

# How to Become Strong

There is only one way to become strong....

- Do hard things

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength

# 1 Timothy 4:7–8 (NKJV)

But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. **8** For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength
- Our mental strength

# Ecclesiastes 12:12 (NKJV)

Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength
- Our mental strength
- Our emotional strength

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength
- Our mental strength
- Our emotional strength
- Our unique strengths



# 1 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength
- Our mental strength
- Our emotional strength
- Our unique strengths
- Our spiritual strength

## Hebrews 5:12–14 (NKJV)

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. **13** For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. **14** But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

# 1 Timothy 4:12–15 (NKJV)

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. **13** Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. **14** Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. **15** Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

# Doing Hard Things Increases...

- Our physical strength
- Our mental strength
- Our emotional strength
- Our unique strengths
- Our spiritual strength
- How tired we feel

## 2 Corinthians 11:24–28 (NKJV)

From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; **26** in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; **27** in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—**28** besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

# How to tell if you are getting stronger

- If you have exerted yourself to the point of being tired
- You ARE getting stronger

## Ecclesiastes 5:12 (NKJV)

The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, Whether he eats little or much; But the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.



# Which hard things?

- Some are chosen for us
  - By our circumstances
  - By the people around us
  - By God
- Many are chosen by us
  - We challenge ourselves

# How does a Church Become Stronger?

- By each of its members becoming stronger

# Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV)

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, **13** till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **14** that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **15** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—**16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

# How does a Church Become Stronger?

- By each of its members becoming stronger
- By doing hard things together

# Hard Things we have Done Together

- Weathering the storm of our elders stepping down
- Making decisions through business meetings
- Exercising church discipline
- Paying off the mortgage on the church building
- Grieving the losses of Robin French and Polly Powell
- A number of our members moving away

What is the Hardest Thing we are Doing  
Together as a Church Right Now?

# Hard Things we are Doing Right Now

- Integrating into our congregation a 66% increase
  - 8 obeyed the gospel from outside our congregation
  - 18 who moved here and stayed
  - 4 born here

# Hard Things we are Doing Right Now

- Integrating into our congregation a 66% increase
  - 8 obeyed the gospel from outside our congregation
  - 18 who moved here and stayed
  - 4 born here
- Plus
  - 5 others who moved here and have since moved on
  - 3 others who obeyed the gospel and have since fallen away
- Total newcomers equal to 84% of the congregation



# A New Challenge

- Special study of benevolence in October

There is only one way to become strong....

- Do hard things

## Romans 5:6–8 (NKJV)

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

## Ephesians 3:14–21 (NKJV)

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... **16** that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, **17** that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—**19** to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. **20** Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, **21** to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.