

The Lord my strength (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Rowell, F Leslie (1902-1973)

[0 : 00] As the Lord should help me, I would ask your attention to a verse in the 15th chapter of the book of the Exodus. The 15th chapter of the book of the Exodus and the second verse.

The Lord is my strength and song and he has become my salvation. He is my God and I will prepare him a habitation, my Father's God, and I will exalt him.

There is a criticism that is sometimes a level against strict Baptists and that is that their preachers are much given for preaching of Christian experience.

And my dear friends, I feel that however much some person might resent this particular criticism, it should be rather a cause for thankfulness to those against whom the criticism is addressed.

For this reason, I believe I can truly sigh that the Word of God is the Word of God that declares, in a very remarkable way, the experiences of the people of God.

[1 : 17] You may say to me, but in the Bible there is much doctrine. Yes, but I want you to remember, friends, that as that doctrine is taught, it is also exemplified in the lives of those who are recorded in the Word.

You will find this for those whom the Lord has chosen and loved and blessed and saved, are those in whom there will be brought the doctrines that are taught in the Word of God, and those doctrines will be beloved by them, and they will be their staff in their hand as they journey, and they will be the foundation of their hope as they die.

And then I feel also that we can say this, friends, that not only in the Word of God is there much good doctrine, but there is also much gracious precept.

But you see, even with regard to the publication of the precepts of the Gospel, you will find that in the Word of God those precepts are experienced. The people whose lives are recorded there knew the power and the authority of those love commands of God and of Christ and of His servants, and that not only did they hear them and approve them in their mind, but also we find that by the power of God, they were able to obey them and glorify God in their obedience to those precepts.

And therefore I do feel, friends, that we can say this, that whether it is the application of doctrine to the life of the child of God, or whether it be the application of the precepts of the Gospel to the life of the child of God, they will certainly have to know a Christian experience, if I may use that term.

[2 : 59] Now I can sympathize with persons who can say something like this, amongst us as a people there are quite a lot of books that are circulating, and books that we are asked to read, but some people will say most of these books were written about 100 or 150 years ago.

And isn't there anything that is happening today of a like nature that we can look upon and say, that the God who was powerful 100 or 150 years ago is still the same God of power and love and grace today that He was then?

You see, friends, what these people are really saying is this, is Christian experience the same today as it was then? You see, we may read about the way the Lord blessed the soul of a young lad or a young girl, 100 or 150 years ago, it's been recorded for our encouragement and strengthening of faith in the Lord, but they can very well turn to us and say, well, can't you tell us something of the same thing that's happening today?

Well, you see, friends, there, I feel, is the true nature of the preaching Christian experience. I stand before as a minister of the Gospel, and I don't simply say to you, I ask you to believe what happened which is written in the scriptures.

I do hope you'll believe that. I hope that faith will be given you to believe that those things that happened, that are recorded in the scripture, were verily true, to take the case that we were thinking of this morning, that the children of Israel, under the leadership of Moses, verily, did come down to a place near the high Hararoth, and they were encompassed by the sea and the land, and that they really, the Egyptians did come out of Egypt and pursue them, and they didn't know what to do, and that really Moses did tell to them, stand still, and see the salvation of God, and really, the waters were divided, and really, the children of Israel did go through the sea, and very rarely, the waters did come back, and overwhelm the Egyptians.

[5 : 02] I do hope, my friends, that we believe in the miracles of God. Moses was only an instrument. All he did was to hold a rod out, and you know how helpless a rod is in the hand of a man.

It was God's power, and God's grace, that did these things, and I'm thankful to say, friends, in my heart as I read the word, there was a going out of faith towards the Lord who did those great things.

But you say, think of the thousands of years that have elapsed since then. We live in a different age, in a different time, and we don't see things quite like that today.

My dear friends, let me assure you of this, that a minister who preaches through Christian experience will tell you this, that the power and the grace of God is just as great, just as unlimited, just as sovereign, as it was in those days.

And the experience of the people of God before they die will be to this end, that they'll be able to tell to others the great things that God has done to them, both in their soul, and also in their circumstances.

[6 : 07] Now I appeal to you this morning as to whether you really would approve the ministry of Christian experience. The experience of a Christian upon the way from, shall I say, the Egypt of sin to the canyon of the wonderful place that the Lord has gone to prepare for his people.

