

Reflection and Discussion

Sermon Series **Be Strong!**
Sermon Title Be Strong!
Bible Texts Isaiah 35 / Romans 8:19-22 / Hebrew 12:12
Date December 31, 2023

CONNECT – Getting to know one another

- Question 1: When faced with a difficult or fearful situation, how do you usually find the courage to move forward and deal with it?
- Question 2: Describe an experience when you had a deadline to meet, but though fatigued, you somehow were able to complete the job or task. What helped you successfully finish it?

EQUIP – Understanding God's word

The Bible encourages us to take courage and be strong.

As we reflect on the three passages for today, here are three questions for us to consider:

1. What adversity were they facing that required courage?
 2. What basis did God give them for being strong?
 3. What does being strong look like (and what does it not look like) when we face adversity?
- Question 3: During Paul's lifetime, Nero was emperor and known for persecuting Christians. In Romans 8:18-22, how did Paul understand the distress of that generation?
- Question 4: Have Paul's words in Romans 8:18-22 ever helped you when you faced a crisis? How?
- Question 5: In the NIV, Isaiah 35 is given the title *Joy of the Redeemed*. Is this joy past, present, future—or maybe all three?
- Question 6: In Isaiah 35:3-4, God tells us to "Be strong, do not fear." What do you think was causing fear to Israel at that time?
- Question 7: What deliverance did God promise them in Isaiah 35:3-4? When will God come with deliverance? (Isaiah 61:1-2, 63:1-4)
- Question 8: Why must we never take vengeance ourselves? (Romans 12:17-21)
- Question 9: Hebrews 12:12 also encourages us to be strong. What was the reason these believers needed to be strong? (Hebrews 12:4-7, 11)
- Question 10: What would that strength look like in a mature believer (Hebrews 12:12-15)?
- Question 11: What's the difference between being strong and being stubborn, angry, or disobedient?
- Question 12: What do you learn about gaining strength for life's difficulties from Psalm 18:32, 29:11, and 46:1?

Question 13: Nahum 1:7 is an important verse. Why is this God given strength important when facing life's troubles?

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Question 14: In John 16:33, Jesus warns his disciples of future troubles. What encouragement do you find for your own troubles in Jesus' words?

Question 15: What power gives us victory to overcome the world according to 1 John 5:4-5?

DISCIPLESHIP – Becoming and doing

Question 16: How will these truths from God's word help you to respond next time you are feeling overwhelmed and fearful?

Question 17: What are some ways we can "be strong"? (E.g., Ephesians 6:10-18)

Question 18: Can sharing our fears with others be an opening to share what God has done for us in those circumstances and to share the Gospel?

Question 19: What other Bible passages have taught you about being strong in the face of life's trials?