



**Building Spiritual Strength: The Secrets of Developing a Strong Spirit**  
**Lesson 1: Why You Need a Strong Spirit**

**1. The importance of developing a strong spirit**

**Proverbs 4:20-23**

**Proverbs 4:23 – Amplified Bible**

*Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.*

**Proverbs 18:14**

**Proverbs 18:14 – Amplified Bible**

*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?*

According to this verse, what is going to get you through physical attack and even life-threatening problems?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

A strong spirit will get you through any attacks of the devil.

If this is true then we ought to be interested in \_\_\_\_\_  
 a strong spirit.

**2. Spirit, soul, and body**

Many Christians do not understand that they are three parts: \_\_\_\_\_

You are a spirit. You have a soul. You live in a body.

The tendency is to be conscious of the physical things or the things of the soul.

However, you are a spirit. The spirit is the most important part of who you are.

## 2 Corinthians 4:16

### 2 Corinthians 4:16 (Amplified Bible)

*Therefore we do not become discouraged (utterly spiritless, exhausted, and wearied out through fear). Though our outer man is [progressively] decaying and wasting away, yet our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day after day.*

There is an \_\_\_\_\_ and there is an \_\_\_\_\_

A good illustration is a glove and a hand.

- When the hand is inside the glove it looks like the glove is alive. You can see the glove moving. But it isn't moving on its own.
- The glove is not a hand.
- When you pull the hand out of the glove, the glove is dead.

When your spirit leaves your body, your body is dead.

The Bible calls our body \_\_\_\_\_

It is your "earth suit".

- It is like an astronaut who wears a space suit.
- An astronaut cannot survive in space without his space suit. You cannot survive on earth without your body. When your spirit leaves your body – you leave earth.

What part of your being is more important? The outer man or the inner man?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 Corinthians 4:16

Your physical body is growing older and wearing out.

However, this is \_\_\_\_\_ of the inner man.

You are not in an aging process on the inside like you are on the outside.

In fact, as time goes by, it is God's will that you grow stronger and stronger.

Twenty years from now, you should be stronger than ever on the inside.

Just like your outer man can be strong or weak, the inner man can be strong or weak. It is your choice.

You can work on it every day.

### **2 Corinthians 4:16 (Amplified Bible)**

*. . . our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day after day.*

Many people take care of their \_\_\_\_\_ but do not take care of their \_\_\_\_\_

But the spirit is more important. Why?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Proverbs 4:23**

### **3. Despair is evidence of a weak spirit.**

### **2 Corinthians 1:8**

Did Paul experience some weakness at this point in his life? – Yes

What happened when he became spiritually weak? – \_\_\_\_\_

Definition of DESPAIR:

- To be utterly at a loss
- \_\_\_\_\_
- To be overcome by a sense of defeat

### **2 Corinthians 1:8, 9 – Message Bible**

**2 Corinthians 1:8** *We don't want you in the dark, friends, about how hard it was when all this came down on us in Asia province. It was so bad we didn't think we were going to make it.*

**2 Corinthians 1:9** *We felt like we'd been sent to death row, that it was all over for us . . .*

Despair is a sign of \_\_\_\_\_

It is an indicator that your human spirit is weak.

Strong spirits do not despair.

When you get to the place where you think – “There is no use. Why go on? What’s the point? There is no hope.” – That is revealing a weak spirit.

#### **4. A strong spirit versus a weak spirit**

##### **2 Corinthians 4:8**

What does this verse describe? – \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have to get distressed when you have trouble? – No

Do you have to despair when you are perplexed and don’t understand? – No

You can have trouble come from every side, but you don’t have to get distressed.

Paul said, “Trouble? We got it on every side! But am I distressed? No!”

Was Paul strong? – Yes

He experienced moments of weakness like any of us. But he was a strong man!

##### **Acts 20:24**

Have you ever been perplexed? What is perplexed?

Perplexed is when you have a big question mark over your head.

You are thinking – “What is going on? Why are things this way?”

But you do not have to be perplexed.

Evidence of a weak spirit:

- Despair
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Depression

Evidence of a strong spirit:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- Joy
- Hope

- \_\_\_\_\_

- **Anticipation**

This is a major one. We need to live our lives with \_\_\_\_\_

Do you remember when you were a kid and you got Christmas presents?

