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WE THAT ARE STRONG

Scott Cain

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Romans 15:1).

Paul had just discussed matters of the conscience, activities that were not inherently wrong, but in which some could not engage with a clean conscience (Romans 14:14). The "weak" described brethren whose consciences were more restrictive (Romans 14:1-2). It was not that these brethren were weak nor that their faith was weak: they simply had weak consciences (see 1 Corinthians 8:7, 12). Paul counselled those with a "weak" conscience to "have it to thyself before God" (Romans 14:22). They were not to condemn others by imposing their personal convictions on others (Romans 14:22; see also 14:3-4), nor were they to condemn themselves by violating their consciences (Romans 14:22-23; see also 14:14, 20-21).

To those who were not "weak," whose consciences were not as prone toward guilt in matters of personal judgment, Paul counseled them not to devalue their brethren (Romans 14:3), destroy their brethren (Romans 14:15), nor to defile their brethren over their convictions (Romans 14:21). Instead, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Romans 15:1).

How many saints read the words, "We then that are strong," and think to themselves, "Nope, that's not me: I'm one of the weak ones"? Let us face it: few. Instead, most Christians like to think of themselves as strong.

Yes, chances are, that includes you, too.

So, since so many Christians tend to view themselves as strong, then we "that are strong" need to take Paul's words to heart and consider the way strong saints treat their fellow Christians.

If We Are So Strong,

Let Us Be Pleasing to God's Children (Rom. 15:1-3).

Let us be strong enough to be selfless in our decisions, putting our preferences and pleasures to the side for the sake of our brethren's wellbeing. Let us be strong enough to use discretion in our discussions, choosing our words and subject matter carefully. Let us be strong enough to be considerate in our clothing, avoiding the extremes of ostentation and laxity, being mindful to find the balance that exhibits modesty, decency, and reverence without turning ourselves into a fashion show.

Are we willing to bear with our brethren (Romans 15:1)? Are we willing to build up our brethren (Romans 15:2)?

If We Are So Strong,

Let Us Be Patient with God's Children (Rom. 15:4-5).

Patience is imperative. It takes an enduring patience to dig into a steadfast study of the scriptures and comprehend the comfort that God provides (Romans 15:4). God is the God of patience and comfort

(consolation – Romans 15:5), and when we learn patience and comfort from Him, we will practice patience and comfort with our brethren. We will be patient enough to be likeminded toward one another, remembering that God has been patient with us.

Christians "that are strong" have patience, therefore they do not dismiss their brethren as worthless over petty disagreements. The "strong" understand that new children of God will not have instant maturity of faith, and so they give them time to learn and to grow in the wisdom and knowledge of God. The "strong" realize that their brethren may have sincere questions that need answered, and they will readily and happily help them to find the book-chapter-verse answers to their important questions.

If We Are So Strong,

Let Us Have Peace with God's Children (Rom. 15:6-7).

Christians "that are strong" will reject the modern mantra of "You are defined by your past." Contrary to what the world tells us, we can "be likeminded one toward another" (Romans 15:5). We can "with one mind and one mouth glorify God" (Romans 15:6). Saints can be likeminded despite different ethnic backgrounds, educational backgrounds, or economic backgrounds, because they share the common ground of Christ.

None are stronger than Jesus, and if the sinless Christ was willing to receive each of us despite our sinful pasts, we each can receive each other (Romans 15:7). Christians "that are strong" will overcome any gap, whether black or white, American or Russian, rich or poor, young or old, Ford or Chevy, Coke or Pepsi, or any other combination of distinguishing traits, in order to stand on common ground, seeing eye to eye, and being likeminded in Christ.

No, peace may not always be possible (Romans 12:18). No, the "strong" cannot be likeminded with those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the very doctrine of Christ (Romans 16:17). Nevertheless, with the exception of doctrinal error or contentious characters, being likeminded is not only possible: it is vital.

Do "the weak" have any responsibility to be pleasing to God's children, patient with God's children, and having peace with God's children? Absolutely: in fact, while Romans 15 begins with Paul specifically addressing the "strong," his focus next shifted to both the strong and the weak when he said, "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification" (Romans 15:2).

These exhortations are for all saints, whether they see themselves as strong or not. However, since being "strong" connects to the idea of having ability, let us "that are strong" remember that we have the ability to strengthen the church by having the strength to put others before ourselves.