Now upon that pathway, they will certainly know experiences of need. And upon that pathway, they will certainly know experiences of prayer.

And upon that pathway, they will certainly know experiences of salvation. Now friends, that seems to me to be what is in the word of our text this morning. And so if there should be some young person here today who is saying in their heart, well, most strict Baptist narratives are a hundred years old, I want you to remember, friends, that here is a poor man who stands before you.

And he tries to tell you week after week that that God who did great things for the children of Israel is still a God who can and will and does do great things for his people to die.

And I would encourage you also to go to the Lord with your great need, with your great difficulties, with your red seas of trouble and distress and affliction, and then lay the face just as Moses did before the Lord.

[7 : 29] We know that Moses prayed. He not only gave good advice to Israel, he said to them, stand still and see the salvation of God. What are you running about and getting into a panic for?

Stand still and see the salvation of God. And then when he turns to the Lord in prayer, the Lord comes through and he says, and why do you continue crying unto me? The time has come for action now.

Not that he denies the necessity or the goodness of a man praying to God when he and Israel are in difficulties. Not at all. But now, says the Lord, I'm going to appear and I'm going to work.

And it's time now for you to back up and take some steps forward and you shall see the mighty power of God. Well, friends, here indeed is the experience of men.

And God grant that you and I may know a day by day experience of the grace and power of God. I was in company with a few friends only yesterday. And after I made a few remarks, friends, I can tell you this, I was very tempted of the devil.

[8 : 32] One of my dear friends told us a very, very pleasing narrative of the power of God. The way in which the Lord accompanied one of his servants to a person who was in tremendous distress of mind so that they were literally tearing their hair in the midst of anxiety.

And how the Lord wonderfully blessed his word to bring that person out of their grateful mental distress and give them a wonderful peace of soul and reconciliation of the will of the Lord and a quiet mind that was really wonderful to be held.

Persons around who didn't fear God at all were saying, here is a wonderful thing. Here is something that only God could do. You see. And as I was thinking of that, friends, well, my mind went to a little similar incident, not in connection with, shall I say, mental dementia or anything of that kind, but a similar incident I felt that happened to some of us within this place a few months ago when there I came back from the nursing home where I'd been visiting our dear effective friend Mr. Riddle and because of something that rested upon my mind that he spoke and I tried to speak to you about those things and some of you bore testimony of the why in which that were and being richly blessed with application and power to your soul.

Now I say, friends, that the God of Moses and the God of Israel and the God who appeared at the Red Sea still does appear and he still does take the weak things of this world and use them to his own glory and to the blessing of his people.

Our God is a God of miracles in 1966 just the same, my friends, as he was two or three thousand years before the birth of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[10 : 19] Remember how the Lord has instructed us. Perhaps this is something of a trouble in our denomination in our churches today. The Lord has instructed us and he has said, don't look upon yourself and your own efforts to think that you can change the world and change the hearts of men and change the circumstances of those that are in trouble.

Look unto me and bring me to all the ends of the earth. And he says, to those who thus would look, open my mouth wide and I will be. Now, I'm wondering, isn't it our poverty in prayer that is a trouble with us in the churches and in our own souls today?

The Lord grant us enlargement of coast in this matter that we may not think it a waste of time to shut ourselves away from our fellows and bow in prayer before our God that may we know of our greater constancy in this matter of supplication before the Most High that we've ever known before.

Well, I want to just unfold to you this verb as the Lord should enable me in connection with this matter of the experience of a man of God. And as we go on step by step I want to appeal to you that are here this morning as to whether you know something of the same experience of God's power that this dear man Moses did.

I know some of you will say that I've never been to the Red Sea and I've never seen the armies of the Egyptians and I've never seen the God in Moses' hand that has divided the waters and so it's useless for you to say have I ever been in similar circumstances to that of Moses.

[11 : 49] My dear friends let me tell you this there is an Egypt that is stronger than that Egypt that was ruled over by Pharaoh and there are dangers far greater than the dangers of the Red Sea that stood in the way of the progress of Israel and there are wonderful deliverances and sarwaions that have been made far greater than that which Israel witnessed and rejoiced in as they sang the song of Moses at the Miriam on the borders of the Red Sea.

