

1 Corinthians - Commentaries by Earl Ensign

Delevan Conference: 1991, Be on Your Guard-Stand Firm 1 Corinthians 16:13,14 (16:13-14)

Address—E. Ensign

First of all, just for a verse just to. Kind of encourage us and to set the set the tone perhaps. My genuine desire is that whatever we have this afternoon might be something that would be an encouragement to us each in Romans, the 15th chapter. And the fourth verse. And we'll read probably verse 4-5 and six. Romans 15 Four for whatsoever things were written aforetime. Were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. And we could translate the comfort encouragement. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In heaven we had a nice time this weekend and haven't we experienced the encouragement of the scriptures as we've as we've been together? And certainly it's been a real encouragement to us all. In these in these perilous, perilous days. Now I'd like to turn over to 1st Corinthians, the 16th chapter. I want to read 2 verses and sort of let this be the springboard for what I have in my heart this afternoon. First Corinthians, the 16th chapter. And verse 13. Watch he stand fast in the faith. Quit you like men. Be strong. Let all your things be done with charity. One translation puts it to be on your guard, stand firm in the face, be men of courage, or be people of courage. Be strong, do everything in love, and with a few variations, most every other translation you'd look at would have words to that effect. Beyond your guard, watch ye stand fast in the faith. Put you like men or be people of courage. Be strong, Let all your things be done with charity, and charity is divine love. And isn't an interesting. That when we think of who this verse was written to, it was written to those Corinthian Saints. And if we think for a moment as to the various things that Paul had to write. To those dear folks, when you think that there was, there was immorality and there was. There was carelessness in their conduct and their practices and a lot of other things that Paul had to write to those Saints. Yes, there was failure and there was failure here with us. But they were still an assembly gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. And as he finishes this communication to them, and we know from reading the farther on into the in the second epistle, we know that that Paul really was on his face in prayer as to how his dear brethren would accept the letter that he wrote. And we know, we know the end of the story. Of course we know that the Saints accepted what he said, and it was such a relief. And to him. But when you think that here, now, this, this verse is written to these, these dear Saints, watch ye stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with divine love. I'd like to turn to just a few verses. We may be turning to quite a few places. Let's look at a few verses and then I want to consider a place from the Old Testament which would really bring out what we read in Romans 15. Because when the Romans 15 was written, probably the only scripture or the Old Testament scriptures turn to Acts, the 20th chapter, when we think of the first thing in our verse. Watchy or beyond your guard? X20. Now I'll read verse 31 and then we'll see what it is he's talking about. Acts 20 verse 31. Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone, night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. We had the matter of grace before us, and I'm so glad, and isn't it nice, that he commends them to God and the Word?

Of His Grace. But what were they to watch out for? Well, verse 29 and 30, I believe, tell us. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. This was written almost 2000 years ago. There were going to be dangers from without, and there were going to be dangers from within. And so Paul tells the Saints in Ephesus here to watch. And the warning is good for us today, isn't it? Now Paul, he could say be followers of me as I am of Christ, and I don't suppose there's any other person outside of the Lord Jesus that could write something like that. We've had the the exhortation before us in our meetings. We had it this morning, didn't we, that we have to have our eyes on the Lord Jesus and not on any on any man or men. So here's something to to watch out for. Our verse said watch beyond your guard. So may the Lord help us that our eyes might be on him. Now turn over to Colossians. We'll read just a few of these Colossians, the 4th chapter. And the second verse continuing prayer and watching the same. With Thanksgiving. And then turn over to 1st Thessalonians, the 5th chapter. 1st Thessalonians 5. And verse 6. Paul writes to these Saints, Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. Sober, I suspect, would be the willingness to take that inward, inward look, perhaps in self judgment, let us watch and be sober. I'd like to consider for a few moments now in connection with this part of our little verse that we're considering. I'd like to have you think with me about part of the life of Nehemiah the. And I'm not going to read it. I'm not going to read it, but let's just think about it for a moment, Nehemiah opens. You know, with Nehemiah hearing news of the fact that the walls in Jerusalem were broken down and things were in pretty bad shape. The Nehemiah's reaction is he starts to pray. He is very concerned. And he starts to pray about the fact that Jerusalem is in such a state. You know the thing that's so nice about Nehemiah? You know, under? The first wave of people that came back his name slips me but he was a descendant of the kings and there were several thousand that came back after the captivity and they came back to rebuild the rebuild the temple and then under under Ezra several thousand more I think about 1800 maybe came back under Ezra and Ezra was a priest and their mission was to re establish the worship. But in Nehemiah's case, here was one man, just one man. And Nehemiah was, can we say he was an ordinary working man, just like most of us here? And in the midst of his duties and his ordinary work, he found time to be concerned and found time to pray about the Lord's things and the Lord's interests. And when Nehemiah came back, there was just Nehemiah. There was a guard that was given to him, but it was Nehemiah's exercise. And so we find when we when we think about. That little account, that one man when he's before the Lord in prayer, what wonderful things that can be wrought when there's one person exercised. So Nehemiah begins to pray. And he confesses. He confesses the sins of his people, and he takes his part with them. And I think that's so important. Sometimes we call that eating the sin offering, don't we? But there isn't any of us that can stand apart and point the finger. In one sense, we're part of the part of the collective testimony, and we all bear our part in whatever failure there is. And So what a nice lesson this is. We see the same thing in Ezra's life and the same thing in Daniels life.