- How was it on Christmas Eve when you went to bed? – Especially if your parents made you go to bed early.
- You had anticipation – excitement!
- When you looked under the Christmas tree in the morning you were not surprised.
- You expected presents to be there.

When you are expecting God to change your physical condition or when you are in anticipation for God to change your financial situation – you are happy. You are not discouraged.

When you are “down” and depressed is it evidence that you are not expecting.

If you were really, truly, and genuinely expecting things to get better – that would make you happy!

The joy of the Lord is your strength! (Nehemiah 8:10)

What kind of strength is that talking about? – \_\_\_\_\_

There is no such thing as a spiritually strong person who is depressed.

Depression can be an indication of a weak spirit.

## **5. You need faith.**

No matter how weak you are, you can get strong!

There is no future in being depressed, down, and in self-pity.

God does not look down on someone who is depressed and despairing and say, “Look at that poor guy. I have to do something for him.”

If God was moved when people were in despair, God would be moving all over the world right now.

Despair, crying, and feeling sorry for yourself do not move God to do anything for you

Why doesn't this work for God?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

Unbelief and doubt actually anger the Lord.

What moves God? – \_\_\_\_\_

Negativity is also a sign of a weak spirit.

If you are constantly negative, God will not have anything to do with you.

God requires faith.

He did not say, "Try and believe if you can."

If you want help from Him, \_\_\_\_\_

You must operate in faith. Faith and being positive go hand in hand.

Being negative is a habit that you can break.

Everyone is at a different place in their walk of faith – but you still have to stay positive.

## **6. Locate where you are in your faith.**

You can locate where you are in your faith \_\_\_\_\_

What if you need \$500?

- You say, "Five hundred dollars! Where am I going to get that from?" – That is not faith.
- What if you say – "I believe God will give it to us. It is no problem for Him." – That is faith.

The same is true with healing in your body.

- "Cancer? Oh God! Cancer." – That is not faith.
- "God can fix that! It is no problem for Him." – That is faith.

Everyone is at different levels in their strength of spirit and therefore at different levels of faith.

If you will start exercising your faith and your spirit, you can get to the place where what is now difficult for you to believe is easy for you to believe.

## 7. Faith is like fishing.

Faith is like fishing.

- First you have to believe that there are fish in the water.
- If you did not believe, you would not even bother going. First you have to believe.
- Of course, you don't see the fish. But you have to believe that the fish are out there.
- Then you have to cast the line out, you have to hook one, and you have to reel the fish in.
- Just because you hooked it, does not mean you are going to eat fish for dinner.
- Just because there are fish out there, does not mean you are going to eat fish for dinner.
- You have to hook it, reel it in, and take the fish off of the hook.

The same is true with healing.

- Just because there is healing out there, does not mean you are going to be healed.
- Just because God is a healer, it is His will for you to be healed, and healing is bought and paid for – does not mean that you are going to get healed.
- Just because you hook a healing – does not mean you are going to experience healing. Why? – Because you have to reel it in.

How do you hook it? – \_\_\_\_\_

Now how do you reel it in? – By faith

What is faith? – \_\_\_\_\_

Reeling it in is \_\_\_\_\_

- You believe you receive.
- You believe and speak and keep expecting, expecting, and expecting.
- Then up out of the water it comes.

Have you ever seen a fishing pole for children?

With a child's pole you can only catch small fish and only cast out so far.

You need a bigger pole to catch bigger fish.

The stronger your faith is – the further out you can reach and the bigger fish you can catch.

**8. Do not be discouraged if you have a child's fishing pole right now.**

Just because you cannot haul out the biggest fish in the lake, does not mean you cannot eat fish!

If you have to, you can eat a 6" fish. It does not matter that it is not huge. You are still eating fish.

Keep developing your faith so that one day you can pull out the 3 foot fish.

\_\_\_\_\_, what was formally hard for you to believe is now easier for you to believe.

**9. How is your faith going to get stronger? How is your faith going to develop?**

Strong faith is the product of \_\_\_\_\_

It takes strength to reach out, hook, and reel in what God has for you.