And there are greater defeats of sin that have happened in this world's history than the overwhelming of the Egyptian forces in the Red Sea. Our God has done and he still does wonderful things of mercy and grace toward his praying people.

Well now to begin with the beginning of the text the Lord is my strength says my well you see friends here we come of course to the personal experience of the man.

I realise that it would be a great truth to say God is strong God is strong you mean it would be a great truth to say that. if we were to enlarge upon it we could draw from the word of God and the history of the world of the church a wonderful example of the strength of God God is strong God is strong God we think my friends of creation of course lots of people don't credit the Lord with the glory of creation but there are some people still upon this earth my friends who as they looked upon the wonders of creation and they hear more and yet more about the wonders of this creation and the discovery of modern scientists only go to show the greater height and depth of the wonder of creation around us and as they look upon that by faith they can say ah God is strong God is strong you think my friends of the power of one that has brought forth the universe by the word of his own power the strength of God the strength of God all the majesty and the glory and the intricacy the minuteness and the magnitude of it all and there

God by the word of his own power brought all these things into me and I declare to you God is a God of infinite strength infinite strength but that is the end of it you see it's one thing to make something there's another thing to preserve it another thing to preserve it and notice this against this great work of God the most dreadful and fearful attack has been made all the dreadful attack the great glory of God this little earth of ours in the midst of all the mighty arms of creation here the Lord settled man from the earth in perfection of innocence and in beauty and an attack was made upon it by the devil I can't enter into the mystery my friends of the origin of sin this morning that a dreadful attack was made upon the creative work of God and man fell under the temptation of the devil and brought sin and ruin upon everything some people tell me my friends that when they go about in the world and spend their

[15 : 05] Sunday you know in the fields and by the seaside and climbing the mountains that they can see the wonderful works of God let me tell you this my friends that there's nothing in this earth that is like what it was when God made it nothing like what God what it was when God made it the mark of sin is seen upon it all decay and disillusion is around us constantly the mighty mountains my friends they are not in the same form that they were when God brought them into existence in this earth there have been things that have happened to them in many many cases by reason of internal violence within the earth of divine creation earthquakes and so forth that have completely wrecked the earth here and there and it's not in the same condition that it won't run lives all I want you to remember that fact that God is strong in the matter of the preservation of this earth there have been everything in this earth to occasion its decay and its disillusion but have not been the controlling hand of the creator there is no telling what could have happened my friends he could have been splintered into thousands and thousands of fragments by the latest powers that lie within its being and not only so the thing of man upon him the greatest work of divine creation everything else prepared for him the place prepared by

God that he should be placed there and live there and provided for there and although man has rebelled against God God by his great strength I'm not speaking about his grace at the moment that will come later friends but God by his great strength has preserved this world of man upon him great sinful beings though they are every single one of them not one example guilty in the sight of God and unworthy with no this and yet God it is even strange as mankind in this world in the condition which it is found to die for God is strong God is strong and he's strong my friends and opposed me with him oh yes if the Lord had the exercise his had the power for mankind through the ages I don't know my friend what would have happened to the earth I'm sure my mind only goes back to 1940 now I remember going into a person's house there the day when we heard about the overflowing of the

Nazi regime into Belgium and France and how all the armies were just simply retreated and I think she said to me Mr. Rau whatever shall we do whatever shall we do I said to her friends there's only one thing we can do and that is to commit our way under the law why is it friends that Nero sooner or later found why is it that the Huns that invaded Europe in a past age were completely defeated and cast back again although they got right to the gates of Budapest I understand right from the very depths of Russia and they hadn't got any transport my friends they had a nice transport to bring them there they were a mighty power invasion and yet in the end they rolled back again why was it my friends that the Spanians with all their power were defeated by little puny ships of Britain why was it that the Nazi power was overcome why was it the

Lord is strong he bring us to pass the purposes of his own will what he has said will most certainly come to that the Lord is strong but although those are messy troubles I want you to remember that happening to dying just interject this thought I went over over this morning I went past the Roman Catholic church there it's only been open about I was going to say five and twenty minutes but you know what I mean it's a very very recent building a very recent opening you know my friends the roads were completely lined with no decars this morning and I don't expect that was the first mass that was being held in blasphemous pain and dangerous deceit that it is don't expect it was the first one that was held that tar was crammed with tar in my own spirit I just groan before the Lord the saints that here all these creatures are subject to such dreadful darned demons that they would give credence my faith to those

