

## Strength

*“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus ...” 2 Timothy 2:1*

It's not always easy to find strength in this life. Sometimes we are in need of the strength to endure long periods of intense difficulty, such as wasting diseases, physical infirmities, or sorrow and grief. There are times where the strength may fail us to do even the most menial of tasks, like a load of dishes or grocery shopping at the end of a long day. Strength must be perpetually fed, otherwise it might run out. We can never have too much strength because we will always be in need of strength.

Strength, though, is an interesting thing. It's not quite what it seems. It seems to reside in the muscles. Yet a person could have all the muscles in the world – forearms the width of coffee cans and calves like footballs – but when they're running a high fever, they have just as much difficulty getting out of bed as anyone else. Why is this? It's not for a lack of muscle but a lack of strength. In fact, those who have experienced extreme illness know that it's not because of a lack of muscle that a sick person has a hard time getting out of bed. Because strength is more than muscles. Strength may use muscles as tools to accomplish deeds, but strength doesn't originate in muscles.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he advises Timothy to use grace as a way to be strengthened. This is good advice. The grace that is in Christ Jesus is an incredible and endless supply of strength. It is nourishment for our souls and spirits. It is light enough to give us that extra boost to get through a tough day, yet deep enough to comfort a sorrowful and grieving spirit.

When we are in need of strength, let us first look to the grace that is in Christ Jesus. There are many other things in this world that offer us strength. Most of them, however, only focus on strengthening our muscles, so to speak. Most things focus on curing the symptom and not the source. We are not in need of the strength of muscles to persevere through the trials of this life, no matter how big or small. We are in need of the strength of the soul. And only the grace that is in Christ offers this kind of strength.

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