

IGNITING THE POWER THROUGH INNER STRENGTH Ephesians 3:16

INTRODUCTION

Description of a Christian :

*Completely Fearless. Continuously Joyful. Constantly In Trouble.

Background of Ephesians

1. One of the prison epistles - Paul was chained to a Roman guard 24 hours a day
2. The letter gives us a hint to why Paul wrote this :

Before the start of this second prayer :

**Ephesians 3: ¹³I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory*

Before he ends the letter :

**Ephesians 6 : ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹²For our struggle*

**Ephesians 6 :²¹Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. ²²I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.*

In short, it was written at a time that being a Christian was not a “comfortable” thing. Very much different of what we expect of our brand of Christianity today.

Historical Background :

1. This letter was written around 60-62 A.D. when Paul was under house arrest in Rome. (Acts 28:16-31)
2. Rome was under the reign of Nero during that time. He hated Christians.

**"to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians [or Chrestians^[15]] by the populace" - Tacitus (historian) – this was in connection with the great fire in Rome*

** "...a vast multitude, were convicted, not so much of the crime of incendiarism as of hatred of the human race. And in their deaths they were made the subjects of*

sport; for they were wrapped in the hides of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set on fire, and when day declined, were burned to serve for nocturnal lights."

* (show photo) 3. If it is addressed to the Ephesians, then Ephesus is the town. It's a progressive town with the Temple of Diana as its centerpiece. The Temple of Diana is known for its temple prostitutes.

***Summary :**

Based on the Biblical and Historical Background, this letter was written :

1. To encourage Christians in the midst of trials
2. To instruct Christians in the midst of temptations

Application :

This is one of the reasons why we go to church, after worshipping and thanking God, we come here to be encouraged or to encourage, to be instructed or to instruct one another.

**Hebrews 10 ²⁴And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. ²⁵Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

***Question:** How did Paul do that with the Ephesians?

1. First, he told them about their spiritual position (Ephesians Chapters 1-3)
2. Second, he told them about their available internal power (Eph 3: 16-20)
3. Third, he told them about the external practice (Ephesians 4-6)

Important : The importance of knowing who we are and what we have will greatly affect what we do.

***Again :** Our beliefs dictate our behaviour

Sample : Hindi ko lang puwedeng sabihin sa inyo basta-basta “kaya niyo yan”, I have to explain it to you why “kaya niyo yan”, and it's because God has already given you all the tools para kayanin niyo and here it is...#1..# 2

For the past few weeks, we have already talked about our position in Christ, now we're going to talk about our power in Christ and how we can ignite that power.

Review :

Last week we talked about:

*Powerful Christian Living is through a constant connection with God. But first, we have to make sure we've got the right connection.

***Now,** we're going to study God's word on the power that's available to us

Illustration : We are amazed with power – Superman. (show slides) But we have a much better power than Superman, we have the power of God in us. Superman relies on his own strength. We rely on God’s strength.

**Ephesians 3:14-21*

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom his whole family^(a) in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Pray

***What is the power that is available within us?**

Inner strength from the Holy Spirit

Infinite love of Christ

Immeasurable fullness of God

***THE INNER STRENGTH FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT**

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Question : Why do we need inner strength?

Answer : Because all of our struggles begin and end spiritually

Sample :

1. Relationships : away ng mag-asawa. Susuko ba ako sa kanya o hindi? Magpapatalo ba ako o hindi? Papatawarin ko ba o hindi? It’s internal.
2. Finances : the trouble is not dahil wala kang pambayad. The trouble is nag-aalala tayo na wala tayong pambayad.

But before anything else,

***How do we access inner strength coming from the Spirit?**

Remember,

We have access to God’s glorious riches because of Jesus Christ

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches ...

Illustration : In PAC before, the owner of the company is also the president and member of the Polo Club, an exclusive club for the richest people in the Philippines. But since, malakas kami doon sa may-ari, anytime we can go swimming. So minsan, may nakakita sa amin doon na talagang member ng club pero kilala naming and asked us? "What are you doing here?". We answered back, "What are YOU doing here?" Malakas loob naming because we have access to the club because of the owner of our company.