Christ dishonoring governments that catholicism holds to die as it ever has done oh what a merciless word of australia God is strong God is strong God is strong the papacy powered completely the world with its superstition the known world in the days of the reformation and my friend who was Martin Luther you see and who was John Crowley and who was Melanchthon and who was John New Witter Par weak men individuals hanging in the midst of this overspending infamy of great power you see God is strong God is strong all God is strong and friends I trust that we may live to see the dark when the Lord again in this dear land of ours will manifest his mighty strength in the exorcism of grace the deluded sinners will have their eyes opened by the power the strength of the Holy Spirit of God that they look about not crying to the

[20 : 55] Pope or the priest grand solution but crying to the Lord and to Jesus Christ saying O Lord save me right there to know friends that all the pleadings and advocacy of men is completely unabated when a guilty man has to have healing for the holy heart searching God oh I pray that that day may come when we may be able to say oh the Lord is strong the Lord is strong you young people that want something to happen to die in which you'll see the mighty power of God and not really think of things that hadn't hundreds of years ago you pray the Lord that this may can happen that God will show the mighty power of his own head be convinced thing that . . .

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before the events recorded in this 14th chapter of the Exodus, Moses thought he was very strong. He went out to see his people and he saw the flashmaster beating another and he killed him.

He thought he had got adequate strength and authority to be able to deal with cases like that. He was so full of sympathy and love toward Israel. You see, friends, he strengthened himself. He strengthened himself.

[23 : 27] And when certain things happened, you see, and he heard the prayer, heard all about this, and how angry he was probably, where, of course, he just runs away. Just runs away. Oh, the Lord give his strength.

The Lord give his strength. My dear Prince Conkly, Moses in that early day, you'd have asked him and said, Moses, do you believe that God is a strong God? And he'd say, no, certainly I do.

You see, there are no gods beside him. Once by the time, my adopted mother told me that there were a multitude of gods in Egypt. But thanks be to God. There was one, perhaps his own mother, his real mother, who taught him there was only one God, and the Lord blessed the world to his soul.

I don't know, my friends, how the Lord, or what the Lord did use to the end, that Moses should be convinced that God was strong. I don't know. But oh, Moses is to learn something else beside that.

And that is that the Lord give his strength. I'll be honest, the Lord give his strength. Mind you, even as I speak like this, friends, we haven't got right to the text yet. It's a step further experience than this.

[24 : 32] It's a wonderful thing to experience that God is strong. And it's a wonderful thing to experience that God give his strength. But Moses goes further, he says, the Lord is my strength. The Lord is my strength. Oh, that's, that's the place, friends, I would have you and me come to.

And would this day be my truth, the, oh, shall I say the triple truth of this great strength of our God, that's strong. And then second, the God in the riches of his grace gives strength to those of the weak.

But oh, the great glory of this blessed truth, that the Lord is my strength. The Lord is my strength. See how the Lord gives strength to Moses. This is said at the burning bush.

He says to Moses, I have something for you to do, Moses, you have to take the children of Israel and leave them into the promise of death. I promised Abraham and Isaac and Jacob that that man should be theirs and now I'm going to perform my work.

Lord, I'm so weak. I'm so weak. I don't feel fit for anything like this. Oh, Moses, you did 40 years ago, didn't you? Oh, but says Moses, I've learned lessons about my own strength, Lord.

[25 : 36] And I've learned lessons of the truth that thou art strong and, oh, I don't feel fit for this. And you know, friends, really the lessons that God teaches Moses. You know, when he goes to Egypt and the miracles that are performed there and so on, the way that Pharaoh hardens his heart against God and his servant and his word, and yet, my friends, the Lord upholds Moses and enables him to go on or to take the disasters and overcome them in the strength of his God.

You see, Moses is learning this lesson all the way along that God gives strength to his people. Gives strength to his people. If someone was to say to me, and of course, many Jews would say this, Moses was a wonderful man.

You know, friends, I should have to say even to you again, God, the reason why such wonderful things are associated with the life of Moses is because they've got such a wonderful God, wonderful in his strength and wonderful in his grace to give strength to those who are weak.