To take their place before the Lord, and to confess the sins of their people, taking their part in it. And when we read in that first chapter, then go on into the second chapter, those two, two months that are mentioned would indicate that that Nehemiah was praying for at least four

months about this whole matter that so was on his heart. And then in the second chapter, Nehemiah is before the king and you know he's sad, and the king notices that he's he's sad. And this was quite a quite a thing. I understand that in the case of those Oriental kings that people were supposed to always be very happy and smiling. And they could be perhaps put out of their job if they weren't, if they didn't conduct themselves in their proper way before the king. So the king notices that Nehemiah is sad, and the king asks him why. What an opening, what an opportunity for Nehemiah as he explains to the king the his concern why it is he said. And he tells the king about what's going on in Jerusalem, and then the king asks him of what he wanted. And so there was another wonderful opening. And Nehemiah evidently had been thinking about this. And he requests letters so that he can go over to Israel and so that he can get all the supplies that he needs in order to rebuild, rebuild the wall. And so the king grants his request and gives him a, gives him a leave of absence so he can go over and to take care of the business. Well then as the chapter proceeds, you remember. Nehemiah didn't just write into Jerusalem and call the elders together and tell him what he was going to do, but it was at night time and he took a trip around that wall by himself so he could see first hand what the condition of that wall was. And so in the second chapter, toward the end, it tells us about that. And then after he finishes that and then he calls his brethren together and explains to them. What's been on his heart and his exercises? And I think it's so nice that Nehemiah doesn't play his exercise on his brethren. But before the conversation is done, if you read in the end of the second chapter, they say his brethren say let us rise up and build. I think that's nice. So that there was that, that oneness of purpose and oneness of heart and what was to be done. Well, then there's a lot of pages devoted to the rebuilding of the wall, and we might ask ourselves. What is the Lord's purpose in telling us about the rebuilding of a wall in an ancient city of over 1000 years ago? Well, you know, a wall was to was to keep out the enemy. And so there's a lot of detail and description given to us about how the people, different ones with their families. There was some more energetic than others, but they proceed with the work of rebuilding the wall. You know, I understand that that one of the things that that characterized the Saints when they were first gathered to the Lord's name back in the 1800s was the matter of of the the separation, separation of life and separation and heart. That those looking on saw that there was a real difference. And you know, I don't have to look any farther than here to realize that that there's been, there's been failure in that in my life. And perhaps you might feel that in your own life that maybe we're too much like those round about us that we haven't maintained that now this is not isolation, but it's a separation, separation of heart to the Lord that we might go on in a way that's pleasing to him. The interesting thing about the rebuilding of that wall? Is the fact that there was opposition. There was there were several distinct waves and several distinct types of opposition that took place to the rebuilding of that wall. There was there was ridicule, there were threats of violence, there was deception, and you can read them in those in those chapters. But the Lord gave Nehemiah the the discernment in order to see through these things and the work. The work continued until finally the wall, the wall was built.

I'd like to have you turn with me now, just for a moment, to Nehemiah, the 4th chapter as we think about this matter of of watching. Because you know the devil is going to try to work in my life, and yours too. He's going to try to get us to be careless. And so in Nehemiah, the 4th chapter, let's read a few verses. Let's read starting at verse 7. But it came to pass that when San Violet and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Astrodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made-up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it. Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto God and sent a watch against them. Day and night because of them. So isn't that isn't that interesting that here they detected the problem and? Their answer was to pray to God with this threat. And Judah said, the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall. And our adversaries said they shall not know neither see that we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease. And it came to pass that when the Jews which dwelt by them, came, they said unto us 10 times. From all places. When she shall return unto us, they will be upon you. I wonder if this isn't the the enemy's persistence to wear us down. 10 times they were they were besieged by these these threats, and these this opposition to the building of the wall. And maybe you can feel it in your life. Maybe I can feel it in my life that there is this, this attempt on the part of the devil to wear down, wear down the Saints. Therefore said I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places I sent even the people after their families with their swords, their Spears, and their bows. And I looked and rose up and said to the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people. Be not afraid of them, remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, and your sons, and your daughters, your wives and your houses. Anna came to pass when our enemies heard that it was known unto us. And God had brought their counsel to none, that we returned, all of us to the wall and everyone to his work. And it came to pass from that time forth that the half of my servants wrought in the work. And the other half of them held both the Spears, the Shields and the bows, and the virgins and the rulers were behind all the House of Judah. They which build it on the wall, and they which bear the burdens with those that laid it, or those that loaded, I suppose, or carried the burdens. Everyone with his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon for the builders. Everyone had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. So here is the here is the result of their being on guard, and they're being on watch against the enemies of this effort to rebuild the wall. And so the devil is going to try to wear us down. He's going to try to get us to let down the bars, as it were. But all that the Lord might help us, that we too might set that watch and be careful. Look to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to guide our guide our feet. In the right way as we think of this first little admonition in our verse. Watchy or beyond your guard. Be vigilant. Be alert. The devil is going to try to If you can't get us in one place, he's going to try to get us in another place. The second part of our verse tells us to stand fast or stand firm in the faith. Turn with me, if you will, to Ephesians, the 6th chapter. Now some of these were going to sort of skim over read the verses and you might want to just to think about them a little more at your leisure. Ephesians, the 6th chapter. And verse 10. We're thinking now of standing firm in the faith.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. I understand that power here is, like our word, dynamite, and that interesting 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. Those Wilds, you know, those are the those are the deceptions. Those are the lies that Satan whispers in our ears. Those things that you know, it's I've often thought this you know the devil. The devil knows my weaknesses, and he knows yours, and he's going to try to exploit them. But the Lord knows my weaknesses too, and he's going to strengthen me in them, and he's going to strengthen you too, in your weaknesses. And so even though there's the deceptions, why we can look to the Lord that we can stand against these Wiles or these deceptions, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood. But against principalities, Against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places? And I've heard, I've heard some put it this way and read things that go something like this, that we're we're arrayed, the Christian down here is arrayed before these terrible powers of wickedness, the very headquarters of of Wickedness 11 writer puts it. And these these powers, they're they're sharp, they're intelligent. They know exactly what they're doing. They know exactly what it is that the Lord stands for, and they know what what we stand for. If we're really standing for the Lord, and so the battle and the. And the conflict is against this this type of thing it was mentioned. During the meeting sometime about what took place in Russia in the last the last

two weeks. When it looked like there was going to be an overthrow of the present government, and perhaps the doors that were recently opened, that the scriptures going in might have been closed, but we saw what happened that that it only lasted for a couple of days and evidently that door is still open. You know, we can't help but think that the powers of darkness have been foiled. You know, they've come up against the God of this universe. God Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ and the Lord is going, is decreeing that that door stays open. Those people are going to hear His word and there's nothing going to prevail against that. Now, the door may close and we don't know. A couple of months down the road, we don't know. But isn't it wonderful to see that, that God really can move those scenes? We've heard that expression, that God's behind the scenes and he's moving them. But boy, when he moves, when he when he moves, He moves quickly sometimes, too, doesn't he? It's amazing that some of the things that have taken place, and they've taken place so fast. But I think of the verse two greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world. Yes, there's all these, all these terrible powers of wickedness, but the Lord has given us the equipment, can I say, in order to stand. And so in verse 13. He says, Take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand an evil day. And having done all to stand, I've understood that it's something like two nations are at war. And there's not battles every day, but war has been declared and we never know when there's going to be an attack or a conflict break out. And so we have to be ready. And so there is the evil day in which the war has been declared and we have to be ready. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith he shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance. And supplication for All Saints. And for me, says Paul. Paul says, pray for me. Isn't that wonderful that the great apostle? We see that he felt his need and he asked the Saints to pray for him. So here are these parts of the armor, and as I say, we're not going to spend a lot of time. But here's the in the verse 14 the loins girt about with truth, and I wonder if the Lord isn't telling us there that he'd have. He'd have our our lives and our affections governed by His word. Hold the place. And turn over to 1st Thessalonians 2 just for a verse.

