

# Lord, Strengthen Me

by Shane Idleman

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**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 16:14, Ephesians 4:30, Judges 16:20, Acts 1:8, Psalm 51:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Judges 16:28, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Romans 8:26, James 4:7

**Topics:** "Presence of the Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Renewal"

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## Description

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## Transcript

James says he wist not, he wist not that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him. He knew not that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him. And this is a big issue because A.W. Tozer said, I think in the 1950s, he said if the Holy Spirit was removed from the early church, 90% of the work would have ceased.

And he says if the Holy Spirit were removed from the church today, 90% of the work would continue. See that's a question that pastors should be asking, that's a question churches should be asking. Do they know not that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from them? Do they know not? I know they've got a great worship team and they've got people who maybe are nationally recognized artists, but do they have the Spirit of God? They've got the smoke coming up for worship, right, but do they have the Spirit of God? Well the pastor's a pretty good speaker, he's entertaining, okay, but does he have the Spirit of God upon his life to pull down strongholds when he preaches, to go after Satan's kingdom through the power of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, and to let the Holy Spirit loose? The old saints used to call the Holy Spirit, listen, the old saints used to call the Holy Spirit the hound of heaven, but he's got a degree Shane, he's got a PhD, but does he have the Spirit of God in him? I like what Leonard Ravenhill said, he can have 32 degrees and still be frozen.

Well the church is big. Is the Spirit of God there? Is the Spirit of God there? Well how do I know? Is he wrecking hearts and rebuilding lives? Is he setting the captives free? Is he setting the addict free? Are men weeping and working on their marriages? Are kids wanting to be better kids and finding them at the altar? Is the prayer meeting powerful? Are there people there? Because the prayer meeting is the thermostat and thermometer of your church. Is the Spirit of God moving? I know the worship sounds good, but is it moving hearts? Because many churches know not that the Spirit of the Lord has departed, and it becomes a machine, and programs, and potlucks, and all those things are great.

But is the Spirit of God there? Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza. Then they bound him with bronze fetters and he became a grinder in the prison. Now I do need to tell you this, this is a key, so you don't get confused.

In the Old Testament, before Christ came, the Old Testament, God would put his Spirit upon a person, and the Spirit came upon Saul, and he prophesied, and the Spirit came upon David, and the Spirit came upon Samuel, and the Spirit came upon Elijah, and the Spirit came upon Samson to do God's work. But in the Old Testament, God can withdraw that Spirit. Can you imagine being left to yourself? I mean, it's no joke when we say, you know, we fear the devil a little bit, it's our warfare, but I fear more of what's within.

Being left to ourselves. New Testament, a believer in Jesus Christ is indwelt, is filled with the Holy Spirit, however you can quench and grieve that Spirit. And the picture I often have is of this roaring fire, and you can feel it in your living room, your den, you know, you're just, you can feel this roaring fire, it's just touching everything, it's consuming everything that's thrown in.

Well you give that fire many, many hours, and what happens? You have to take a little, you know, steel rod, and you're poking around, and here's a little ember. See, it's still there, it's red hot, but I can't feel anything. I can't even, well if I pick it up I can, but I feel no heat, nothing, it's lying under ashes, it's useless, it's pointless, nobody sees it, nobody feels it.

That's what a believer can do to the Holy Spirit. When you quench and grieve the Spirit of God to such a degree that He's no longer operating in your life to the degree the Holy Spirit could be. The Holy Spirit's not an it, it's part of the triune nature of God.

God says we are plural, He calls it, He says let us make man in our image, us, Elohim, it's the plural nature of God. Try to wrap your head around that one, okay, you're gonna get a headache. We just know the Bible teaches it, Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

Part of the triune nature of God, so the Spirit of, this is amazing, the Spirit of God indwells the believer. So the question never is, do you have the Holy Spirit? The question always is, how much of you does the Holy Spirit have? All believers have the Holy Spirit, so why are some people so different? Because they've submitted and they've surrendered their entire life to the work of God's Spirit. That's why they're a little excited during worship.

That's why you might see this, because the Spirit of God worshipping, I'll tell you something a little embarrassing, but I just remembered it this morning, I forgot about, for 25 years, I'm up here, I'm worshipping in this incredible worship, and I said, I'm the guy I used to make fun of 25 years ago. I remember the church, I remember the back row, I remember I was about 70, 60 pounds heavier, taking steroids, getting in fights, I've kicked out of Black Angus for life. I think I can go back now, but, and I would mock that guy, raising his hands, what a wimp.

I'm a tough guy. Little did I know, I was dying inside, I killed my marriage, I almost killed my soul, I walked away from God, I'm dying inside. Every little thing was so sensitive.

