

JANUARY 2022

"TRUTH"

**A SURE WORD
FOR TODAY**



Truth is like a mountain,
It cannot be moved and it never changes

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UPDATE

We want to start the new year by giving thanks to our Lord for placing His blessing on this newsletter. We have always believed that without His blessing it is impossible to experience any success, but with His blessing all things are possible. Certainly the ability to create a website and maintain it is miraculous. Usually, college courses would be necessary if one was to attempt to do this, but we are self-taught.

Perhaps the biggest miracle is the number of people who read our newsletter each month. 2021 was the first year where we never had less than 2000 views per month. We do not self-promote so we know this is another indication that God's blessing rests upon this ministry.

The third miracle is God's abundant supply. We never ask for financial help, cannot give tax credit, and yet all the needs are met. Thank you for just doing what God puts on your hearts.

FEATURE ARTICLE: "Stay Strong In The Lord"

WARNING: You are entering the "TRUTH ZONE". You may not like what you read. At times it may make you feel uncomfortable. That is not my goal. My goal is to speak truth that will provide spiritual guidance for you and your family in a time of great spiritual darkness.

You can be sure that what you read here will be TRUTH!

Looking back on 2020 & 2021 I think it is safe to say that none of us could have imagined the things we would experience. I am sure many would agree that those two years may have been the most difficult we have ever lived through. And, at the risk of being called a pessimist, I must tell you, I am not too optimistic about 2022 either. We all know that our world is broken so I shall not waste valuable space giving illustrations to convince you of this fact. Rather, I want to help you cope with it.

So many of God's people have expressed to me that they are weary and worn out. I understand because at times I too have felt this way, but with this has come a great determination to overcome and to give God's people something I believe will help them stay strong in the coming year no matter what they may face.

I want to preface what I am going to say by telling you that I don't think this is optional. Finding a path to victory in times like these is not like taking a multiple choice quiz with the right answer being, "All of the above". And as with everything connected to our spiritual life, God's Word is where we must go if we are going to find guidance to live strong and finish strong. So, let's dive into it.

If I were only allowed to give you one verse in the coming year it would be Ephesians 6:10.

Ephesians 6:10 King James Version

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the **power** of his might.

Five times the apostle Paul used the word, "Finally" as he concluded His pastoral letters to the churches he ministered to. It almost feels like he saved the most important for last so people wouldn't forget it. Now more than ever maintaining our spiritual strength must be our "Finally".

We must, "Stay strong in the Lord."

This is the admonition I want to give you, but I also want to try and show you what, "Strong in the Lord" looks like and how we can make it a reality in our lives. To do this I want to focus on the word, "**power**". Most of us are familiar with the Greek word "dunamis". (Acts 1:8) This Greek word speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit which is given to us for the working of miracles. What many don't know is that there is another Greek word which is also translated as "**power**". It is the Greek word, "Kratos". This word does not refer to something God pours out upon us, but rather to what exists within Himself.

Strongs: **Kratos**... "vigor ("great") (literally or figuratively):--dominion, might, power, and strength."

I think it is safe to say that this pretty much describes God. Agreed? **So, which Greek word do you think Paul uses in Ephesians 6:10 "Dunamis" or "Kratos"? If you answered "Kratos" you answered correctly.** Ephesians 6:10 speaks of strength and power that exists within God Himself but is available to all who will develop an intimate relationship with Him. The Amplified version confirms this when it adds a parenthetical: **[draw your strength from Him and be empowered through your union with Him].**

There it is! This is the secret to living strong in a world gone mad. Those who would live strong and stay strong will have to learn to live close to Him and draw strength and power from Him through that union. There is no other way; the closer we live to Him, the stronger we will be.

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"Stay Strong In The Lord"

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Now let's try to figure out how we can make this happen in our lives. I want to warn you, this will probably make you feel uncomfortable so I ask you not to judge it by how it makes you feel, but instead, judge it by whether or not it is true.

Let's start by asking a few questions.

First Question: What exactly are you doing to strengthen your intimate relationship with the Lord? If you answer, "I attend church regularly" then you have revealed why you are spiritually weak. Attending church regularly is good but it can never replace intimate time alone with our creator.

