

## Rely on God's Resources (Part 2): *Strength in His Name*

Isaiah 41:10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

*Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will also help you, I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand.'*

Philippians 4:13 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.*

### **Introduction**

Recap: Last Sunday, I started a new sermon series called "Rely on God's Resources," which God has made available to us for our life journey. The first resource available to us is the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts. He resides 24/7 in every believer who confesses that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior. That is, those who do not know Christ have not yet received this indwelling gift (1 John 4:15, 1 Corinthians 3:16). The same Spirit guides us every day in God's truth and love. He also helps us to bear fruit of the Holy Spirit such as *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23).

### **Content**

#### **God's Strength in Uncertain Times**

Today, I am going to talk about the second divine resource that we can tap into: God's strength.

Nowadays, we are living in a constant state of fear and anxiety. Everything today seems fragile, volatile, uncertain, and unpredictable. Think, for a moment, about our society, our government, our national security and economy, let alone our health and families. I don't have to go further.

We are inundated with heart-wrenching, sad, upsetting, or fear-raising news every single day. People in the media, in competition with each other, seem determined to bring us the shocking news by any means necessary. They do not seem to care about the impact of the news on the audience. We cannot completely shut down the news, either. I wish all of us were free from fears and anxieties. I wish we would be exempt from all life's uncertainties.

But we are not. In fact, I, your pastor, am no different from you. Almost every day, I too go through life's uncertainties, challenges, struggles, worries, or fears. I know what it's like to carry those same fears. Here's an example.

About thirty years ago, I was in Michigan serving a small congregation. At that time, my daughter was about 3 or 4 years old. Just like today, I would pray for her every night. One night, I was on my knees praying for God's protection on my daughter from any harm and evil forces. All of a sudden, a fear arose in my heart about her future. The fear was about who was going to be there for her when both me and my wife were gone (she had no siblings and no relatives in the States. They all lived in South Korea). The fear completely gripped me and began to rob me of peace.

This feeling of panic disturbed me greatly, so I kept asking God the question: *Lord, who's going to be there for my daughter in times of need, when neither of us (parents) are around?* I remember how God answered my question that night. In fact, I loved the way He did it. He answered my question with a set of three questions.

The first question was this: *'Do you remember when you first came to America?'* "Yes, Lord," I answered. In fact, I still vividly remember that summer of 1985, August 2, to be exact. Both my wife and I landed at the O'Hare International Airport in Chicago with several pieces of luggage and \$5,000 in cash to pay for tuition.

The second question from the Lord was: *'Who took care of you since then?'* "It was You, Lord," I replied. Indeed, He provided everything my family needed more sufficiently than we ever imagined.

The third question was the clincher: *'Don't you believe, then, I will still be around long after you are both gone and be there for your daughter as I always have been for you?'* That did it! My fear immediately melted away! That night, the Lord assured me, once and for all, that He is with me and my family forever and would take care of us! Amen. The presence of the Lord is the antidote to our fears.

### **God's Strength Available to His Children**

My story is just one example of how God provides strength in our weakness. Your circumstances may be different, but the source of strength remains the same. Let's examine how God makes His strength available to all believers. That leads us to our first verse: Isaiah 41:10.

Here is the context. Through the mouth of Isaiah the Prophet, the LORD spoke to His people Israel. Obviously, Israel in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., was a fragile nation facing uncertain future, caught in between the mighty powerhouses such as Assyria and Egypt. Fear and anxiety filled the hearts of the people. So, God spoke to them, *"Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will also help you, I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand"* (Isaiah 41:10).

Let's take a closer look at this powerful verse. First, God says, **“do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God;”** The English translation of ‘do not fear’ doesn’t do us justice here: it barely shows the meaning of the original Hebrew. In Hebrew, this phrase is in the imperative form, better translated as ‘*Stop fearing*’—implying that fear is already present, and God is commanding it to cease. God saw that His people were already engulfed in fear and worry about their future.