He said something bad about me, oh. So sensitive, men are just little boys in grown bodies. But then when the Spirit of God gets a hold of your heart, and you're filled with that, you can take a licking and keep on ticking.

I mean, if I received one one-hundredth of the criticism I receive today, I would've caved in. And I remember, I would never be that man, what a wimp, holy smokes. I would go to George Strait concerts, right, 12 pack of beer, get in fights, that's a man, that's a man.

Arrested at the sheriff's station when I was on Avenue J. Spent some time in that prison cell, that's a man. Unbelievable, how deceived we become because of pride. And then when God finally breaks you, and that prodigal son comes home, you come running home, and you have to worship.

See what worship really is, it's just the Holy Spirit in you, resonating with the Holy Spirit that we're singing to, God, Father, God the Son, we're worshiping, crying Abba Father. See, so it's not Shane Eidelman worshiping, it's the Holy Spirit within me worshiping God and the Holy Spirit is always united, never divided. John Wesley's mom was asked what sin is, and she said this, whatever weakens your reasoning, whatever impairs the tenderness of your conscience, whatever obscures your sense of God, or takes away your relish for spiritual things, in short, anything that increases the authority of the flesh over the Spirit.

Is there anything in your life that is giving the flesh more authority over the Spirit? Let me put it in terms we might be able to understand a little bit better. Whatever we are feeding spiritually that is building up the flesh and quenching and grieving the Spirit, that is sin. Whatever quenches the Spirit of God, that to us is sin.

And then verse 21, the Philistines took him and put out his eyes. Did you catch that? Do you know what was involved with that? They would tie the prisoner down and have sharp instruments and they would remove their eyeballs. So there's just empty sockets.

This mighty man of God, this mighty man of God called to deliver Israel would kill Philistines with a jawbone, would wipe, now this mighty man of God, now he's been taken captive. His eyes have been removed. And this is a very important point because the enemy targets your eyesight.

The enemy will always target your eyesight. What do I mean by that? Not physical eyesight, spiritual eyesight. Because God will call you to do something, God will say back there, He's called me to do that.

Like when He called us to plant the church, He's called me to do that. So know how many naysayers came up and say something, know how many people leave the church no matter how this happens, but God has called me to do this, just like He's called you. God has called me to do this.

I don't care who's taunting me, I don't care who's trying to knock me off course, I'm doing what you call me to do and I'm keeping my focus on you, Christ and Christ alone. My eyesight, once He rips that out of you, you're like wandering, the Bible talks about in the Old Testament, like groping, as it were, in the darkness, grabbing on to things, holding. I have no spiritual eyesight, I have no direction and that's exactly where men are leading their families and why the nation is in the condition it is in today.

You want to rebuke the nation, look in the mirror. Oh my Lord. Listen, I'm not trying to win a popularity contest, I'm trying to preach the gospel, the good news, but it begins with bad news.

Everyone's talking about the good news, well there's bad news too. Bad news is the backdrop, the good news is the cross. I just see so many families falling apart, so many marriages disintegrating, so many children crying themselves to sleep at night.

So to survive the anointing, you must readjust your focus. You must know when spiritual eyesight is fading. Because whatever our focus, many times I've spoken at the men's thing about this, men, it's oh I've got to work and I've got to pay the bills, wonderful, but that better not be your focus.

See, that's what you do, the focus is what God's called you to do, to be that godly husband, to be that godly wife, to be that godly father, to be that godly mother, grandparents, that's my focus, God is the foundation. Jesus said, whoever hears my words and he does them, he will be like a man who built his house, what, on the sinking sand? Who built his house upon the rock, and when the waves came, because they're coming, when the floods come, because it's coming, and when the rain beat upon that house, it did not fall. Why? Because it was anchored with six inch steel beams? No, because it was anchored in Christ.

That's the rock, the solid rock on which I build my life, there is no sinking sand when Christ is the foundation. And all of those things that leads to the prison of bondage, a grinder in the prison. You know what he was doing, it says with oxen, his eyes are gorged out and he's probably pushing this machine and he's grinding at the prison, he's turning this wheat and barley, or whatever it is, they're removing the chaff and they're getting the good stuff, and he's in the prison and that's all he's doing, this mighty man of God.

What do you do when you are called to do the mighty? But now you're grinding in the prison. You're going through the motions, have you ever been there? It goes like this, I'm barely hanging on, I'm barely hanging on, I'm just, I'm going through the motions, I'm going through the motions. I just want to throw this out there because I did the first service, often the man's spiritual eyesight deeply affects the family.