Second Question: Do you spend many hours on your computer or cell phone but none worshiping and praising the One who possesses all strength, honor, power, and glory? Foolishly spending your precious time will drain your spiritual batteries, but spending intimate time with God will charge your spiritual batteries. If you feel it is necessary to ferret out every shred of information about the Covid-19 virus, the Covid vaccine, or any other nefarious evil plot that you consider a threat, be my guest, but I promise you, none of it will result in you being strengthened spiritually and staying strong in the Lord.

Third Question: Do you have a quiet intimate time with your Lord each day? I fully realize that we all feel like there just aren't enough hours in our day to get everything done. I understand that, but do you understand that excuses never result in change? The person who is badly out of shape can give a thousand reasons why they aren't doing what it takes to stay in shape, but even ten thousand reasons will not change anything. So, if you want to experience what Paul was talking about in Ephesians 6:10 stop making excuses and take control of your life.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

I want everyone to know that I am just as human as anyone else. The demands placed on

me may not be the same as yours, but if I want to stay strong in the Lord, I must take control of my time. Back in October, I was feeling discouraged and depressed. It had been a difficult summer and many days were spent removing burned trees from our property in the mountains. As I prayed about what was happening to me the Lord began to open my eyes to the things I have shared in this article. As a result, I purposed to once again set aside a quiet time each day when I could meditate on the goodness of my God and praise Him not only for His faithfulness but also for who He is. In the days that followed I experienced an amazing spiritual renewal.

If you fix your gaze upon a broken world, you will grow weaker and weaker each day. But, if you turn your eyes to heaven and spend time each day in worship and praise I promise, you will see an amazing change take place because in Him resides might, power, and strength (Kratos) and that strength becomes yours as you draw near to Him. Without this, our strength fails and we are left weak and powerless, but in Him, we find both strength and power.

FINALLY

One of the things I love about God's Word is how it confirms itself over and over. Such is the case with this truth. In Isaiah 40:31 we read:

31 They that **wait** upon the Lord shall renew their strength....

I was so excited when I learned that, "wait" actually means, **"to bind together (perhaps by twisting)"**. I want you to picture a huge rope like they use to secure large ships to a dock and picture yourself like a tiny thread. God is like those ropes and He is saying, "Come, and I will twist you into myself so my strength becomes your strength." What an amazing thought!

STAY STRONG IN THE LORD!

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"Stay Strong In The Lord"

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I am weak, but in Christ I am made strong!

AND THAT MY FRIENDS
IS THE TRUTH!



A MINUTE WITH MISS LINDA



"Wash My Heart"

Can you believe 2021 is over and we stand looking ahead to 2022? One of the things I have observed is that each year the cartoonists depict the old year as a worn-out old man and the new year

as a young boy filled with hope and potential. How does this epic change keep happening year after year?

As I was thinking about this it occurred to me that a great new years resolution would be to end 2022 stronger and more victorious than when we started it. While this is a nice thought, for some this is impossible because they are their own worst enemy. They see everyone else as their biggest problem and blame them for the ongoing chaos in their lives.

What do you say to a person like this and where can they go to break the endless cycle of heartache and defeat? I believe taking a look at Kind David is a good place to start. Even though he was a king, his life was a mess. He was an adulterer, a murderer, and a broken man. He finally came to a place of repentance and cried out for

God's help. His prayer of repentance reveals that he understood exactly what his problem was.

Psalms 51:10 Amplified Bible

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right and steadfast spirit within me.

David's biggest problem was the condition of his heart. The word "heart" is found 895 times in the Bible and in the Old Testament it is the Hebrew word, "Leb" which means, "the inner part of a person and refers to the will, mind, consciousness, emotions, and understanding." It also refers to a person's moral character and determination.

If I were to put it in plain words I would simply say that your heart is who you really are. That is why Proverbs says, "Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." (Proverbs 4:23) The heart is our inner person controlling the thoughts we think, the choices we make, our emotions, our feelings, and our will. It is the control center of our being.

To make matters worse, Jeremiah says our hearts are desperately wicked.

Jeremiah 17:9 Amplified Bible

9 The heart is deceitful above all things and it is extremely sick;

Who can understand it fully and know its secret motives?

