**Strength Training**

I can remember my parents taking me to the circus when I was a child. I recall lots of different acts and performances. One of the main acts was The Strongest Man Alive. This man stood in the middle of the arena wearing short black lace up boots, a red tank top bodysuit, and a thick black belt around his waist. He would bend down and pick up barbels weighing thousands of pounds on each end. He would lift the heavy weights above his knees and waist, then with a slight jump he would lift the weights above his head into the air. He would stand there holding the heavy weights in the air and the crowd would scream in amazement at his strength. He was said to be the strongest man alive.

Along my life journey I found the real strongest man alive. He not only has physical strength; he is strong in every aspect. He is the epitome of strength. He is not just at the circus, he is everywhere. He lifts heavy burdens, and he will lift you up too. His name is Jesus!

Jesus is strong and he can strengthen you. He is almighty, all powerful, all knowing, and he will give you strength. His strength will enable you to overcome difficult times. His strength will make you pick up the phone when you know it could be bad news on the other end. His strength will allow you to look at the brighter side of things when trouble comes your way. There are times when the future may look bleak, but his strength will help you persevere even when all you can do is cry. When it feels like nothing is going your way, He gives you the strength to dry your eyes, get up, and keep going. When tests, trials and trouble come, you can find strength in Jesus.

He strengthens us with his word – the Bible. In the King James version of the Bible there are 168 scriptures referring to strength. There are scriptures that will lift emotional weights and heavy burdens. So, when it seems like the weight of the world is on your shoulders go to the word of God. Read scriptures like Exodus 15:2, “the Lord is my strength and my defense,” or Isaiah 40:31, that says, “but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.” (*NIV*.) And read Psalms 27:14, “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.” Psalms 73:26, “. . . but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever,” and Nehemiah 8:10 “. . . Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength,” are also great strength training scriptures.

When I face life’s hard times, I go to my favorite scriptures, 2 Corinthians 12:9, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness,” and Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Live strong in Christ.

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