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SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024

- 9:30 - 10:20 A.M. "A Righteous Nation Needs Instruction in Righteousness"**Keith Mosher, Sr.**
- 10:30 - 11:30 A.M. "Instruction In Righteousness From Romans"**Scott Cain**
- 4:30 - 5:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 5:00 - 6:00 P.M. "Righteousness Exalts A Nation"**B.J. Clarke**

MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2024

- 8:30 - 9:00 A.M. CHAPEL: "The First Man God Called Righteous"**Andrew Boyle**
"Pharoah—The Lord Is Righteous, and I and My People are Wicked" (Ex. 9:27)....**Justin Evergarden**
- 9:05 - 9:55 A.M. "Who Is Right About Righteousness In Job?"**Daniel Cates**
- 10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "If The Foundations Be Destroyed, What Can The Righteous Do?"**Jon Mitchell**
- LADIES ONLY*** "Instruction in Righteousness Begins In The Home"**Melissa Cain**
- 11:00 - 11:50 A.M. "What If Everyone, In Every Nation, Practiced Psalm 15?"**Bobby Liddell**
- *Rm 405 School Bldg "The Righteous For The Unrighteous, That He Might Bring Us To God" (1 Pet. 3:18-22)**Brock Kendall**
- 11:50 - 1:30 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:30 - 2:20 P.M. "Is It Worth It To Be Righteous?" (Psalm 37)**Jason Moore**
- LADIES ONLY*** "Unrighteous Women Who Brought Nations Low"**Tish Clarke**
- YOUTH** "The Father Of The Righteous Shall Greatly Rejoice"**Evan Manning**
- 2:30 - 3:20 P.M. "When The Unrighteous Attack The Righteous"**Ronnie Hayes**
- *Rm 405 School Bldg "A Righteous Nation Must Not Forget God"**Kevin Rutherford**
- 3:30 - 4:15 P.M. "The LORD Knows The Way Of The Righteous"**David Sproule**
- 4:15 - 6:00 P.M. *Banquet Meal—Spotlighting Manna Project, Scattered Abroad And World Missions Program* (FELLOWSHIP HALL)
- 6:30 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:00 - 8:00 P.M. "The Ultimate King of Righteousness And Peace"**Dan Winkler**

TUESDAY, APRIL 2, 2024

- 8:30 - 9:00 A.M. CHAPEL: "Noah, A Righteous Man With A Righteous Message"**Joe Mallory**
"Lot, Whose Righteous Soul Was Vexed Everyday"**Odane Brissett**
- 9:05 - 9:55 A.M. "The Mouth of the Righteous"**Michael Clarke**
- 10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "Instruction In Righteousness—Proverbs 10"**Gary Hampton**
- LADIES ONLY*** "Instruction In Righteousness Must Continue With Our Children's Children"**Rebecca Davis**
- 11:00 - 11:50 A.M. "Instruction In Righteousness—Proverbs 11"**Trent Kennedy**
- *Rm 405 School Bldg "The Grey Head Is A Crown Of Glory, If It Be Found In The Way Of Righteousness"**James Pilgrim**
- 11:50 - 1:30 P.M. LUNCH
- 1:30 - 2:20 P.M. "Instruction In Righteousness—Proverbs 12-13"**Jameson Steward**
- LADIES ONLY*** "Instruction In Righteousness—The Older Women Teaching The Younger (Titus 2:3-5)"**Teresa Hampton**
- YOUTH** "Righteousness For Young Hearts (Proverbs 2)"**Haston Handley**
- 2:30 - 3:20 P.M. "Instruction In Righteousness—Proverbs 14-15"**Mark Lindley**
- *Rm 405 School Bldg "Instruction In Righteousness In Psalm 119"**Matt Stewart**
- SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS/ SUPPORTERS (CATES CHAPEL)—Speakers:
Tyler Cannon & Sergio Luna
- 3:30 - 4:15 P.M. "We Should Live Soberly, Righteously And Godly"**Paul Sain**
- 4:15 - 6:00 P.M. ALUMNI AND FRIENDS DINNER (FELLOWSHIP HALL)
- 6:30 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
- 7:00 - 8:00 P.M. "When Instruction In Righteousness Caused A Man To Tremble"**Allen Webster**

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BUT SIN IS A REPR

DUPLICATE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

8:30 - 9:00 A.M. CHAPEL: "Saul: Thou Art More Righteous Than I" (1 Sam. 24:17; 1 Sam. 26:23)
.....**Zachariah Lockhart**
"Balaam: Let Me Die The Death Of The Righteous" (Num. 23:10)**Brennan Mallory**
9:05 - 9:55 A.M. "The Righteous Shall Not Be Moved"
.....**Tom Wacaster**
10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "Righteousness In The Sermon On The Mount"
.....**Tony Lawrence**
*LADIES ONLY**** "The Pathway To Righteousness"
.....**Carol Mangrum**
11:00 - 11:50 A.M. "The Effectual Fervent Prayer Of The Righteous"**Jeff Archey**
*Rm 405 School Bldg "The Social Behavior Of The Righteous Man"
.....**Chase Green**
11:50 - 1:30 P.M. LUNCH
1:30 - 2:20 P.M. "Putting On The Breastplate Of Righteousness"
.....**Eric Garner**
*LADIES ONLY**** "He Leadeth Me In The Paths Of Righteousness"
.....**Brittany Suttles**
*YOUTH*** "Follow After Righteousness" (1 Tim. 6:11)
.....**Daniel Manning**
2:30 - 3:20 P.M. "When A Few More Righteous Souls Could Have Made The Difference"**Adam Orr**
*Rm 405 School Bldg "We, Being Dead To Sins, Should Live Unto Righteousness"**Drew Suttles**
3:30 - 4:15 P.M. "The Blessings Of Righteous Living" ...**Larry Acuff**
4:15 - 6:30 P.M. INTERMISSION
6:30 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00 - 8:00 P.M. "A Righteous Nation Needs Courageous Men, Who Refuse To Bow To Unrighteous Decrees"
.....**John DeBerry**