First Peter says, husbands, be considerate to your wives, respect them as the partner that should be cherished, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. Could it be that many of our prayers aren't being answered because of what is happening in our homes? Now, verse 22, very important word, you ready for this one? Life changing, life altering, this work can change your life. We see this terrible news, Samson's in bondage, this great man of God is in prison, he's lost the anointing of God, the spirit of God has left, the Philistines can overtake Israel again.

Hold on, hold on, here's the word, however, however, wait, who gets the final say? God gets the final say, I love the scriptures that say all hell is breaking loose, but God, but God, however, see, no damage so great, no barrier so deep, no bondage so engraved in our human hearts that God can't say however, however, however, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had become shaving. See he renewed his strength, and it took God bringing Samson to a point of total humility, utter desperation, before he finally cried out to God. See, be encouraged, you know math, right, most of you know math, a lot better than me, but before you multiply, often you have to get it down to its lowest common denominator, you have to break it down, break it down, break, God breaks people down, why don't I break that? You should, it's very freeing once you understand that God breaks us before he uses us.

How many of you put on perfume this morning? What happened to the flower? Have you used olive oil? What do you think the olives have to say about that? Now you can understand a lot of the scriptures that talk about in the crushing, in the breaking, David said, blessed are the bones that you have broken that they may rejoice in you. This broken, you've got to break a wild stallion before you ride it. So it's in this crushing, it's in this breaking, it's I've seen, you get to utter despair, my whole life is falling apart, everything's over, everything I dreamed of, thought of is gone, however, however, in the waiting time, Shane why do you get so loud, why shouldn't I? We're talking about the living God resurrecting dead spiritually people, church is not a cemetery.

Who told us church is a cemetery? Who told us church is a cemetery? Do a song, do a couple announcements, do four songs, be done by 35 minutes, do one song so people can get out in an hour and five minutes. Somebody, a pastor friend of mine told me that like it's a good thing, we got our services down to an hour and five minutes each. That's what I need to preach, but you know what the response is? That's what the people want.

Their attention span, listen, if you're filled with the Spirit of God, you can preach for an hour and 20 minutes and people will be sitting on the edge of their seat wanting more. So whose fault is it? It's you. Every I've got a whole volume of Puritans, Puritan theology, Puritan books, and it's like every sermon is an hour and 20 to hour and 45 minutes.

Now hold tight. People would often stand, did you know that? Often the preacher would sit and the people would stand for that long. See, it's not that the church is boring, it's that the Spirit of God has departed from that place.

It always begins in the leadership. Is the pastor spending time broken before God? Because you know where this comes from? It comes from a tear-stained prayer morning, praying, oh God, and I pray this, I'll tell you, I'm just letting you know, God, if you don't move today, I don't want to go preach. If you don't fill me with your Spirit, I don't want to share because it's just going to be some guy up there with bricks coming out of his mouth, everybody looking at their phone, what time is it to get out of here? Because I want to please the masses, not pierce the heart.

However, gosh, let's get back on track, however, his hair begin to grow back. You see, it's in the renewing of his strength. Survive the anointing by waiting upon God.

Wait upon God. What is waiting involved? It involves prayer. I am going to just promote Wednesday night right here for a minute.

This Wednesday, I'm talking about that waiting time is not wasted time on prayer. So if you're hungry for prayer, come this Wednesday at 6 p.m. It's an important message because it could really be summed up, survive the anointing by being men and women of prayer. Because when you're prayed up, when you're full of God's Spirit, how in the world is the enemy going to sidetrack you? Most of us leave here on a spiritual high after Sunday, but come Monday, that draining takes place.

So survive the anointing by waiting on God. And I want to keep pushing this issue, but let me just, let me close with what it says here. Now the Lord of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon, their God, and to rejoice.

Isn't this interesting? They captured Samson. Now he's in prison. They're going to bring him out and make fun of him.

And they said, our God, our God Dagon has delivered Samson into our hands. Our God has prevailed. How long, how many times have you heard that? Our God has prevailed, not your God, not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not Jehovah.

Our God has prevailed. He says, oh God says, not yet. Oh no, not yet.

This is all part of my sovereignty. This is the same Dagon where later we read in the Bible that they would set up the ark of the Lord next to Dagon, their God, and this big carved image or metal, stone image would fall to the ground. And they would put it back up again and it would fall to the ground.

The head would come off, hands would come off, Dagon, what's wrong? What must be the presence and power of God because no other God can stand in his presence. Every name, I said, everything will bow with the name of Jesus Christ. Have you thought about that? I want to go, quick Tyrae, don't worry, just quick, why do they want to remove God from everything? Get Jesus out of our schools, get him out of our city council meetings, atheists want to remove the nativity scene, get him out because at the name of Jesus Christ, every knee will bow.