Well, that's it. That's it. Let the glory belong to the Lord. I don't know, my friends, how many in this building are really jealous for the glory of the Lord. Be quite sure of this, that if they're jealous for the glory of the Lord, whatever experience of divine power and grace they shall pass through, they will want to lay the glory and the praise at the feet of one God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, his own dear son.

The Lord gives strength. The Lord gives strength. But you see, we haven't gone to the text yet. We've talked about God being strong and we've talked about God giving strength to the weak like he did to Moses and like he does to poor sinners upon this earth to die.

[27 : 22] Oh, friend, he does give strength to the weak. He does give strength to the weak. It's a wonderful thing, friends, that as a man goes and speaks to a poor, troubled, distressed, tempest-torn woman who's literally tearing her head with anxiety and there is he speaks about the blessed name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you're in trouble, friends, that's the best thing you can think about. It's the best thing you can administer to you and it's the best thing that any man can take to his troubled friend when he goes to visit them.

The name of Jesus. The name of Jesus. And if he goes and ministers the name of Jesus to this person, then the Lord gives strength to those that are weak.

But we've got to go step further. The Lord is my strength. The Lord is my strength. You see, friends, when we have something given to us, we can use that gift, the limit of the gift.

If the Lord gives me a measure of strength today to be able to minister in the Word and Gospel in the midst of the people here, it doesn't mean to say, my friends, that because of today's gift I shall, of necessity, to have that gift of valuable for tomorrow.

[28 : 38] You may say to me, ah, but Mr. Rowe, don't forget, the Lord has said, I am to save yesterday, today, and forever. Indeed, he is strength and his stomach has to prove it. But they do know this, that the strength that is given to them for the day means renewing tomorrow.

And my friends, the one who is the source of this day's strength will have to be approached tomorrow and his sovereign grace he will be to give fresh strength to his people tomorrow for their tomorrow needs in addition to what they have received today.

I want you to notice, my friends, that Moses can say in his heart here, the Lord is my strength, the Lord is my strength. I think he means this really, friends.

Not only is he a strong God and not only is his strength available to his people and he's willing to give it to them in the time of their weakness and their need. But I think he means this.

That all the strength that I ever really possess belongs to God and has come from him. And that strength that I have received yesterday does not exhaust his strength for tomorrow.

[29 : 46] There will be a sufficiency for me tomorrow as there has been yesterday according to my age. And I believe he goes further from this. He has to say, Lord, now show me that I must look away from myself completely and absolutely for thee for all strength that I shall ever need.

The Lord is my strength. The Lord is my strength. You know, friends, I feel that whilst this word is a word of wonderful praise and thanksgiving and glory to God, it's a word of complete dependence upon God on the part of this man.

When you and I can really say from our heart, the Lord is my strength. You see? All then, friends, we bespeak our great dependence upon him. But of course, there is a step further than this.

And that is, Moses said, my God, isn't a long way off. I don't have to spend every so many days in going, traveling along and on a journey to come to him. And then I find at the end of a week of a short life journey that he has something to give to me which is his strength.

But, oh, blessed be his name. He has come and entered into me. And although I have nothing but weakness and sin and shame in myself, there is one that indwells me by his Holy Spirit and his eternal strength.

[31 : 09] The Lord is my strength. Oh, not only relatively but possessively. Yes. Oh, he has taken possession of me.

And I possess him by divine grace. And the Lord is my strength. The Lord is my strength. Remember, don't you, how the Apostle Paul seems to enter into this remarkable truth in a remarkable way.

When they're writing to the church and warning them against sin and its prevalence and power within their person, he says, your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

Remember, don't you, friends, what happened in the ancient tabernacle of the temple. There the Lord ordered that there should be a mercy seat set up and the mercy seat should be sprinkled with blood.

Whenever the priest of the Lord went in, he must go not without blood into the holy place and he must sprinkle the blood. Oh, has he offered sacrifices, will he present petitions? Then he must come with the blood of the offering and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat.

[32 : 15] And there, friends, in that holy place, the priest drew nigh to God and God made himself known for that life. Oh, he dwelt there.

He dwelt there. Oh, friends, that in a much more blessing way, I feel we can sign it. The Lord does come and dwell in his people. Oh, he does.