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 2024

8:30 - 9:00 A.M. CHAPEL: "Zacharias And Elisabeth—And They Were Both Righteous Before God"**Nestor Silva**
"Elymas, Enemy Of All Righteousness"
.....**Spencer Gumpert**
9:05 - 9:55 A.M. "Abraham: And He Counted It To Him For Righteousness" (Gen. 15:6)**Jimmy Clark**
10:00 - 10:50 A.M. "Phinehas: It Was Counted Unto Him For Righteousness" (Psa. 106:30-31)
.....**Michael McDaniel**
*LADIES ONLY**** "Righteous Women In The Ministry Of Jesus"
.....**Shelley Hazel**
11:00 - 11:50 A.M. "He That Feels Him And Works Righteousness Is Accepted With Him" (Acts 10:34-35)
.....**Billy Bland**
*Rm 405 School Bldg "Learning To Love What Jesus Loved"
.....**Steven Ford**
11:50 - 1:30 P.M. LUNCH
1:30 - 2:20 P.M. "Workers Of Righteousness In God's Hall Of Faith" (Heb. 11)**Mark Howell**
*LADIES ONLY**** "Instruction In Righteousness In The Bible School Program"**Vicky Rutherford**
*YOUTH*** "The Righteous Should Choose Friends Carefully"
.....**Jared Rhodes**
2:30 - 3:20 P.M. "Christ Jesus Is Made Unto Us Wisdom And Righteousness" (1 Cor. 1:30)**Westley Hazel**
*Rm 405 School Bldg "A Parable For The Self-Righteous"
.....**Gage Coldwater**
3:30 - 4:15 P.M. "The Day The Righteous Judge Will Judge The World In Righteousness"**Tim Hayes**
4:15 - 6:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
6:30 - 7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00 - 8:00 P.M. "There Is Laid Up For Me A Crown Of Righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:8)**Cliff Goodwin**

* Classes In The School Building - Will Meet In Room 405

** Youth Classes Will Meet In Cates Chapel

*** Ladies Classes (*Ladies Only*) - Will Meet In The Fellowship Hall

**EXALTETH A NATION:
TEACH TO TO ANY PEOPLE."**
- PROVERBS 14:34

PLANNING YOUR LECTURESHIP STAY? RESERVE YOUR ROOMS WITH THESE LOCAL HOTELS

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LECTURE DISPLAY AREA

If you would like to have a display at the Lectureship, time and space are running out. Please call 901-751-2242 to make your reservation.

ALUMNI REGISTRATION

Alumni, please go to www.msop.org and complete the Alumni Registration Form. Your doing so will save us time and money, in that we will not have to mail a form to you.

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Call (901) 751-2242. Call **early**, because spaces are limited. R.V.s must be parked in assigned spaces.

CLASSES & CHILDCARE DURING THE LECTURES

The MSOP students' wives will provide classes and childcare, for children 5 and younger, from 9 to 11:50 A.M., and 1:30 to 4:15 P.M., Monday through Thursday.

We want to make this time with your children edifying and educational, and we want to insure safety, comfort, and quality of classroom time.

All parents must register their children and complete an Information Sheet. All adults must show a proper ID when picking up children. Parents may designate another, with proper ID, to pick up their children, but no one under 18 will be allowed to pick up children. Childcare Registration Forms are available at www.msop.org.

Please bring a well stocked diaper bag for infants and toddlers, including formula/milk, spill-proof cups, diapers, wipes, extra clothing, and a special toy or book. Please do not send snacks. For children that are toddlers and older, bring a mat or blanket. Please label all items with the child's name.

SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS

This year's Seminar For Prospective Students And Supporters will be on Tuesday, April 2, at 2:30 P.M., in the Cates Chapel. Prospective students and congregations interested in supporting preacher students are given an introductory overview of the School by the Director and faculty. Prospects have an opportunity to ask questions, and also will receive a packet of information.

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