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"Wash My Heart"

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This is hard for us to accept because our hearts tell us we are not like this. We want to believe that deep inside we are good people. I can't speak for you, but sometimes the things I see inside myself trouble me greatly. There have been times in the last year that the feelings, thoughts, and words coming from my heart were extremely "sick". There were even times I wanted to just get in someone's face and tell them what I thought of them. Thank God I have a husband who put that thought in the washing machine!

It's very easy to become self-righteous and feel we have a right to think, speak and act the way we do, but this too is a feeling that is created in a wicked heart and will end up causing us problems. So what can we do to make sure our hearts are pure and holy? There are three things the Bible says we can do.

1. PRAYER

Psalm 139:23-24 TPT

23 God, I invite your searching gaze into my heart. Examine me through and through; find out everything that may be hidden within me. Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares.

24 See if there is any path of pain I'm walking on, and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting way—the path that brings me back to you.

2. GET IN THE WORD

Hebrews 4:12 Amplified Bible

12 For the word of God is living and active and full of power [making it operative, energizing, and effective]. It is sharper than any two-

edged sword, penetrating as far as the division of the soul and spirit [the completeness of a person], and of both joints and marrow [the deepest parts of our nature], **exposing and judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart.**

3. APPLY THE BLOOD TO YOUR HEART

Psalm 51:7 Living Bible

7 Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and I shall be clean again. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

I believe 2022 can be a great year of victory for God's people, but it will take a conscious effort on our part to make sure our thoughts, actions, and words are Spirit lead. God's will for us is to live in amazing victory no matter what we face and it all starts with the condition of our hearts.

Lord, wash my heart!



AND THAT MY FRIENDS
IS THE TRUTH!

P R O P H E C Y U P D A T E

"These Are The Days"

During the time Miss Linda and I pastored Rez. Church, January was always special. Toward the end of the month, we had our annual church business meeting and unlike many churches, it was always a wonderful time. We looked back on the previous year and rejoiced in how faithful God had been and then looked forward to the coming year with excitement knowing that God always seemed to do more than we could imagine.

January was also special because every year I would start a series on Bible prophecy. Our congregation always looked forward to this and for this reason attendance in January was always strong. I do not consider myself an expert when it comes to Bible prophecy, but as I look back I am amazed at how many of the things I said have come to pass.

I also said some things that haven't happened so I have no room to boast. In spite of this, our congregation grew to appreciate the fact that there are prophecies in the Bible that were written thousands of years ago and are being fulfilled in our lifetime. That is incredibly exciting.

The one I would put at the top of the list is the great apostasy (falling away) that the Apostle Paul prophesied would happen. Truly, Paul was not only an apostle but also a prophet. The Old Testament prophets prophesied to Israel, but Paul prophesied to the church and we are living in a time when the things he said about the church are coming to pass.

All this is a bit nostalgic for me, and I enjoy taking a journey back to a time that was very good. But I don't want to spend too much time focusing on the past because I believe the future holds more excitement and promise than anything we experienced in the past. Isn't that the way it always is with God?

With that thought in mind, I began to think about what things we should be looking for that have been prophesied, but have not yet come to pass. I must confess that I was a bit dismayed because I was having a hard time coming up with a very long list. I asked Miss Linda for her input, but her list was as short as mine.

Our lists contained only two things:

1. The rapture of the church.

2. The fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39

(And I am not certain this will happen before the rapture.)

As I have said, the shortness of this list bothered me, but then I saw something so exciting. Of course, it is short, it must be short if we are to see the return of Jesus in our lifetime. We don't have to look for the nation of Israel to be reborn, we have seen it. We need not look for the great falling away to happen, we have seen it. Nor do we need to look for an increase in false teachers and false prophets, we have seen it. For sure, I am not looking for the rise of the Antichrist nor the great tribulation. (See last month's Prophecy Update.)

I am looking for and expecting to hear the sound of a trumpet calling the church to a great wedding celebration. I am looking for the one who redeemed me from the bondage of my sin, to come for me in the clouds of glory. I am looking for heaven and my eternal reward. There is nothing else in the Bible that still must be fulfilled before Jesus can return. Let that sink deep into your soul and look up, your redemption is nearer than you think.

Hebrews 9:28 KJV

28....and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time.....

AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS THE TRUTH