In I Thessalonians 2, Paul describes his concerns and exercises as he went into the Thessalonian folks. And he says there in chapter 2. Verse 13. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing. Because when you receive the word of God, which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men. But as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually. Works also in you that believe. So he saw how they received it, but they saw that that word worked in them. And so the Lord wants that word to work in me, and He wants it to work to work in you in order to have our our lives control by what we read in the word of God. Not just to read it with the idea of getting so many interesting religious facts, but that it might make a change in my life and a change in your life. And so there's then the breastplate to guard those affections, and the feet shod so that. Our the way we walk through might be commendable to the to the gospel. Then there's this shield of faith to ward off these fiery darts of the devil. Because the devil is going to try his best to discourage us and to make us doubt. And so we need that, that shield, his faith. And then there's the helmet of salvation. My head needs to be guarded because of the the thoughts. And Satan's going to try to work in my mind, and we'll speak a little more about that. He's going to try to work through my mind. My thoughts need to be guarded. Then there's the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. And prayer. And I've heard it suggested that perhaps one of the times that we need this armor the most is when we kneel down to pray. Has anyone here like me that that when you kneel down? Or you try to gather your thoughts to prayer. Many times you find all kinds of distractions. Your mind wanders and you just can't focus in many times. Does it ever happen? Yes. I'm sure you know you. It has to be the same with you. We're all made of the same stuff, aren't we? And so one of the times that we need this armor the most is when we pray, when we want to pray to the Lord, so that all these things that we've talked about can be in right relationship to the Lord as we pray. The first verse that we read in chapter 6 here was be strong in the Lord. We have no strength in ourselves. None of us be strong in the Lord. When we think of standing in the faith, you remember how it was with Daniel. And in that first chapter of Daniel, you remember how he and his friends. Of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were their captivity and they've been taken captive. And there they were, these youngsters in a strange land, strange customs, strange language, and the whole. The whole effort was to get these men to conform, to conform to the customs of Babylon. And I suspect that the Babylon was probably a lot worse maybe than some of the situations that we faced. Maybe not. But it's a pretty good, pretty good comparison. And so the time came when they were put to the test. And so it speaks later on in the chapter one about the food they were required to eat, a certain kind of food that was set before them. And I wonder if this isn't the the pressure sometimes when we think of food, let's think of it in a spiritual sense about the the things that we take in, the things we read, the things we hear, whatever it might be, they were pressured to take in a certain kind of food. And those men, Daniel and his friends, had the sense. Because of their training and their beliefs that this was really something that they should stand against. And so they did. They did stand against it. Daniel, he used a very reasonable approach with his captor. He he requested that they might not defile themselves. And the Lord honored that request. And I tell you, dear friends, dear Saints, that that if that's read to your desire, I've seen it work. That if your desire is if you get into a certain situation and your desire is that you might not defile yourself. Stand back and watch the Lord work. If you tell him that, Lord, I don't want to defile myself in a particular situation and he'll work, I really believe in all my soul, he'll answer that prayer. And so Daniel and his friends were allowed to be tested for a 10 day period with the food that they wanted. Very simple fare and they were found fatter, you know, and they look better than the others. And so how to eat their simple fare and they came out at the head of the class.

At the head of the class, they passed the exams with flying colors because they had it on their heart to please the Lord. They stood against the pressure to put them into the mold. You know, It says over in Romans 12 be not conformed. To this world, and you know, the interesting thing is the word for conform there. Is a word that indicates a confirmation to something that is fleeting and doesn't last at all. When it tells us in the previous chapter in chapter 8 in Romans that we might be conformed to the image of his son, that's a confirmation that's being conformed to something that's lasting and eternal. Isn't that interesting? So the Lord would have us to stand against these things. Well, there's other examples we could turn to, but I want to move on here. The next thing in our little verse says it says quick, You like men, or be men, or be people of courage? I like to think for a moment turn over to First Samuel, the story of David and Goliath. You know, we've all read this story, and the children have heard it in the Sunday School, and mothers and dads have have read the story to the children. But you know, I wonder if we if we realize. What tremendous confidence in the Lord. That David had in order to go against. This giant, And maybe it seems sometimes we're going against the giants. And you know the story how it is that David was just a young man and and of normal height. And here was the giant who was at least nine feet tall, armed to the teeth. But David David volunteered to go against the giant. Now we do see in David a picture of the Lord Jesus, but I'd like to think of this story now as. David and one who had confidence in the Lord. And so David and the Giant come face to face. Let's read now on First Samuel 17. And verse 41. And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David. The man that bare the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him, for he was but a youth, and Ruddy, and of affair, countenance. And the Philistines said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves. And the

Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistines said to David. Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield. But I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, who now has defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee. And I will give the carcasses of the host, the Philistines this day under the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord says not with sword and spear, For the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands. Isn't that wonderful? David had confidence in the Lord. We know the end of the story how that it took only the one stone. And the aim was true, and the one stone dispatched the giant. But all with confidence that David could say all the earth is going to know that there's a God in Israel today. I think two of the third chapter of Daniel, we won't turn to it, but that's the the account of how Shadrach and Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to that image that the king set up. It was a very simple thing, you know, The music sounded, and everybody in the Kingdom just bow down. That's all there was to it. But here were three men standing upright in the midst of everybody else that was following the knee to this, this heathen, heathen image. And you remember the story. The decree was that anyone that wouldn't bow down to the King's image supposed to be cast into the burning, fiery furnace.

