



**Stronger and fitter – Together – for the  
Master's use**

**~ From Rhetoric to Reality ~**

# Introduction to this subject



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- **Some of us went into the pandemic with fear, trepidation and uncertainty of the future.**
- **With deaths, job losses, health issues in various forms we had to take a stand and make a declaration of our faith in God.**
- **The word “unprecedented” became everyday use and it became clear that we needed to be intentional if our declarations were not to become mere words; rhetoric.**
- **Unfortunately, we have been made to understand that we are going through a second wave of the pandemic.**



# Do you agree with this assertion?



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**What we have been teaching and preaching should have equipped or made us ready to face whatever was thrown at us but this has not been true with all of us.**

# Taking a reality check



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- **Some of us will do well to acknowledge that perhaps before the lockdown things were not good in certain aspects.**
- **Actually things were rather bad and the lockdown offered some respite from strife that came because of proximity.**
- **Our resolve has been that we are not coming back with the same mess in which we went into the lockdown.**
- **Failure to acknowledge this means that nothing will change for the better and the passage of isolation would have ossified or solidified what was undesirable in the sight of God in the first place.**



# Questions for you, child of God ~ 1



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- 1. Have you (we) really taken advantage of the imposed absence to reflect and make sound Christian decisions so that in our relationships with fellow Christians we will “beat our weapons into plough shares. No more war. No longer our enemies. Only family, sons and daughters of one Heavenly Father.**
  - “4 .... They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.**
  - 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the LORD. (Isaiah 2:4 – 5)**
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# Questions for you, child of God ~ 2



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- 2. Have you (we) really taken advantage of the imposed absence to reflect and make sound Christian decisions regarding our service for the King?**
- 3. Have you (we) really taken advantage of the imposed absence to reflect and make sound Christian decisions regarding our standing with God? Our devotion, prayer life, commitment, resolve and general direction of our walk in the things of God?**
  - Without intentionality, it will be business as usual, same as it ever was, for nothing changes here and we will be much the poorer for it.**
  - Let us not waste the “silver lining” that comes with this pandemic.**



# Strong (Stronger)



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- In the context of our subject, strong or stronger relates to the ability to exert influence or force in order to achieve the things of God.
- Since we are dealing with spiritual matters, we are talking about the influence we can bring to a set of circumstances for good.
- Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. (Ephesians 6:10)
  1. What influence do you have in prayer?
  2. What influence do you have over unclean spirits?
  3. What influence do you have to resolve everyday conundrums? (Being a game changer)



# Fit (Fitter) ~ 1



- **When we talk of fitter, these are the things we have in mind:**
  - 1. How long does your strength last?**
  - 2. Have you got stamina for the long haul?**
  - 3. Are you a nine day wonder, a flash in the pan or a shooting star.**
  - 4. Can you keep on running when others have given up?**
- **But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)**





# Fit (Fitter) ~ 2



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- 5. Will you be tenacious – like Jacob who wrestled all night with the angel as found in Genesis 32:26. *And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"***
- 6. Will you be audacious – Like Joshua who commanded the sun and moon to stand still**
- 7. Will you have resolve – like Elisha who would not be put off by Elijah.**
- 8. Will you now be seeking excellence? – Your motto should be this: “Nothing but the best is good for the Master.”**



# Fit (Fitter) ~ 3



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- **In matters of the mind will you be fitter than Samson?**
- **Does this sound strange to you? Listen to this:**
- **“And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death.” (Judges 16:16 English Standard Version)**



# A picture of the strong and fit



- **Psalm 1:1 - 3**

**1 ¶ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;**

**2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.**

**3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.**



# Together ~ 1



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- It has been said that the strength of a chain is measured by the strength of its weakest link.
- “The overall strength of a chain is not the strength of the strongest link, or even of the average link. The overall strength of a chain is the strength of the weakest link.”
- Since we are the body of Christ we must work together for the betterment of the whole.
- “And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with *it*.” (1 Corinthians 12:26)



# Together ~ 2



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- **We are not to be like Genghis Khan who is quoted to have said: “It is not sufficient that I succeed – all others must fail.”**
- **We must rather listen to the one who said: “Success is sweeter together.”**
- **Deuteronomy 32:30 English Revised Version  
How should one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Except their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had delivered them up?**



# Together – the place of blessing



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- **Psalm 133:1 - 3**

**1 ¶ « A Song of Ascents. Of David. » Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!**

**2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments.**

**3 It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing — Life forevermore.**



# Stronger and fitter ~ How? ~ 1



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- **We will need to come to a place where scripture is taken seriously as the Word of God to be believed and acted upon.**
- **We will not have to explain away those parts of scripture that make us uncomfortable.**
- **The Word will need to become flesh in our lives.**
- **Here are a few examples of what I am talking about:**
- **It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. (Galatians 2:20)**
- **Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. (John 14:23)**



# Stronger and fitter ~ How? ~ 2



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- **Colossians 3:15 – 16**

**14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.**

**15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.**

**16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**

**17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**





# Stronger and fitter ~ How? ~ 3



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- Perhaps, for some of us our strength and our fitness will need a wake up call with an angelic callout or shout out:
- In a sense Israel was in lockdown because “the Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them.” (Judges 6:3)
- Then one day this happened to Gideon:
- And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valour!" (Judges 6:12)
- Until then, let us do the normal stuff!



# Some attributes of the strong and fit



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- **Philippians 4:8 gives us a list of the “whatsoever things” of the Christian. The Christian on the journey of being stronger, fitter and together will manifest these:**
- **Finally, brethren,**
  - 1. Whatsoever things are true,**
  - 2. Whatsoever things are honest,**
  - 3. Whatsoever things are just,**
  - 4. Whatsoever things are pure,**
  - 5. Whatsoever things are lovely,**
  - 6. Whatsoever things are of good report;**
  - 7. If there be any virtue,**
  - 8. And if there be any praise, think on these things.**



# What will stronger and fitter look like?



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- 1. A healthier appetite for the things of God.**
- 2. The insatiable desire to please God.**
- 3. A desire to actually work together with the Lord in His vineyard; with others.**
- 4. Character being transformed daily.**
- 5. Being changed from day to day to be like Jesus.**
- 6. A better representative or ambassador of Christ.**
- 7. The Caleb spirit in full bloom.**
- 8. Contented in God and yet a resolve to press on to the higher calling in Christ Jesus.**
- 9. From me, mine and I to He and He alone.**
- 10. Owners and not hirelings**



# What will stronger and fitter look like?



**Fitter, Stronger, Together**

- **No obstacle will stop you from performing your tasks and vows. Just like Joshua marched all night to defend the Gibeonites.**
- **Joshua 10:6**  
**And the men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp at Gilgal, saying, "Do not forsake your servants; come up to us quickly, save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the mountains have gathered together against us."**



Lord, please grant this plea of ours



Fitter, Stronger, Together

With the help of the Lord,  
we will come out of this pandemic **STRONGER**  
and **FITTER** for the Master's use and for  
**His GLORY**