Just like our relationship with God, we have access to heavenly riches simply because of Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 3: 12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.*

Question : So how do we access?

¹⁶I pray...

Answer : We just have to ask.

**James 4: 2You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.*

Observe :

**¹⁶I pray...*

It is Paul praying for the Ephesians.

Application :

We can also pray for others for God to strengthen them.

Please pray for me also.

Sample : One of my confidence is that I know that my best friend in the Philippines prays for me every Tuesday at 6 in the morning. His name is Peter A.

But more importantly: I have a much ``bester`` friend than my best friend whom I know prays for me 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 60 minutes an hour, 60 seconds a minute... His name is Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 7 :²⁵Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because **he always lives to intercede for them.*

Tip :

Sa mga babaeng may nambabaeng asawa, after confronting them, don`t nag them anymore. Go to Jesus Christ and ask them to give your husband the power to resist temptation. Or ask others to pray for you...pero wag niyo namang itsi-tsismis yung pinagpre-pray.

Icebreaker : Tatlong pastor, praying for one another`s weaknesses (accountability group) One asks na ipag-pray niya na weakness niya babae. The second pastor, asks na ipag-pray, na weakness niya pera, minsan dumudukot siya sa church fund. Tinanong nila yung third pastor, but the third pastor doesn`t want to say anything...kasi ang weakness niya tsismoso siya.

Now regarding Inner Strength:

***I. THE PROVISION OF THE CHRISTIAN’S STRENGTH**

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Etymology :

riches “ploutos” – abundance

glorious “doxa” - majestic, excellent

1. The provision comes from God

Application : It can never ran out. It means we can get from Him strength anytime.

Illustration : Yates Field. There is a rich oil field in Texas called Yates pool. During the depression, this field was a sheep ranch owned by a man called Yates. Yates was unable to make enough on his ranching operation to pay the principle and interest on the mortgage, so he was in danger of loosing his ranch. With little money for clothes or food, his family had to live on government welfare. Day after day, as he grazed his sheep on that land, he was greatly troubled about how he would pay his bills. Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and told him there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a test well and sure enough, at 1115 feet they struck a huge oil reserve able to produce up to 125,000 barrels of oil a day... and Yates owned it all.

The day he had purchased the land, he had received the oil and mineral rights as well. Yet he’d been living in poverty. The problem was that he didn't know the oil was there or that he owned it.

Inside us, we have our own Pool. Pool of living water...

** John 7:37 the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as^a the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." ³⁹By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.*

***II. THE POWER OF THE CHRISTIAN'S STRENGTH**

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Etymology :

strengthen "krataioo" make you strong

power "dynamis" dunames – **power resting on armies, forces, hosts**

***Illustration :** The Story of Elisha and his servant

2 Kings 6 ⁸ Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place."

⁹ The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." ¹⁰ So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.

¹¹ This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"

¹² "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom."

¹³ "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." ¹⁴ Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.

*¹⁶ **"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."***

¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha

***III. THE PROVIDER OF THE CHRISTIAN'S STRENGTH**

¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Application : We must realize that inner strength doesn't come from us. It comes from the Holy Spirit that is in us.

It prevents us from saying, 'Ang galing ko...but instead...ang galing talaga ni Lord.'

***Hudson Taylor :** when he was complimented on the impact of his mission
“It seemed to me that God looked over the whole world to find a man who was weak enough to do His work, and when He at last found me, He said, ‘He is weak enough—he’ll do.’ All God’s giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on His being with them.”

CONCLUSION

***A POWERFUL CHRISTIAN HAS INNER STRENGTH**

Question : How is strength tested?

Illustration : Weightlifter : Kung gaano kabigat ang weight, nadadala,

Story : Father said to his 9-year old son trying to teach him a lesson. Move that big stone from here to there. Son can’t move it and the father said to use all his strength. Until the son gave up but the father said you haven’t used all your strength. You still didn’t ask me to help you. When it comes to problems, ask God not to give you more strength but ask God for His strength.

Don’t say, “kaya ko ito”, say instead “kaya ni Lord ito.” Always point to the Lord.!

*Remember “hina”

II. THE INFINITE LOVE OF CHRIST

III. THE IMMEASURABLE FULLNESS OF GOD