And so the king questioned Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And they were very firm but respectful. They said words to the effect that, O king, our God is able to deliver us, but even if he doesn't choose.

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100 and 56156. Praise the Lord again. Again the Spirit strikes the chord, Nor touches He our hearts, and vain we praise we praise the Lord. Could somebody start there? I'd like that to turn with me tonight to 1st Corinthians 16. And before I read these the verses that that I have in my heart. Just to think for a moment what it is that. That we've had, if you'll think about the contents of this this letter, the file wrote to these dear ones, that's the corn they were, they were recommended, we might say, by Paul, for several things that were that were problems there. They were allowing some unjust people and they were not very respectful of the remembrance of the Lord. There were several other things that he had to speak to these ones about. There are many things that were said in the chapter 1213 and 14 about about the the regulation in the Assembly as we as we come together and then a special word of encouragement in the 15th chapter. And as he comes to the end of the 16th chapter, there's some final instructions and some greetings. And then he and he closes the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with you, my love, be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. And so this this book inspired by God and given to the Apostle Paul, it's it's for Christians of all time if you just look on the 1st chapter for a moment. And notice the. The second verse. If the official was dressed, addressed under the Church of God. Which is at current to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Proud Saints with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. And so while there was some special instruction to the the Saints back there in the 1st century at Corinth, why it's still meant for you and me today.

So then in the last chapter where I had to turn the 16th chapter. I'd like to read verse 13 and 14. Watching stand fast in the face. Quit you like men. Be strong. Let all your things done. Let all your things be done with charity. Now that charity there is divine love. Another translation puts it beyond your guard. Stand firm in the faith, even of courage. Be strong. Do everything in love. There were many, many adversaries. Notice a father in the 16th chapter. File says in verse 9. For a great door and effectually is open unto me. And there are many adversaries. We all here we sit tonight in the 20th century, and it's still true, isn't it? There are many, many adversaries. There are many forces at work to to prevent our going on for the Lord. But the Lord is greater than all the adversaries. Watchy, stand fast in the faith, Put you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done to cherish what I'd like to do Now, in the time that remains, I'd like to expand on There's four things in the 13th verse, and I believe there are some things that can be a real encouragement to us and real help for us. So as we think of the first one, watch you or be on your guard or be vigilant. Alert the Lord have us to know what's going on around about us. Not that we need to know every detail. I get immersed in the did, immersed in the evil, but the Lord would have us to be to be watchful and to be to be diligent. I already already read the verse what Paul said in that ninth verse, that there are many adversaries. There are many that are that are against us. Turn over to first Peter, the 5th chapter. We'll be turning to several places, and I'll try to allow plenty of time to turn into different places. First Peter final. And verse 8. Here, Peter writes to those he's writing too. He says he's sober. Be vigilant, he. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour. Now we'll read the ninth verse. We're going to look at that a little bit later. Who resists steadfast for the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world? Verse 8. Be sober. That's the In one sense, sober is the Be willing for me to be willing for you to be willing to take the inward load. The serious, the serious look at what really, really is happening roundabouts. And there's that word. Be vigilant. Be watchable, be vigilant. And so then we're told that who our adversary is your adversary is the devil. As a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may develop, there's the adversary. There is the one who's against this, who is going to be against the things of the Lord and against Christianity. Everywhere that he can, He will heal, but he won't heal until he has to. And so the Lord have us to be very much in prayer. Concerning the fact that there is an adversary, there is one. There is one against us. And so beyond your guard, beyond your guard, he says. In First Timothy Three, we won't turn to this, but there is a word to those that would have the oversight from the assemblies, the bishops if you will, or their overseers, the neighbor to be vigilant, they were to be watchful. Then turn over to the 20th chapter of Acts. X20. In this chapter there is a departing parting message that Paul gives to the the the elders, the overseers and necklaces.

Sort of his final, final word to them. I don't know that you ever saw him again. Verse 28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers. To feed the Church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood. For I know this that after my departing shall grievous woes. Enter it among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own self shall men arise. Speaking perverse things to Broadway disciples after them. Therefore watch. Watch says be vigilant. And so here he tells us clearly. And we look over the history of the church, and we can see that indeed there were those that came in from the outside to try to spoil things, and there were those on the inside that did the deadly work too. And so the word to us ringing down through the centuries. Is lost. Verse 31 Continuing. And remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone. Night and day is tears. And then he commenced them to God and

to the word of His grace. And that's what we have today. Here once we have the same thing that the dear ones in the 1st century had when the apostles died on We have God, and we have the word in the toothbrush. Well, turn to. First Thessalonians and the 5th chapter. 1st Thessalonians 5. And verse 6. Now this is right in the middle of. Of several verses that speak about different kinds of sleep 30 verse 6. Paul says, therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. So there it is again. Let us watch and be sober, saying two things that we write about in first Peter 5. There's three different kinds of sleep mentioned here. Notice. Verse six says let us not sleep and do others, so let us want to be sober. Verse 7 for they that sleep sleep in the night and they that be drunk and are drunken in the night. And then? Let's see. Verse 10. Our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us that whether we wait or asleep, we should live together with Him. Well you have you have physical sleep. You have moral sleep and you have the sleep of death. And I'll mention I'll mention here the Lord doesn't want you and me to be sleepy Christians. He wants us to to be very much awake and to know what's to know what's going on around the bars. And so he invites us to to want to be sober. Well, then I was I was trying to think of an example we might have. One in the scripture. Maybe you can think of many yourself, but it seems to me that in the Nehemiah we have an interesting example. So let's turn to Nehemiah. Over there, the Old Testament. Just a few verses. Now the book of Nehemiah. We're going to look at the 4th chapter, by the way, the Nehemiah. The subject in the early part of the book. That it dwelt on is the. Is the rebuilding of that wall that Jerusalem? And when you think of a wall, you think of something that that separates, wow, that wall of separation. And you remember the story how it was that the Nehemiah was really exercising about the state of affairs in Jerusalem. You know he was a tough player for the king over there and the Avalon and the Lord opened up the way. So that's your man in the in response to his prayers and his exercise for him to go over and to be a help and encourage for his brethren. And there's one chapter of devoted to the building of the wall and it names names of people that that help and their concerns are exercise. Every step of the way, the rebuilding of that wall that is opposition. Now why would there be opposition? We're building a wall. Why would the devil oppose? If we take this and apply it to ourselves, why would the devil oppose you and me in the sense putting up a wall of of separation? Well, he knows that that if we can be careless on that by he, he's able to come in with his terrible suggestions of evil and the people from going on with the Lord. And so Nehemiah was one who was alerted. Now notice in verse seven of chapter 4.