That is spiritual authority. When you come in, when you walk into a situation, when you walk into a situation and you believe it because of Jesus Christ, that name is greater than Buddha, that name is greater than Allah, that name is greater than Hare Krishna, that name is greater than Mormonism, Jehovah Witness, and all other is's put together, that name will be exalted, that name will be high and lifted up. Why? Why? Have you thought about that? If you go to all these school districts that are allowing transgenderism to be taught, now I love transgenders, I just don't like the agenda.

See, be careful, don't call me a hater, I'm a lover, I hate the agenda, that's trying to push on kids, that's perversion. It's coming out in schools, they can choose what they want to be. Something in the middle, how is that even possible? We have lost our mind.

I don't even know where I was. Oh, but think about that, every name. You go to the school district, you say, hey, listen, we want to teach Buddha, okay, approach a school board, let's think about it, everything, everything, they're open, but you say, hey, we'd like to teach Jesus Christ, you'll see her, oh, oh, Tony, you saw that when we went to the college a couple years ago, I said, I'm going to preach against atheism, I'm going to preach a gospel in the auditorium, oh, she said, not either, she did whatever she could to stop me, why, because you say Jesus Christ, they know the spiritual realm, the demons hate that, the demons flee, but don't worry, they're not equal, they're not equal.

I love that verse, even the demons believe and tremble. I just get so excited, pardon me for, but no, especially on this, I just read the Bible and these demons can't even, they have to negotiate with Jesus, don't throw us into the abyss, don't judge us before our time, what do you say, Lord, even the demoniac filled with allegiance had to bow to Jesus, it says, they worshipped him, Lord, do not throw us into the abyss before our time, let us go into pig, go, go ahead, go into the pigs, and he'd walk to the boy being convulsed and throwing the fire, he'd say, out, no negotiating, no fighting, oh, Jesus, come on, and they're fighting, he just said, go, just the name, the voice is so powerful, when Jesus Christ says something, Lazarus, come forth, even the dead have to get up, and I might preach in a minute, I might just stop for a minute, hold on, don't you see, so no matter what you're going to call on the name of Christ, that's what

Samson did, oh, I knew I shouldn't have closed this, survive, so it happened when their hearts were married that they said, call for Samson, let us make fun of him, and they stationed him between the pillars, then Samson said to the little boy who held his hand, let me fill the pillars which support the temple so I can lean upon them, and there were about 3,000 men and women on the roof watching Samson perform, survive the anointing by knowing who you are even when your enemies taunt you, here's how you get through, you remember who you are even when your enemies taunt you, people will taunt you, have you learned that yet as believers, hello, remember who you are, because many people get discouraged, oh, you're right, oh, yeah, I don't want to, I'm going to check it before I say her name, but there's somebody who leads worship nationally that we play songs for, we love, and she just came out saying, I don't know if homosexuality is wrong, read the Bible, see what you find out, let me know, it's because we want popularity, I know people that struggle with sin, so do I, but I love them enough to tell them the truth, that's how you set people free, there's surveys, there's even pastors here locally, we're not going to talk about sin, they say I don't talk about those issues, I'm not going to tell people to repent, not going to mention the blood of Christ, not going to mention judgment, hell, no, what are you doing, you should be a motivational speaker, hand in your credentials and go hit the motivational circuit, because a preacher of the gospel preaches the difficult things, that's what put Christ on the cross, so you're not going to talk about what put him on the cross and what saves people when they look to the cross, it makes no sense unless the spirit of the Lord has departed. And then the final ending here, so we have this picture, verse 28 of Samson, he's got a little boy leading him out, a little lad, they use the word lad, it's a young child, probably 10, 11, 12, and they lead him out, he's blind, his eyes are gone, gorged out, and he says, he puts his hand on the pillars, and what's he say, oh Lord God, remember me, that's all he says, that's where the however comes in, but God, he just says, Lord, remember me, avenge me for my two eyes, and he pushed with all his might, and the entire Colosseum came down, and the Bible says that the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

See, he finished well, that's the encouragement, survive the anointing by knowing where to focus your strength, see Samson put the whole, he put his hands on the pillar, do you know where to put your strength, where are you gonna put your hands, not necessarily physically, but spiritually, see I want to step on the neck of the enemy, that's what I want to do, I want to put my hands in this position, so I pull down strongholds, we cast down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity, we sing that song, this is how I fight my battles, I don't know about you, but that's how I fight my battles, in worship and prayer, and you're pulling down strongholds, Lord, show me where to put my hands to pull down the oppression that is happening in our families, show me where to put my hands, so my little ones are not led astray, show me where to put my hands, so my marriage doesn't falter and fail, Lord, remember me, and he will answer that prayer.

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