

Strategies for Spiritual Strength

2 Samuel 23:9-10

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Shepherd's Community Church

Attaining Spiritual Stability

“Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience” (Col. 1:11).

An alarming number of Christians seem to lack spiritual stability. Many are "carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming" (Eph. 4:14). Others lack moral purity. Many are driven by their emotions rather than sound thinking. Increasingly, therapists and psychologists are replacing pastors and biblical teachers as the heroes of the faith. While we still proclaim a sovereign, all-powerful God, our conduct often belies our creed.

Despite our inconsistencies, the power for spiritual stability is ours in Christ as we allow the knowledge of His will to control our lives. Paul describes the working of that power in Colossians 1:11. There the Greek words translated "strengthened" and "power" speak of inherent power that gives one the ability to do something.

The phrase "according to" indicates that the power for spiritual stability is proportional to God's abundant supply—and it is inexhaustible! The literal Greek says you are being "empowered with all power according to the might of His glory." That thought is akin to Philippians 2:12-13, where Paul says that the power for working out your salvation comes from God, who is at work in you to will and to work for His good pleasure.

In Colossians 1:11 the result of God's enabling is "the attaining of all steadfastness and patience." "Steadfastness" speaks of endurance regarding people; "patience" speaks of endurance regarding things or circumstances. When you are steadfast and patient, you are spiritually stable. Your responses are biblical, thoughtful, and calculated; not worldly, emotional, or uncontrolled. You bear up under trials because you understand God's purposes and trust His promises.

Paul said, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might" (Eph. 6:10). That is possible when you trust God and rely on the infinite power that is yours in Christ.

Suggestions for Prayer: *Perhaps you know someone who is struggling with spiritual instability. Pray for him or her and ask God to use you as a source of encouragement.*

From *Drawing Near*, John MacArthur. Available in book form or as a daily devotional online or delivered daily to your email, www.gty.org/Resources/Devotionals

Courage

(Romans 15:4; Judges 3:4; Joshua 1:9; 1 Chronicles 11:13; Psalm 138:3; 1 Timothy 6:12; Philippians 1:20)

Perseverance

(Isaiah 40:30-31; Romans 15:5; Psalm 119:28)

Reliance

(Deuteronomy 20:1; Joshua 23:9-10; 1 Samuel 17:24; 2 Samuel 21:16-21; 23:8-39; 22:1; Romans 8:28, 31, 37)