It came to pass that when Sam Ballot and Tobiah. And the Arabians and Ammonites and the Astroditers heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being were made-up, and that the breaches began to be stopped. Then were they very raw, and conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it. Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night. Because of them there's the word watch again. And Judah said, the strength of the bearers of virginity came, and there was much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall. And our adversary said they shall not know. Neither see till we come in the midst among them and slay them and cause the work deceased. So you see, here are some coming in from the outside that we would look and read carefully. We find that there were problems on the inside also. So here are the enemies they're trying to commit from the outside in a very secretive way. Verse 12. And it came to pass that when the Jews which got by them came, they said unto us 10 times. From all places which when shall you return unto us, they will be upon you. Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall. And on the higher places I even sent the people after their families with their swords, and their Spears, and their bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people. Be not afraid of them. Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to not that we returned all of us to the wall, everyone to his work, And it came to pass from that time For that behalf of my servants brought in the work, and the other half of them held both the Spears and the Shields and the bows. And the Herburgians and the rulers were behind all the House of Judah, and they which they would build it on the wall, and they would bear burdens with those that laid it, were loaded, and carried it every one of them. With his hands around the world and with the other hand held a weapon for the builders. Everyone had to serve girded by his side and so building and and he that sounded the trumpet was by name. Now I'm just a few words you can see that that here was here was the thread of enemy coming in by stealth but we can see the Nehemiah because of his his habit of prayer and he had very much discernment he was he was alert to what was going on. And he realized what their plan was, and he was able to spark the enemy by rallying his president that they would watch and they would come together on the wall, places where they were, where they were needed. And I just think that's so instructive and so helpful for us. And, you know, if you haven't read the book of Nehemiah recently, I would encourage you to go through it and see here a man who who started in that wonderful freshness of the Lord, and when he ended his course, there was still that freshness. And we see that that all during his course. He had a real concern for his brethren, for the for the people of God. Well, back in. Don't turn to him. Back in First Corinthians 16, the next item was stand fast or stand firm in the face. So let's turn back now to first Peter 5. We've mentioned the part of the verse there. First, Peter 5. And verse 9, speaking about the adversary the devil. First Peter 59 who resists steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. And if we turn to James, we find aversive and say resist the government and he will plead he will flee from you. So here's here's the devil and the character of the roaring lion and works in order to to resist. Well, how can we resist? Well we're told the equipment that we have in Ephesians 6. So let's turn over there. Think about standing firm in the face. Ephesians 6. Verse 11.

Put on the whole armor of God. Be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil. And so here's something that is depicted to us as the armor. We'll read these next verses shortly so that we are able we are able to stand against the wicked 1A. Notice that says here now the wild over first Peter it was the devil and his character as a roaring one and now here it is, the lyles and the deceptions. You know Satan. We'll try to, we'll try to declass, if you will, to set us up to deceive us and we need everything that we have available to us in order to stand against this sort of thing. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, with the margin says spiritual wickedness in heavenly places or in the heavenlies. We gather from what the Lord is telling us here that between where we are and where Now it is in the Lord Jesus that there is some kind of a round in between. Where these powers of darkness are challenging and doing everything in their power to stand against Christianity, to stand against us as Christians, to stand against the spread of the gospel. And if only if only we could really realize what this is all about. You know, whatever these principalities and these powers are, these rulers of gardens, they are highly intelligent, as we say in today's language. They're sharp, they're they are, and they're wicked, and they're opposed to God every step of the way, and to the Lord. If we just read through the Gospels, we'd see how every step of the way there was opposition against the Lord Jesus, and several times we see Satan come right out in the open and tempt the Lord. And trying to get him off the path of obedience to God's father in the wicked one will try that with you and me too. And the only way that we can stand against such such intelligent and powerful evil beings is by having the armor that God tells us about. Verse 13 says, Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand an evil day, and having done all to stand. I remember some of them explaining that verse. Similar to the way it was in the last war, when the United States and Japan

were in war with each other. And that was a very strange type of warfare. There were there were days and weeks that there was no, no benefit or no confrontation at all. But we had to be ready because we never knew where there would be another strike, you see, and that's the way it is. And I believe that's an explanation of this verse, that you may be able to withstand an evil day. And having done all to stand, there may be times when we're not under a particular attack from the adversary, but we have to be ready because we don't know when he's going to start. Stand therefore, having your lines beared about with truth, that would be. My life and those things that the government is the very inmost parts of my being governed by the word of God. Having a breastplate of righteousness in the. Breastplate being local, part of the body, and it might, it might say that the that the affections might be directed in the right in the right way for the Lord and your feet chop with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that that my rock and my footsteps might be sent. That would commend the gospel so that Satan wouldn't be able to to have anything against me. If I were trying to speak to someone that could be there would be that that quality of life above all taking the shield of faith. Wherewith he shall be able to quench all the fiery guards. Of the wicked. And it seems that one of the one of the ways that the devil tries to get in and penetrate that shield of faith is with discouragement those darts of discouraging to get us to to disbelieve the goodness that God has in his heart for you and me. And we need the shield of faith for that. Take the helmet of salvation. The helmet guards the head and the head is the up there. It's it's the brain and it controls all all of my movements and your movements and so. We need that that protection, the helmet of salvation, and then the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and here is the word of God.

