

TOPIC: STANDING STRONG IN DIFFICULT TIMES

(II Timothy 2: 1-4, 8-10;) (II Timothy 3:10-11)
(Ephesians 6:11, 13)

STRONG: Able to resist strain, wear, temptations, etc.; of great effectiveness; powerful in influence, authority, resources, etc., Firm and unfaltering; fervent.

DIFFICULT: Not easy; hard to deal with; hard to do; hard to satisfy; hard to understand or resolve.

The noun form of the word difficult is difficulty, which alludes to trouble. In Job 14:1, the word of God stated, that a man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.

When difficult times come, some people are a little reluctant as to whether they can stand under such pressure and burdens of life. They began instead to feel a lack of confidence in themselves and in God's word during these troubled times.

Paul in his letter to the church at Corinth, in (II Cor. 4: 8-9), said that we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed but not in despair; persecuted by not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. In other words, Paul felt confident that no matter what he went through, victory was imminent.

Paul is the author of the First and Second Epistle of Timothy. They are referred to as the Pastoral Epistles. They were written for the encouragement of Timothy who Paul called his son in the Lord. These Epistles are among the last things that Paul wrote reflecting the concerns which burdened him nearing the end of his ministry. These Epistles are ostensibly addressed to Timothy who was functioning in a pastoral role, but however these Epistles were read before congregations.

These letters show a clear sign that Paul intended for them to be used widely. There is much of general interest in these letters. These letters have profited the church for many years, and they continue to profit the church until Jesus returns.

In I Timothy 2:1, Paul instructs Timothy first of all to be strong in Christ Jesus. The following scriptures show us that it is only in him, that we can be made strong. In our weakness, we are made strong in the Lord. (Hebrews 11:34). Let the weak say, I am strong. (Joel 3:10)

His second instruction was to endure hardness as a soldier of Jesus Christ. You cannot endure hardness if you are not strong in Christ. Paul because he was strong in the Lord, I endured all things for the elect's sake.

How can we be strong in the Lord? In Ephesians Chapter 6; 11 Paul says, Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The methods, plans, schemes and devices of the devil.

He continues in vs. 13 of Chapter 6 by saying, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. This verse indicates that in the evil days there are things that will come against us and we must have the power to resist them or stand against them or it will destroy us. If not, at the end of the day our souls could be lost.

He continues to instruct and encourage Timothy to be strong, to stand, to withstand, to endure, to be faithful, to shun profane and vain babblings because in Chapter 3, he warns him that in the last days that perilous times shall come. He was referring to hard times, grievous times, trying times, fierce times and difficult times. We are in those perilous times right now.

In Acts Chapter 27, Paul was headed to Rome, but a great storm arose on the sea. He was headed to go to stand before Caesar. Those who were on the ship began to experience a difficult time. They were shipwrecked because of a strong wind. It was like a typhoon whirlwind or a hurricane blowing in all directions. In vs. 31 Paul says to them, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Because they all adhered to his instruction, they all made it safely to shore.

Likewise, in order for us to be strong in difficult times, we must stand firm in God’s power and through his word. When we obey line upon line and precept upon precept, we will survive. We must recognize that although many are the afflictions of the righteous, God will deliver us from them all. There is a promise of ultimate victory to those who allow Christ to strengthen them.