



STRENGTH TRAINING!

Growing daily in the things that really matter!

The Mighty Man!

Ephesians 3:14-16

Message #1 of 4

Sermon given on May 17, 2019



**Men's Retreat Session #1 – Friday Evening
Tahquitz Pines Conference Center**

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Mighty Man!

Ephesians 3:14-16

Opening Comments

- Welcome to our 15th annual Men's Retreat
- Our theme for this year's retreat is **STRENGTH TRAINING: Growing daily in the things that really matter!**
- Turn to **Ephesians 3**
- Men are doers! We are naturally inclined to do what needs to be done
- One of the things I started doing at home – when Kelly is struggling to do something around the house – strike the superman pose – “Do you know what you need?” – “What?” – “A man!”
- Men are not better than women, but we are different
- Men tend to focus on tasks – women on relationships – not all
- Men are doers! We become known by what we do – we label our doings
- A common question we ask each other is, “What do you do?”
- I am a pastor – that is one of the things that I do
- I am also a husband, father, son, grandfather
- I have been in the military on a nuclear-powered submarine
- I have been a salesman – I have owned my own business
- I pretend to be a golfer – I am a novice podcaster
- We use these titles and descriptions to relate to one another
- Each of you could come up with your own list
- In fact, I asked you to do that very thing
- The question I would like to put to you tonight is, “Do those things really matter?”
- I am not saying they don't matter, but do they matter as much as we act like they do
- Is there something that matters supremely more than those things?
- This retreat is founded on the reality that there is something that matters more than the things we do
- We will be focusing on a part of our lives that we probably don't give enough attention to – The Inner Man

- And because we don't attend to The Inner Man – most of our doings don't really matter
- Let's pray and then look at The Inner Man
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Mighty Man!**
 - This retreat is based on a prayer by the Apostle Paul for the people in the church in Ephesus
 - **Ephesians 3:14-19**
 - What really matters?
 - When we talk about life, we often talk about legacy
- Legacy: anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.**
- Hopefully, you filled out the second questionnaire
 - Biologically, we all have 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 8 great-grandparents
 - Unless you were raised Mormon, it is highly unlikely that anyone could name all 8 of their great-grandparents
 - Even naming one of them might be hard – I can't do it
 - Even harder might be answering the other questions about them
 - Here is a truth that might explode your reality – your great-grandchildren may not be able to name you – or remember anything about your life
 - For me, that is a very humbling thought
 - What am I doing that really matters, if within three generations my own family probably won't remember me?
 - Let's read our text for tonight and look at what really matters
 - **Ephesians 3:14-16**
 - If I had more time I would explore Paul's theology of prayer
 - Each session will take one part of Paul's prayer
 - In the first part, there are three things that apply to all four parts
 - First, 'that He would grant you' = give, cause, produce
 - What we need, only God can provide
 - That is important because three out of the four are in the passive voice = we do nothing to earn or achieve – we simply receive it

- Second thing that applies to all four – the potential for answered prayer – ‘according to the riches of His glory’ = limitless potential
- Third thing that applies to all four – ‘in The Inner Man’
- None of these things directly impacts the doings of your life
- But because of each of these things the doings of your life are impacted
- For example, I can choose to love my wife through sheer force of will – by my outward – or I can be rooted and grounded in God’s love and let God love her through The Inner Man – which do you think is better?
- There are a couple of verses that teach us about The Inner Man

Roman 7:21-23

I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

- The Inner Man is the part of you that loves God and His perfect law
- Paul also tells us that there are two parts of us **2 Corinthians 4:16** **Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.**
- The outward man is your body, your desires, your passions, your doings – capable of only loving self
- That part of you is perishing and there is nothing you can do to stop it
- Only the inward or inner man is being renewed – or made new or better
- This is why focusing on the outward man is not good – focusing on the doings of your life are a waste of your life
- The outward man is not going to heaven and the doings of your life will not be evaluated based on whether they were good or not
- They will be evaluated based on whether they came out of The Inner Man or not
- Listen guys – it will not matter what you do in this life if your inner man does not reflect these four things
- That your inner man is strengthened with God’s might
- That Christ dwells in your inner man through faith
- That your inner man is rooted and grounded in love
- That your inner man is filled with all the fullness of God

- That is what really matters
- And only as those things become true do the things you are doing begin to really matter
- Men are doers! God made us that way!
- Guys, you may not hear a more important message than what you will hear this weekend – besides the message of the gospel
- You will either do this life doing with the outward man – which is perishing and everything it does is perishing
- Or you do this life doing with The Inner Man who is being renewed day by day – which is eternal and results in God’s blessings and rewards – both now and in heaven
- Maybe you are like me and this message sits a little heavy on your heart
- My study of this text for this message has opened my eyes to my own doings – there is much of the outward man at work than I care to admit
- It has challenged me to examine my life – to look at the state of my inner man
- I can see in my own life a need to pray for and look for these four things in my own life
- My task is to address the first one tonight
- **Ephesians 3:16**
- Paul is praying and asking God to cause the Ephesian’s inner man to be strengthened with might
- The verb ‘strengthened’ is in the passive voice = the subject (The Inner Man) is being acted upon by someone or something else (God the Father through the Spirit)
- The word ‘might’ can also be translated as power and is the same word we use to describe the supernatural power of God
- One of the things that differentiates men from women is strength
- As a general rule, men are larger and stronger than women
- Where does that strength come from? The outward man that is perishing!
- Paul is praying for a different kind of strength – literally, the mighty power of God in The Inner Man

- Paul will tell us later in this epistle **Ephesians 6:10-12**
Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.
- Guys, you might be physically strong, but are you strong ‘in the power of His might’?
- Have you wrestled against principalities – this world’s desire to conform into its image and won?
- Have wrestled against the evil powers of pornography and resisted temptation?
- Have you wrestled against the rulers of the darkness of this age and exercised self-control when you were frustrated or angry?
- Have you wrestled against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places and forgiven someone who doesn’t deserve it?
- I would love to tell you that I win every spiritual battle that comes my way – I don’t – and those closest to me know that
- Too often I allow the outward man, my flesh to fight my battles
- But I have experienced what Paul is praying for – I have been strengthened with might in The Inner Man
- I am learning that I can’t wait for the battle to ask for God to strengthen me in The Inner Man with His might
- Be humble – Pray – ask God to strengthen your inner man
- Be spiritual – recognize that everything in life is spiritual
- Be trusting – learn to trust God to act on your behalf – not all on you
- Be obedient – When God wants you to do something – do it! Now!
- And when He tells to do something, I do it, not in the feeble power of my perishing outward man but in the mighty power of God within me
- Whether it is a spiritual battle or just everyday life, we can learn to handle it the same way
- Guys, men are doers. God made us that way. If you want to do things that really matter, it will be by being strengthened with God’s mighty power in The Inner Man
- It is time to examine yourself – pull out your list – 5 things that matter

- Look at each one of them – ask, ‘Who is doing this – the outward who is perishing or The Inner Man in the mighty power of God?’
- If you are honest with God and yourself – most of you will admit that the outward man is doing most of it
- That can change right now, right here
- Admit it to God and ask Him to strengthen your inner man with His mighty power
- David is going to come up and play some music
- Let God speak to your heart – ask someone there to pray for you
- If the outward man is doing more than one – maybe focus on one for tonight
- **Pray!**