of puff up your Self-confidence and with a confidence you didn't have before you can probably do more than than you could before But it certainly isn't what Paul means here Because that kind of self-confidence is built on such a flimsy foundation That it's sure to crumble.

Oh, it might help get you through a few things But it won't help you in that real critical hour Because every day and in every way I'm getting better and better. That's no foundation for anybody's life much less the Christian life So what does it mean? What does it mean to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might well We might say the first thing that it means is that when Paul says be strong in the Lord It shows us that we need strength. I mean why would he even say it unless there was a need for it in the Christian life? Be strong in the Lord now.

I know I may be preaching to the choir so to speak this morning You may say Pastor David. I know I need strength Physically and spiritually I Barely dragged myself here this morning And I'm just hoping that God will give me some morsel of strength to carry me on forget about tomorrow I just want to make it through the rest of this day, and you know your need for strength Now I wonder even if you know your need for strength if you know all the reasons why you need such strength Let me suggest a few of them to you first of all when you consider the strength of your enemy you need strength Don't you? Well, we have a spiritual enemy. We'll talk a lot more about that next week We consider both the fact and the foe of the Christian combat that we're in but we need strength considering the strength of our enemy We have a spiritual enemy And he has associates so to speak or allied with him against us and when we consider his strength We said oh Lord.

I need strength, or I'm going to just waste away Secondly when we consider the strength of the evil days that we live in We need strength don't we now Paul is going to refer to this look at verse 13 That's okay to skip ahead a couple verses He says therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to Withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand Well if Paul was saying that the evil day was when he wrote. I don't think it's got any less evil since he wrote So we need the strength of God don't we we need that strength considering how evil the times are that we live in Thirdly I'd say that when we consider our own lack of strength. We need strength oh We put on a good image to other people don't we I think we've pretty much mastered that I've got it together Look on our face But you know in yourself how weak you often are I know in myself When I look into the mirror look into the mirror of my own soul I see the strength that I need before God don't you It makes me cry out.

I say Lord I think of the enemy that I have I think of the evil times that I live in and I think of my own Inherent weakness Lord God, I need your strength, but let me suggest you one more reason why we need the strength of God It's when we consider the greatness of the team so to speak that we belong to we see that we need strength You know when you're on a great team you sense a need to be a great player. Don't you? Recently at our home. I've kind of horrified my family again because I've dragged out the Documentary on baseball that was shown on public broadcast a while back, and we taped it and it's stupefying Lee boring to my whole family But I enjoy it immensely You know it's just hours and hours on the history of baseball and their eyes just glaze over when I'm watching this and You know one of the things they talk about is the great teams from baseball history baseball fans love to discuss You know which team was better was it the 1906 Chicago Cubs or was it the White Sox teams with shoeless Joe Jackson? Or it had to be the 27 Yankees right or maybe it was the 55 Brooklyn Dodgers and you talk about all those different teams through baseball history and You think what would have been like to be on one of those teams you go back to the 55 Brooklyn Dodgers and there's Gil Hodges and and Duke Snyder and Roy Campanella and all those play pee-wee Reese for heaven's sakes and there's Jackie Robinson and You know you think of all those players, and you think man if I was on that team You you would say I've got to be at my best.

I mean look at the company I'm in look at the team. I'm on I've got to be at my strongest my best and being part of a great team Inspires you to say I've got to be at my very best And friends let me tell you you in the Christian life. You're on the best team imaginable That the captain is Jesus Christ now You just look at your captain and ask yourself that doesn't inspire you to say I need to be at my strongest to play on His team and then you look around at your teammates Well your teammates they stretch not just in our own day And I could mention you great men and women of God in our own day But look back through history you're on the same team as Martin Luther You're on the same team as the Apostle Paul.

Well. There's Peter He's on your team too, and there's Charles Spurgeon, and there's a John Calvin, and they're all on your team You look around and you look at the team that you're on and you say I better be as strong as I can be to play on this team Friends this is no private battle that we fight Sometimes we feel that in the Christian combat we face that it's so personal. It's just us getting attacked That's a strategy of the enemy against you You should understand that you're part of a great army, and you don't decide strategy.

You don't decide tactics It's not your battle. It's your captain's battle It's Jesus's battle, and you're going to fight as he tells you to fight And that's what we're here for right now to get orders from our commanding officer And the first thing he tells us to do is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his mind We say we need it Jesus now. How do we get this strength? And Jesus says I'm glad you asked look at verse 10, and he'll tell you how It says finally my brethren Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might Now I want to make a distinction here And it's a distinction that the Paul makes inspired by the Holy Spirit right there in verse 10 He says that there's a difference between power and might We really have three things mentioned in verse 10 you have strength be strong in the Lord you have strength You have power and you have might Well might is inherent power or force It's power or force or strength in reserve Think of a big Muscular man, I mean his muscles are just bulging everywhere you look at him and as he flexes his muscles He has muscles in places you didn't know people had muscles Well, but he's not doing anything with it, but it's there.

