

Strong is How We Are Defined as God's Children

Too often, God's people identify themselves as "the weak" when God's declares that we are "the strong." To succeed in life, we must see ourselves as God sees us. The best way to do that is to embrace the names and titles God has given us in His Word.

God refers to His people as "the strong" only once in Scripture, hidden away in Isaiah 53: a prophetic passage about the crucifixion of the Son of God. Even though it was yet a future event, strangely, the prophet spoke of the death of the Messiah as if it had already happened. This could be labeled "the past-prophetic tense" (a unique method God often uses). Consider the following three verses:

"Surely he has borne our grief and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray; each of us has turned to his own way, but the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:4-6, MEV).

Then, in the final verse of that chapter, the Father foretold the glorious outcome:

"Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with THE STRONG, because He poured out His soul to death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, thus he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is. 53:12).

Mysteriously, God refers to those who will yet benefit from Jesus' death on the cross as "the strong." What a miraculous transformation! Prior to that pivotal event on Calvary, all

who are unsaved in this world could easily be described as “the weak”—overpowered and enslaved—by the curse of Adam, the curse of the law, the dominion of sin, the control of satanic powers, the fallen nature and the shadow of death.

Helpless and hopeless, vulnerable and defenseless, defeat was inevitable for all of us. But then “the strong Lord” came down to our level, assuming our low estate that we might be lifted up to His level: seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ps. 89:8, KJV; see Ephesians 2:6). And because we are enthroned with Him, our enemies have also been made our footstool (see Acts 2:34-35). Yes, we are now “the strong.”

What Does “Spoil” Mean?

Our foundation scripture declares that the Father will “divide the spoil with the strong,” but what does that mean?

The normal definition of “spoil” is plunder or booty taken from an enemy defeated in battle. The New Testament joyously announces that at the cross, Jesus “spoiled principalities and powers” and “made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15 KJV, NKJV). In other words, through His death, the Son of God stripped “principalities and powers” of their most valued possessions. Most likely, this is a reference to high-ranking evil spirits, assigned to regions, nations and cities who shared legal authority over various spheres of influence in the earth. In the fall, Adam relinquished the authority over this world to Satan (who Jesus later referred to as “the prince of this world”—John 12:31, KJV). But our Redeemer has restored dominion to those who receive forgiveness through His blood. Thus, He vanquished the enemy (He “spoiled” him), taking back what Adam forfeited.

Yes, we who have been born again have been restored to the dominion Adam lost. We are blessed with dominion over sin, dominion over satanic powers, dominion over the flesh, dominion over the curse of Adam, dominion over the curse of

the law, dominion over death, dominion over the grave and dominion over hell. Through our identification with the crucified One, we are cleansed. Through our identification with the risen One, we are raised to a position of spiritual supremacy and victory.

No wonder God refers to New Covenant sons and daughters of God as “the strong”—for He has made us stronger than all our adversaries. Hebrews 11:34 explains that “out of weakness,” we have been “made strong.” This impartation has happened many ways but the following three are highlighted especially in Scripture. God’s people are:

- Strong in faith (Rom. 4:20)
- Strong in grace (2 Tim. 2:1)
- Strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Eph. 6:10)

Of course, these sources of strength may remain relatively untapped unless we implement Joel’s exhortation—“Let the weak say, ‘I AM STRONG’”—for our inheritance is activated by our confession (Joel 3:10, NKJV). So, lift your voice, child of God. Be bold! The power of death and life are in your tongue. Even when you feel weak, rise up in the Spirit and dare to say:

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

To explore this wonderful subject more deeply, listen to a past episode of Mike Shreve’s weekly podcast called, “Discover Your Spiritual Identity” on our calling to be “The Strong.”
{eoa}

*A product of the Jesus Movement Era, **Mike Shreve** has traveled evangelistically in the United States and overseas since 1970 with an emphasis on healing and the prophetic. His primary biblical teaching for over 35 years has been the spiritual*

identity of believers. This powerful insight is featured on his weekly podcast on , and his TV program—both titled Discover Your Spiritual Identity. It is also the theme of his Charisma House book titled WHO AM I? Dynamic Declarations of Who You Are in Christ. The first three categories on his YouTube website expand on this amazing revelation:

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.