Really. And I think in connection with with, you know, for us, sometimes we think of using the sword on others, but no, we need the word of God as protection, as protection for for ourselves and then finally praying, always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Watching thereunto allow perseverance and supplication from all sinners. And there is the the provision, you might say, the armor that that God has given us. You know, the military may have been reading this. Well, he might expect that verse 18 to say And then fighting always the note for the Christian we have all the parts of the armor described. And then it summed up praying, praying always. And so that is yours and my weapon the most powerful weapon against the forces that are that are arrayed against us. And I hope that I hope that you don't think I'm overly emphasizing something that that that shouldn't be emphasized. But I really believe that if we can get it firmly fixed in our hearts and our souls. But there is there is this, this adversary character against us in the form of the devil, and all of his legions by it might give new impetus to our to our prayers, and the things that the Lord tells us here, that we might stand firm in the faith as Paul exhorts us over there in the Corinthians. There is 2 verses in Philippians. Let's take a look over there in the first chapter. First of all Philippians 1. Verse 27. Only let your conversation or manner of life, We might say, let your manner of life be as it becomes the gospel of Christ, That whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel. Stand fast of 1 Spirit that over the 4th chapter. And the first verse. Therefore my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for my joy and my crown souls stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. So there is a a real heartfelt fleet that followed his to these dear ones that that felt there was some problems there was with the Vainglory and conflict and all that, but he just pleads with him, He would stand stand fast in the world. Now it looks like an example. Turn over to Second Samuel 23. Second Samuel 23. I think as we look at these examples. The Bible is full of wonderful examples so that we might be encouraged that these were real people, people just like you and me, that lived and walked and breathed down here in this world. The world was maybe a little bit different in some ways, but. These people had a desire to stand for the Lord. It's on Second Samuel 23. Verse 11 about this man Shammah. He was one of the mighty men. The Philistines with the enemy and the Philistines. With the enemy in the land. And so this seems to maybe depict. You know, the lounge of the world coming in and amongst us, whatever whatever it might suggest to us that they're the enemy and they were very much against the Israelites, in verse 11 Says. After him was Shammah, the son of Nethaneel, the hero. And the Philistines are gathered together into a truth where it was a peaceful ground, part of language, that the people fled from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground and defended it, and slew the Philistines. And the Lord brought a great victory. The Lord brought a great victory. Now this might not seem a very big thing, but in one sense you might say he was defending. Defending, where there was some of the food for God's people. We think of the word of God is our is our food. In Jude, the writer suggests that there should be that contending for the faith that's delivered to the same. And so here is a man who stood his ground and it took a lot of courage for him to do that. The odds were quite heavy against him. But Shammah stood his ground as he defended his place, approved for God's, for God's people. And it says the Lord won great victory.

Think of Daniel in the first chapter of Daniel. Here he was, a young man. He might not. He might have been just a late teenager. He'd been uprooted from his his country, his his parents, And there he was in the land of Babylon, surrounded by all their terrible customs and the heat of worship and everything that there was. And there was this pressure, terrible pressure on Daniel to confirm the way things were evaporated. And Daniel he he requested. He very wisely requested they were listening in his calculator as he used wisdom and how he requested that he might not be filling himself. It says he was going to be required to eat a lot of his food that had been offered up to the heathen idols. And Daniel felt before the Lord that he shouldn't do it. And so he pleaded that they be given that he be given some very. Coarse, plain food and, he said true. 10 days. Give us a chance. And so the angels, Daniel, God, listen to that prayer and they're given this this chance to see whether the school would be nursing enough for them and. They were allowed them to go on and to eat this plain chair without having to defile themselves, Daniel and his friends. And when the examination time came by, it tells us that Daniel and his friend for 10 times wiser than anyone else in the realm of when I came into the things that the Babylonians tested them in. And so there was one, you see, who stood by his faith, stood by the courage of his convictions in a terrible, difficult situation. And I suspect that that that was probably. Probably a lot more difficult than maybe situations that a lot of us are in. And so he stood fast. And then think of Daniel on the 6th chapter, where he was a man of prayer. There was accustomed to pray to God three times a day, so the windows open towards Jerusalem. And. The other ruler, see, Daniel was only the second only to the king. And there was some other, some other men who were called presidents. And you remember, they were jealous of Daniel because of his position. They conspired to get the king to write a law that said it was unlawful for anyone to work with anybody or create anyone except the king for 30 days. And so the doctor came to sign this. And Daniel tells us plainly, new what the law was. And even though he knew what the penalty was, the penalty. Be cast into the dead of lion. And even though Daniel knew what the penalty was, he prayed just like he always did for his windows over towards Jerusalem. And we would read back from chronicles when Solomon prayed that prayer at the dedication of the temple that that was that the Lord would answer the prayer of his people from the land of their captivity. And so even though there was a stiff penalty but Daniel was caught framing God, he did it anyway. And so he stood firm for the faith. And the Lord indicated that dear man, because when he was putting that down of lines, the Lord of those lines no longer told. He was come up. He came up harmless. Well, that's Daniel Six. We're all familiar with the story. So here are some people that stood firm, stood firm for the Lord. Well then, in the 1st Corinthians 16, the third, the third thing in that verse was it says quickly like men will be men of courage and. It's presumed you see that, that men act in a courageous way. And you know, I suspect we don't always do it, but the courage was associated with the way men, men generally acted. But these people are curious. Maybe we can say we can say that.