So, He says to them, “Stop fearing now!” In the same way, today, God sees what His children are going through. He knows that you and I are already overwhelmed with constant worry and fear. And, to us, He says this morning, “Stop fearing, my children! You don’t need to be afraid anymore!” Do you hear Him?

God is telling us why we should stop living in fear. Because *He is with us*. Because *He is our God—our Immanuel*, God with us. Do you see the significance of that? God’s presence dispels fear and anxiety. From Genesis to Revelation, the LORD consistently reassures His people this promise: *I am with you*. Just look at these powerful examples: “When you pass through the waters, *I will be with you*” (Isaiah 43:2). “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for *You are with me*” (Psalm 23:4). I once heard of a pastor who, to remind himself daily of God’s presence, chose to walk through life with one hand closed—as if holding Jesus’ hand. May we do the same.

Despite these truths, however, we often forget that the LORD is with us. How do I know? Because we worry constantly—about the future. This morning, the LORD speaks once again, “Stop fearing, for *I am with you*. Stop being afraid, for *I am your God!*” Not just anyone’s god, but your God. My God.

### Three promises of God

God doesn’t just assure us of His presence—He reinforces that assurance with powerful promises. In Isaiah 41:10, God gives us three clear and comforting commitments: *I will strengthen you, I will also help you, I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand.*’

I especially love how King James Version puts it: “*I will strengthen thee; **yea**, I will help thee; **yea**, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*” Here, the LORD repeats three times His commitment. This kind of triple repetition is rare, even by biblical standards. It’s God’s way of **driving home a truth we often forget**: He is our strength. He is our help. He is the One who holds us up. Three times He declares it—so we’ll never doubt it. In times of trouble, don’t look to your own strength. Remember who your God is: the Almighty, your ever-present help.

One more thing: God says He will uphold us *with His righteous right hand*. In Hebrew, *the right hand* symbolizes ‘strength and might.’ For instance, the name *Benjamin* means ‘the son of the right hand—the son of strength and power.’ So, when God says He will uphold us with His righteous right hand, He is declaring that He will hold us with His mighty, unailing

strength—and He will never let us go. Let it be God's hand—not fear—that takes hold of you. This brings us to our next verse Philippians 4:13. *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

Here, the apostle Paul clearly affirms the true source of his strength: **not his own ability, but Christ who empowers him.**

Many of us know and love this verse—*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* It's a favorite for good reason. It sounds bold, inspiring, and full of hope. But if we focus only on the phrase *"I can do all things,"* we risk missing the heart of Paul's message.

Paul is not promoting *self-confidence*—he's proclaiming **Christ-confidence**. He's not saying he can do everything because of personal grit or willpower. He's declaring that **without Christ, he can do nothing**—but **with Christ**, he can do everything God calls him to do.

Let me repeat: *True strength begins and ends with Christ.* When we rely on ourselves instead of Christ, we place our trust in a foundation that will ultimately fail. To believe we can do all things on our own is not just an illusion—it's a dangerous mistake.

For example, G.K. Chesterton, the renowned British thinker and writer of the 20th century, offered a striking reflection on self-importance in his book *Orthodoxy*. He wrote:

*"Shall I tell you where the men are who believe most in themselves? For I can tell you. I know of men who believe in themselves more colossally than Napoleon or Caesar. I know where flames the fixed star of certainty and success. I can guide you to the thrones of the Supermen. The men who really believe in themselves are all in lunatic asylums"* (*Orthodoxy*, New York: Doubleday, 1959, p. 14).

Chesterton's point is sharp and sobering: the danger of being full of oneself isn't just arrogance—it borders on madness.

### **Paul, David, and the Source of Strength**

Of course, when Paul said, "I can do all things," he wasn't 'full of himself' or delusional, was he? On the contrary, he was deeply grounded and sound-minded. He wasn't boasting in himself; he was pointing to the One who empowers him. His message is clear: **Don't rely on your own wisdom or strength.** Instead, trust in God's wisdom and power—and you will never be led astray.