What is it, friends, that when you wake up in the morning, I don't doubt what some of you will say, I feel ever so troubled about my waking thoughts. They seem to be so worldly and so calm.

Oh, I would that I could wake up praying. I would that I could wake up believing in Jesus. I would that I could wake up seeing by faith a precious Emmanuel. I would that that fair glory of his person, my light upon my first thoughts, that I wake up in the morning and so on and it's different to me.

But, my friends, what is it that makes you long for that sensible presence of the Lord with you and that constant unfolding of the revelations of his grace through his soul is because not only does the Holy Spirit visit you, but your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

[33 : 26] That's why you, more friends, as that carnal thought comes upon you and that fleshly appetite exercises itself, what is it that checks you?

What is it that corrects you? What is it that causes you to be grown out before God and mourn because of the prevalence of sin within your person? Your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

It's not a whisper from the distance that is magnified into your spirit, but, my friends, it's the very power of the eternal world dwelling in the self of the whole sinner. The Lord is, my Savior, the Lord is, my Savior.

May I just conclude by telling you something I may have repeated here before. Dear John Newton, my name, he had a dream, a vivid dream, he never forgot.

He recorded it in his autobiography later on. He tells us how he had a dream that he was in the Bible like Naples. Some of you have been there recently and you know what a wonderful scene it is.

[34 : 31] There used to be an old father that had a dual meaning, see Naples and dying. And, I think the people meant this, that there never was a more beautiful place than Naples to look upon and so if anyone was a traveller they could well go to Naples and they'd never see anything better however long they lived.

But on the other hand, Naples, although it was a beautiful place, was also a playground spot. And I think that the little saying really meant this, if you went to Naples ever much you might enjoy the season, you could probably die by reason of disease.

But I just say that in time. Naples is a wonderful place and the scenery is wonderful scenery on top. And here, even if you've been there he had this dream, he was on a ship in the Bay of Naples and a 31 came from heaven and gave him a ring.

Told him he'd wear it. He said, while you're wearing it you're in perfect safety you'll never lack any good thing, anything you need. And this one disappeared. And then an evil one came to him and told him the ring wasn't any real worth.

All this was just a title about the ring being the secret of his strength. And under the temptation in his dream he sees himself putting the ring off and throwing it in the sea as a worthless thing.

[35 : 52] My friend, I don't know whether you account the promises of God with a yea and amen in Jesus Christ to be a worthless thing, but that was the lesson you see that John Newton was taught. the dreadful danger of our sinful flesh accounting the promises of God that are yea and amen in Jesus Christ to be worthless things.

I know the world accounts it that, and I'm afraid a lot of professed religion of today accounts the promises of God to be a worthless thing. I ask some of you, friends, how long it is since.

Perhaps in any other place, such a place as this, you've heard any minister of religion speaking about the promises of God being really valuable to the soul because they are yea and amen in Jesus Christ.

Mind you, there's a wonderful sermon in that, many sermons I believe. Anyway, there he is to be wrapped through the rig. And immediately, this happens, my friends, he looks at the shore, and there Vesuvius, behind Naples, is bursting out into volcanic eruption.

And the clouds of this overhang the ship and it looks as though, with the waves of the sea and the violence of the eruption, immediately stares John Newton in the face. And then, the Holy One comes to him again, and he tells this one the awful fear of his soul and the wretchedness of his conscience because of this, well, defiance of the advice of this blessed one that had given him the ring, you know, his despising of the promises of God.

[37 : 25] And this Holy One goes down into the sea and he retrieves the ring for it. And he brings it back and he shows it to John Newton. John didn't hold that on his hand, he would have the ring on his finger a day.

But he wants to say, no, no, I'll preserve it for him. I'll put it on my finger and I'll wear it for you. But in all ways I offer you, all above you, the Lord is my strength.

It is only something he's given to me, something that I would wear for him, you see, some experience of the past that I've known even of his strength and of his grace, that blessedly is mine.

he's all that to me to die. That's what he is. In Christ Jesus, he is my strength. He is my strength. He is my strength. Oh, friends, don't forget those blessed words that seem to my soul to speak so wonderfully of the strength and grace of God.

He ever did it to make him the session. What more do you need? What more do need?
Poor praying soul, you've got no strength. But here, the eternal strength of God God