Well. I was thinking of some examples we might have here. So let's turn back to Second Samuel 23 again. And we look at the ninth verse this time. And here's Eliezer and. 23 Dinosaur Second Samuel, the son of Dodo. He's another one of the mighty men. Says one of the three mighty men with David. When they defied the Philistines that were gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away, he arose and smoked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand played to the sword. And the Lord brought a great victory that day. The people returned after him only to spoil. I've enjoyed associating that little example. His hand, you know, he hung fast. His hand just felt fast to his sword. And you think of how the scripture speaks about the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And God's word is like A2 edged sword, His hand held chance. And are we holding fast to God's word in the revelation of the two? Very short risk 2020 it says that which you have hold fast so I come hold fast till they come and so shameless or any easier he held thanks to this sword. And you want to grade 50? I took a lot of courage. There's one man again standing against all these facetimes that were coming upon him. So he certainly behaved himself like a Atlanta courage. Think of David and Goliath. Turn to it First Samuel 17. Here's a nine foot tall giant arm to the teeth with another man to carry his the shield, I guess. And here's David. Just a young man. A strip club. And they meet together, you might say, for the showdown this day, because the the. The challenge was that if the Israelites man won, the Philistines would be servants to them, but as the Philistines made one, then the Israelites would be servants to them. And so here was a battle that seemed like it was way out of proportion between these two men. And after an exchange between Goliath and and David. Notice and verse. Horrifying. Then said David to the Philistine. That comes to me with a sword and with a spear with a shield. Will I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, who now has to be fired? This day when the Lord deliver thee into my hand. And I will smite thee, and take thy head someday. And I will give the carcass of the host of the Philistines this day under the fowls of the air, and of the wild beasts of the earth. So all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saves not with sorrow and spirit, for the battle is the Lord, and he will give you into our hands. I love that and I think there's a just a wonderful example for us, not only of courage but one had confidence in the Lord. As I said the if anyone up on the hill could be looking down the the giant and Gable there, it might say why the battles over before it starts. It's it's nonsense. Turn with me if you will. I'd like to make a little gospel application here. During the First Corinthians chapter one. Verse 18. Now I'd like to read these, keeping in mind what we just said about David and Goliath and the. Strange match up there between those two. For the preaching of the cross. Used to them to perish foolishness. Whatever else we are saying to power. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the rise. This is First Corinthians 119. For it is written I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the rise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that and the wisdom of God? The world by wisdom knew not God. They please God by the foolishness of preaching. Now I believe we might say, of the preaching. It's the message. It's in view the foolishness of the message the world looks on the message of the Lord Jesus dying on the cross as foolishness. You see, just like someone might look on. The battle between David and Goliath before the battle is over. As foolishness. But he says it please God, for the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. We preach Christ crucified under the Jews is stumbling block, and the Greeks of the Gentiles foolishness. But then to them which are called don't Jews and Gentiles Christ, The power of God and the wisdom of God, because of the foolishness of God, is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

And so just a little perversion that maybe there's someone here tonight that you're not saved yet. Maybe you think the Falcon, something that happened 2000 years ago possibly affect me today. Well. It does according to the truth of God's word that God sent his Son into this world, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he went to that cross of Calvary, a terrible death of torture. And we read in the scripture that in a way that we can't explain that the Lord Jesus Christ or our sins in his own body and cross on the tree. And that's what the world considers foolishness. Once we believe it, why we realize that it's the power of God. It's the power of God. Regardless of what's the the man of the world might say, that's the way anyone is going to get to heaven. And they're all going to get there by the same way, by believing that the Lord Jesus Christ. And getting back to our example here, there was a, as I say, a tremendous example of of Curry, John Davids Park. But really David had confidence in the Lord. He had he had known in the sense test of the Lord and experienced his faithfulness with the lion, the bear. As we would read that he knew that God was going to be faithful when it came to fighting this this close by. Another example again Daniel, remember when the third chapter? When the king made the image, he built this power image, whatever it was. And the Word was you hear the music, bow down and worship, worship the image. And there were amongst the people over there, these Jewish Jewish men, and it tells us in the account of Daniel three about three of them, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. And they did not bow down for this image. Again, they have the courage to stand for the world. They were men of courage. They they felt that the Lord could deliver us. But when they were asked, they said, even if the Lord won't deliver us, nevertheless you're not going to bow down to the image. And the penalty there was to be thrown into the fiery furnace. And you remember the story? The furnace was heated up. The king was furious. The furnace was heated up. Seven times hotter than had ever been heated before. And. They would take each man or they cast him, it says. Cast into that fiery furnace. Even the men that that did the casting were killed because of the terror of terrible heat. And the King looked into that furnace. And he saw a four men walking in the midst of the fiery furnace. And he said, well, that forest was like the Son of God. And so here were these men that that were men of courage. They stood for the Lord even if the Lord would deliver them. They were willing to take the penalty rather than bow down to something else except God. And the Lord Jesus was with him in the trial. It is that wonderful even for you and me, that we may have to go through some kind of difficulty or trial for the Lord. I know some people today in our own assembly that maybe there are some here too, that you're having some difficult immediate work and your stand for the Lord. But you know the Lord is promised to stand by you in the child. I'll never leave it or forsake, he said. And what a wonderful promise that is. So the Lord is one that we can have full confidence in. He can be relied upon. Well then, the last the last item in that one verse was the strong. Be strengthened. So let's look at a few things as we think about that. Let's turn back again to Ephesians 6, where we were. Versus before the armor of God is brought in. 10 Ephesians 610 After all the things that he's brought before the people. There's the exhortation, not the walk, is the Gentiles walk that we shouldn't be walking in darkness, we should walk in the light. And then all the wonderful instructions to be cousins and wives and the children and the workers, the masters. Verse 10, he says Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his word in both those words. Power and might come from the Greek word that we get our word dynamite from. And so God's power and God's might is God's sentiment.

Just like the gospel is the power of God, it's God's dangling. Strong in the Lord. We're never told to be strong in ourselves because we'll see some verses in a moment where we realize that we don't have any strength but be strong in the Lord. File exhorted that Timothy. We won't turn to the second Timothy. He says be strong and of grace. That's in Christ Jesus. Now let's turn over to 1St John. That little epistle away back there just before Revelation. First John in the second chapter. Right after. Second Peter and First General. We kind of alluded to this last night for the Reading meeting. But in Risk 14, the first John 2. In the middle of the verse. He says. I've written it to you young men. Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you. That he had overcome a wicked one. And so here is a strength that's I believe derived

because of the the word of God. These lines, these young men can make good to Minnesota. And so here's a a nice word to the young men in our audience tonight. Are you regularly reading God's word as to what you're about to be strong in the sense of this, of this, this verse here? You want to be an overcomer or do you want to be one that gets overcome? I'm sure down in our hearts, Well, we are going to be overcomers. Well, we need to have 1000 words before it's going to regular basis. But then he goes and he gives us these three verses here. Love, not the world either, the things that are in the world. And remember, that's the that's the world system of things. It's not the creative world that God gave us to enjoy, but it's this, the system of things that's designed giving our hearts away from the Lord. If any man love the world system, you might say the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes of the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. The temptation you see if you link these with the temptations to Eve in the Garden. And to the Lord Jesus tempted by the devil, it's the temptation to to indulge ourselves just to do whatever we want, or to draw attention to ourselves. Those would be attention to the the temptations. You see, we're 17 in the world, or the world system passes away in the lust thereof. What he to do with the will of God Knights forever. So these were strong because of the word. Now let's turn back to Ephesians, the third chapter this time. Ephesians 3. I want to read several verses to get the one I want your read starting at verse 14. Ephesians 3 and 14 For this cause I bow my knees under the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man that Christly dwell in your hearts by faith. That he, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all things what is the breadth and the length and the depth of height, and in all the love of Christ, which passes knowledge that he might be filled with all the fullness of God. Well, it's at 16 verse that I wanted to kind of get out here that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might, but his spirit and the inner man. And so there's there's things we gather from this. There's things that need to take place in that that what should I say? That an inner man, the thing that's really mean, that thing is really you, the new nature. However we want to describe it to be strengthened And then if we strengthen on the inside, well then I believe. Things are going to flow forth from that and there's several places you can look them up where we get the importance. Of what goes on, what goes on on the inside. Because, you know, what goes on on the inside is sooner or later going to show up on the outside. And that's the verse of Proverbs. And as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. I've often said that, you know, we can tell as we talk with one another.