That's the reserve of strength. That's might well, then he says Be strong in the power of his might power is the exercise of might When that muscular man takes an iron bar and bends it that's power He's using that

reservoir power that he has within himself and he's Exercising it in power to display that strength and the power is exercised on the iron bar and it's bent He's using that reserve of strength in operation You see what God says to you. This is very exciting in verse 10 Be strong in the Lord and then the power of his might God has a reservoir of power Reservoir of strength of might and he says I will let you draw on my reservoir I'll let you draw on my power It's as if that great muscular man said I'll transfer some of my strength some of my might to you and you can exercise it In your life and you can see the power of God at work in your life because I will give you for my resources of Might well, that's a thrilling thought isn't it? That God allows us to tap in so to speak of the resources of his might And here's the problem for us isn't it is oftentimes? We've wanted to be strong in the Lord and in the power of our might and you look at my reservoir of strength and God's reservoir of strength And it's like comparing a teacup to the Pacific Ocean There's really no comparison is there You know up up on the hill just to the south of us over here There's a water tank that they built on the hill right up above where we live and since we live in the neighborhood down below We could look up and we could see them build that water tank I mean we saw what the hill was like before they built it now They built it and it's right up there and you look at that water tank And that's a nice big reservoir of water, and I thought you know what if you filled that thing full of water That could probably supply the water need for our household for the rest of our lives I mean if that was just for us.

There's enough water in there. We'd never need any other source It's a huge reservoir and all you have to do is just use that reservoir that's provided and then provide everything you need God has a reservoir of might for you and I to use as Christians And so when he says be strong in the power of his might it's God saying I make my Resources available to you so drop on them Think about his might Think about the might of Jesus. He displayed it on this earth there.

He is Demons come against him was there any lack of power or might in Jesus. No he dealt with an easy Temptation comes against Jesus was there any lack in his power or might to deal with them No, no came against him and his might was displayed on the cross It was displayed in the empty tomb friends the life of Jesus over and over again shows us that there's no lack in the power and the might of God But now here's the question How does his might work within me? Sometimes we think that the might of God is sort of transferred to us as we sit by passively okay, I'll sit here God and And you put your strength into me and then I'll have it And the idea is we'll just sit back and do nothing and God will put his strength in us and then we'll be strong But friends you don't get the strength of God passively That's not how it works You see his might works in me as I rely on it and step out and do the work now I can be relying on God's might and do no work That's a possibility right and so all that reservoirs there for me says I'm not putting it to work and then again, I can step out and do the work without relying on his might and Many of you have experienced that haven't you gone out to do the work of God, but you're not relying on his might You're not relying on his Inexhaustible supply of strength you're relying on your own strength and that falls short as well No, we don't receive the might and fail to do the work and we don't do the work and fail to rely on the might We we reject both of those that fall short instead. Well, I must rely on his might and then do the work You know, this principle is illustrated so many times in the scriptures Let me give you two examples in Philippians chapter 2 Paul speaks and he says listen to this work out your own Salvation for fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to will or to do for his good pleasure Paul says you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Okay, it's my work And then he says for it's God who works in you. Well, then it's God's work Well, which one is it? Is it God's work or is it my work? And the answer is Yes It's both Hey, here's another one's

Colossians chapter 1 verse 29 Paul writes and he says to this end. I also labor Striving.

Okay. Oh Paul, you're working so hard. This is great to this end.

I also labor striving According to his working which works in me mightily Well, which is it Paul? Is it your work or is it God's work and Paul says yes Now let's understand what it's not It is not I Do everything and God does nothing No, no, it can never be that way Nor is it I do nothing and God does everything. No, it's not that either This is the point. It's not either.

I Do all I can and then God makes up what I can't do. No, that's not it either Each one of these approaches falls short The key is for me to rely on his might and to rely on it more and more and then do the work That's how to live the Christian life Live it with a conscience dependent reliance on His might on his strength and then say God help me to get about the work of living my Christian life To your glory every day How do we do it, how do we get this strength we know our need for it We know it doesn't happen as we just sit passively We're not just going to sit and have a silent moment here and say okay. God will make us all strong God, what do you want me now to do to get your strength? God turns us back to the scriptures and let me share with you five passages of Scripture that speak to us about how we get strength Here's the first one Zechariah chapter 4 verse 6. I'm not going to ask you to turn there.