His words reflect a profound spiritual truth about accomplishing anything in life: true strength doesn't come from yourself—it comes from God. This echoes the timeless wisdom of Proverbs 3: *"<sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart. And **do not lean on your own***

**understanding.** <sup>6</sup> *In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight*" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Paul later reinforced this truth when he said, "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). Why? Because in our weakness, we stop depending on ourselves and begin to rely fully on God. And God's strength is more than enough to accomplish all things.

King David, who faced Goliath, shared the same mindset as Apostle Paul. When we picture the courageous young shepherd standing before a towering ten-foot warrior, it's easy to focus on his bravery—but there's no sign of self-reliance or human confidence in David's stance. What we see instead is **complete confidence in the Lord of hosts**, the One who empowered him to stand against such overwhelming odds.

Listen to David's own words to Goliath: "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you **in the name of the Lord of hosts**, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted" (1 Samuel 17:45).

David didn't trust in his own strength. He trusted in God—and that made all the difference.

This leads us to a vital question: **How can we live with the divine strength** of Paul and the unwavering confidence of David? **How can we learn to fully trust in God** in our own lives?

The answer is found in **Zechariah 10:12**: "And I will **strengthen** them in the Lord, And **in His name they will walk**," declares the Lord (Zachariah 10:12). The secret is this: walk in His name.

### **What It Means to Walk in His Name**

To walk in His name means we're not just going through the motions—we're living each day with Jesus at the center of our thoughts and choices. It's about staying in step with His heart. And when we do, His strength becomes our strength.

When we align our lives with God's character, will, and purposes, **He strengthens us**. Scripture gives us clear guidance on how we walk in the name of the Lord.

1. **Trust in the name of the Lord and rely on our God** (Isaiah 50:10). When we do, *He will guide our paths and keep us in perfect peace* (Isaiah 26:3).
2. **Walk in integrity**, and you will walk securely (Proverbs 10:9).
3. **Honor the Lord with your wealth**, and your barns will be filled to overflowing (Proverbs 3:9).
4. **Keep His commandments**, and *He will love you and remain faithful to His promises* (Deuteronomy 7:9).

5. **Let your good deeds glorify your Father in heaven**, so that others may see Him in you (Matthew 5:16).
6. **Do all things in a way that pleases the Lord**, remembering: *"The joy of the Lord is your strength"* (Nehemiah 8:10, NKJV).

If you live out these truths, the Lord will strengthen you—and you will walk with the same boldness and trust that David did. You'll also be able to declare, just as Paul did: *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

## Conclusion

Let me close my sermon with the words of Christ Himself—words that reveal how even Christ relied fully on the Father's power and will. In John 5:19, Jesus says, <sup>19</sup> *"Truly, truly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself**, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same way."* And again, in John 5:30, He affirms: *"**I can do nothing on My own.**"*

We know that Jesus performed many miracles—healing the sick, casting out demons, calming storms, and even raising the dead. But we must remember: **He did all of this by doing what pleased His Father**. When He relied completely on the Father's will and power, the Father confirmed Jesus' ministry by the signs that followed. If Jesus needed the Father and His strength, how much more do we?

So, don't lean on your own wisdom or strength. **Rely on Christ—on His wisdom, His power, and His presence**. Seek His will in all you do, and you will experience His power working in you and through you. And like Christ, you'll discover that your strength is not your own—it flows from the One who never fails, never leaves, and never runs dry.

Amen.

## Study Questions

1. What does it mean to be upheld by God's "righteous right hand," and how can this truth **change** the way you **respond** to fear or anxiety in your life?
2. Philippians 4:13 is often quoted, but how does understanding its context **reshape** your view of where true strength comes from?
3. Of the six ways to walk in God's name (trust, integrity, honor, obedience, good deeds, and living to please Him), which one do you sense God **inviting you to grow** in this week—and how will you respond?