You can tell pretty quick after talking with me what I've been thinking about when I've been occupied with, and I can perhaps tell the same thing about you. So it's important what's going on on the inside. So that the things on the outside would be great also. To be strengthened and that sort of the force when he says be strong. The 1st Corinthians 16. To be to be strengthened. Now let's turn over to 2nd Corinthians, the 12th chapter. Here's one where the apostle Paul speaks about something that happened to himself. At one point in his in his life, he was. Caught up probably in spirit, we're not sure. But he is caught up and he was shown things in the glory and he comes back and he says that they're not. Words tell what he saw in this, this vision that he had in the glory. And so he says about that in Seven Corinthians 12. They're set up. And lest I should be exalted, I don't believe that we look at some better translations, that the above measure is proper. But let's leave an office for the moment, lest I should be exalted. Through the abundance of the revelations that was given to me as thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan suffered me, lest I should be exalted. So whatever, whatever took place, the Lord gave some kind of a bodily affliction, or whatever it was. So with this experience that he had, wouldn't be something that that he'd get all puffed up about. We're seeing for this thing I besought the Lord thrice three times, and it might be part from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for me. My strength has been perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore will a rather glory of our eternities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I think pleasure and infirmities, and reproaches and necessities and persecutions in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. And he was strong, because his his confidence was in the Lord. Paul knew that there was no no good in him. No good in that question. He knew that he was weak, but it was then that he was being strong. And if you think of the examples that we had particularly. David, I think you know David, He came in the name of the Lord. David didn't come in his own strength. He wouldn't even put on Saul's army. He had just those 5 stones and it took one, you know, to kill the giant. And so these deer ones that want for God as we read about in the Bible, different places. They were ones that had their their confidence and their their strength and their hope. The Lord. So it was with power. And that's that's the secret for you and me too. Now I'd like to refer to an example. We have a few moments left here that I want to think just a little bit about the other verse, but turn to Second Chronicles and read a little bit about King Asia. I'll just try to summarize the story. King Asian in chapter 14 of Second Chronicles. I believe that here again, I believe that the Lord has given us the things that happened to these men to be encouragement sports, because we see, we see the good things they did and we see their their mistakes too. And so on the 14th chapter, very briefly. In verse 9, notice it says there came out against them. That's against the. Julia. The Ethiopians with a host, it says 1000 thousand, that's an army of 1,000,000 and so here was this army of a million men coming out against Judah. Versailles and Esau cried unto the Lord his God. And said, Lord, it is nothing you need to help, whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rest of thee, And in my name we go against this multitude. Oh Lord, thou and our God, let not man prevail against thee. And so in just a few words it says So the Lord smoke ejection.

It's like the Lord Smoked Egyptians and the house people. They won the battle. The Lord won the battle, if you will, the Lord smoking. But you can see ASA, he realized his strength. And praise the Lord without any other tricks or schemes or anything like that by the Lord. Smoke those. In the next chapter. Issa encourages his people. I beg, I beg your pardon, he said. Azariah, son of Oded. He says they're listening And the Lords people. And the word is in verse six in the next chapter, verse 7. Either for be strong, therefore let them have their hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded. And then the follows of ASA, they began to tear down the idols and burn them up and put them away. And there was an encouragement from others round about. And as a result of this thing came over to east and side some of those that Israel that have been carrying away. And so there was a period as they they put their trust and realized that the Lord was their strength and then finally in the 16th chapter. Another army comes up against them. This time it's from Syria. And King Asia evidently forgot everything that the Lord did. And So what he does in verse two is he brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the House of the Lord. In the King's house and sent to Ben Haydad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying there is a leaf between me and thee. That's a terrible thing to begin with. It appears this ungodly king and ASA had brought him out so he could fight for him. And he said. You have a life sent these silver and gold Go break thy needle. Bash the king of Israel that he may be part from me. And so the Syrians went to the drove off Israel and everything seemed to work perfect. And he said took all this money and all the treasures and he got the world to work for him. And the scene that worked beautifully as far as Asin was concerned. But here's what the Lord says about it. Verse 7. Because Law has relied on the king of Syria and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host. The King of Syria escaped out of that end. We're not The Ethiopians, but a huge host with very many Chariots and horsemen. That's the one we just read about to see. Yet because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thy hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on the behalf of them. His heart is perfect

toward him. Here it is passed out on foolishly. Therefore from henceforth thou shalt no Lords. And Isa was curious if God's prophet Seer, he puts him in prison and he presses the people. And it's just a real sad end to this dear king who started off so brightly. And realized at the beginning. Strength. But they could do anything of the Lord. And so, as I say, he seemed to forget everything that he learned. Well, what have we had so far? We've had stand firm in the faith we've had. The watch quickly like men be strong and several examples for us to encourage you and then it ends. Let everything be done in love and I see our time is up and I would just encourage you to read 1St Corinthians 13. Divine love by anything that we would do just doesn't have God's stamp of approval. It's possible to stand firm for the Lord, but maybe in the wrong, in the wrong way. Let's see. And so there's many, many examples where we would be encouraged that the things that we take up and the way we would stand firm and all these different things that might be done in the right spirit for the spirit of love, as it says in Ephesians 4:15, speaking the truth. In love, and there's many, many examples, as I say, but I believe the 1St Corinthians 13. You can make a note of that. Would be a real good example for us to think about in that case. Well, I trusted that we've been encouraged by. I just think it's remarkable how much the Lord can say. And it's a little worse, like that little verse of his Corinthians on the 16th. That's great.

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