I'm just going to read the passage You can turn there if you'd like, but more than anything make note of it Zechariah 4 6 says This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit says the Lord What does that tell us about the strength of God and how we get it it tells us that the Holy Spirit brings strength Do you feel weak in your Christian life? Are you aware of a lack of power of a lack of strength in the Lord? Then when's the last time that you cried out to God Lord God fill me with your Holy Spirit. I Need the Holy Spirit in my life because the work that's going to be done in me and through me It's not going to be done by my mind nor by my power But by the Spirit of God, that's the strength that he wants to give So isn't that a place to start? Shouldn't we even just forget about everything else until we've done that first? The Lord I need to rely on your spirit not on my own might not on my own strength There's a second way mentioned in Nehemiah chapter 8 verse 10 it says Go your way eat the fat drink the sweet and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared For this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow For the joy of the Lord is your strength.

That's a second way that we gain strength We gain it by the joy of the Lord Now let me express it to you in two ways But the joy of the Lord can give us strength First of all, it can come from our joy in the Lord. And how do you have joy in the Lord? Let me just suggest you two ways if these two things don't give you joy in the Lord Then pinch yourself to see if you're still alive First of all, you get joy in the Lord when you really have assurance of your salvation Huh, you know when you know how great the salvation of God is and all that he's rescued you from And all where you were and all where he's put you now that gives you joy The second way that we have joy when we think of God's work in us is when we know our identity in Jesus Christ That we're adopted as sons and daughters of God That we have this place where we're seated in the heavenlies with them that we're more than Conquerors because of the work that he's done in us that we identify both in his death and his resurrection And I could go on and on and speak about the identity that we have in Jesus Christ But when you know it and when you live it, that's joy in your life Doesn't matter so much what other people do to you, does it? It doesn't matter. It's hard for people to bring you down when you really know who you are as a child of God That's a reservoir of joy in your life and the joy of the Lord will give you strength There's another way that the joy of the Lord gives us strength It's not so much our joy in him But how about his joy in us when you recognize the joy of the Lord the joy that he

takes in you That gives you strength When you know how much he delights in you how much he loves you how precious you are in his sight That's a source of strength And so the Holy Spirit brings strength the joy of the Lord brings strength Here's another one from Daniel chapter 11 verse 32 It says the people who know their God shall be strong and shall carry out great exploits You know what that tells us about the strength of God.

It tells us that abiding relationship brings strength When you're walking in an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ, there's a strength in your life There's a power there Because your your pipe so to speak is connected to the reservoir And there it is you receive there's the reservoir and here you are and the abiding relationship is the pipe right there And you're receiving it and isn't it wonderful? And I think this really needs to be highlighted in our lives folks You know one of the themes I want to come back to a lot in this series on Christian combat is What the real goal in Christian combat is and you know what it is it's deeper relationship with Jesus Christ It's not strength for strength sake it's not victory for victory sake God could make strength robots and they could go out and be strong God could make victory robots and make them out and they'd be victory, but they wouldn't have relationship with him You know if God could look down from heaven and see Someone who wanted to live for him and they were very strong and very successful in all their Christian endeavors But their heart was far from God in relationship to him It would sadden God because what he really wants is relationship And so you know what are the reasons why he allows all this Christian combat to come into our life It's because he wants closer relationship with you. So he says oh, I want to work together with you child Oh, I want you to have this with me. I want you to rely on me in a way you haven't relied before And that's why God doesn't say well just step aside and I'll do everything because God knows that one of the greatest ways that Relationship is formed in our lives is by working together with somebody So God says let's work together It's not just for the sake of getting the work done It's for the sake of building relationship now when you build relationship you have a reservoir of strength there Don't you that's why it says in Daniel 11 32 the people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits Well, here's another one 1st Peter chapter 2 verses 2 and 3 tells us that strength comes from spiritual food He says as newborn babes Desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby if indeed you've tasted that the Lord is gracious Well, that's a way that you gain strength.

I trust that you're gaining in spiritual strength right now That you're receiving something good from God's Word If not from what I say then you've got an open Bible right in front of you and you can read it and God is Strengthening you spiritually right now And here's a fifth way Strength comes as we exercise ourselves to godliness Let me read to you from Jude verse 20 We read there, but you beloved building yourselves up on your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit the idea is of exercise building strength We know it does that in the natural realm but it also does it in the spiritual realm that as we wait on God as we give ourselves to the Exercise of godliness and in living an active Christian life. He pours strength into us Let me read to you from Isaiah chapter 40 verse 28 through 31. I Love this passage where the Prophet says have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God the Lord the creator of the ends of the earth neither faints nor is weary his Understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the weak and to those who have no might he increases strength Even the youths shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall But those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength They will mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary They shall walk and not faint what a great promise of strength for those Who wait on the Lord now that waiting isn't a passive thing to wait on the Lord means to serve him To be active in service from it's the waiting that a waiter Does not

the waiting that you do in the doctor's office waiting for the appointment? So it's not passive. It's active Wait upon the Lord So I think it's wonderful when we think of these five ways to gain strength And I'm sure that if you were to go into the scriptures you could find even more ways that the Bible says we can gain Strength, but how about just these five the Holy Spirit brings a strength the joy of the Lord brings a strength abiding relationship with God brings a strength spiritual food brings a strength and then finally Exercising ourselves to godliness brings strength I Wonder if there's anybody here this morning You're doing all five of those in your Christian life, and you still feel terribly weak and depleted I Would doubt it I really would Usually when we feel weak and depleted and exhausted and no strength in our Christian life We look to it. There's one of these things there are more of them that we're not doing But there is a way that we can be putting strength into our Christian life Yet be wasting our strength in other areas, and let me explain to you what I mean I Think that there are ways that we can waste spiritual strength Now this idea is an original to me it came to me as I read a commentary on this passage by a great preacher of a Previous generation named D. Martin Lloyd-Jones He preached in Westminster Chapel in London for many years an incredible teacher of God's Word D. Martin Lloyd-Jones and his commentary on this listed many ways in which he believed Christians Wasted their strength.

I'm going to read some of these things from this listee I want you to consider this because maybe strength from God is coming into your life, but you're wasting it And you're not putting it towards the purpose that God intended to be So here from D. Martin Lloyd-Jones is a partial list of things that he believes will waste Strength in a Christian's life. He says committing to too many spiritual works or things will waste your spiritual strength It's just too much conversation It's just gab gab gab talk talk talk all the time. He says that's a drain on your spiritual strength arguments debates Wrangling over things he says that's a waste of spiritual strength Laziness Will waste your spiritual strength.

Oh, you know how that is Don't you when you're really lazy on a Saturday or a Sunday afternoon? And you take that nap in the middle of the day that you didn't really need You wake up more tired than when you started in the nap, right? You don't know how that works, but how it's funny spiritually to laziness can waste your strength too much time in the wrong company D. Martin Lloyd-Jones says that that will waste your spiritual strength Too much foolish talk and joking He says a love of money and career will waste your spiritual strength a desire for respectability and image will ruin your spiritual strength and unequal yoking with an unbeliever Or ungodly entertainment. He says will waste your spiritual strength Finally he says a wrong attitude toward the Word of God or doubting the Word of God These are things that he says will waste your spiritual strength There wasn't that an eye-opener for some of us We wonder why you know, it seems like I'm putting in my life all the right things But I don't seem to have much a sense of spiritual strength. Well, maybe we're wasting it You maybe it's just what Paul says in one passage in Ephesians.

He describes one type of sin. He says it's dissipation That means wastefulness Maybe God is putting spiritual strength in us, but we're wasting it Well Lloyd-Jones has a very good comment on this He says we have to walk on a knife edge in these matters You must not become extreme on one side or the other but you have to be watchful And of course you can always tell by examining yourself Whether your strength is increasing or declining Well, how about you in your life your spiritual strength increasing or declining I Think the first thing we need to do is come to God and say God I will use your means the ways that you have appointed to gain your strength Because I want to draw on the resources of your might I'm tired of living on my own strength God The second thing we need to do say Lord are there places where I am wasting spiritual strength You know, maybe God has filled up your bucket in a marvelous way today and

you're leaving here with your bucket full of spiritual strength Oh, but wait a minute. There's a lot of holes in your bucket, aren't there? And before you even get home, there's just a few little puddles in the bottom of that bucket Well God help us to patch up those holes and and help us to always keep that continual flow into our life because God has a work for us to do together as believers that absolutely requires that we Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might let's pray that he does it right now father that is my prayer and I pray God that you would give us a Passion Lord to have this strength worked out in our life Father we need to rely on you and on your resources of strength and all the means that you have appointed to give it to us but Lord God Keep us also from wasting strength and I pray that now you would speak through our hearts Lord We we want to give free reign to the Holy Spirit To convict us to to encourage us to guide us Into how we can fulfill this glorious command to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might we pray this in Jesus name

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