



## Stronger But Not Faster

### Cory Waddell

I want to give proper credit to Nate Miller for the seed thought in a lesson he recently gave during a Bear Valley Bible Institute chapel

We humans face temptations daily as part of the human experience. Sin rears its ugly head attempting to throw us off course in our pursuit of holiness. When that happens, we are all faced with a key decision on what to do. We can either face it head on or flee from it. At first glance, most would probably advocate for standing strong. After all, that's the stuff heroes are made of, right? They dig down deep inside and find the strength to stand tall and fight off temptation. To flee is to show cowardice. Only the weak run! The problem with such an outlook is that it is rarely successful. You see, as a general rule, sin is stronger, but not faster.

Consider the mighty man, Samson (Judges 13-16). As a called judge of God's people, Samson had a unique relationship with the LORD, being endowed with super strength as he maintained his Nazirite vow. Yet, the Bible makes clear Samson also struggled with sexual purity. The book of Judges records multiple relationships outside of wedlock, the most famous of which is with Delilah. How is it that such a man of God was so prone to this sin? I would suggest it stemmed from Samson's desire to face temptation head-on instead of running from it. How many times do you suppose he said, "I'll just go hang out with Delilah tonight. If things get 'spicy' then I'll just leave"? Yet, time and again he found himself in her bed, having lost the arm-wrestling match with temptation. Sin was stronger than Samson.

Now, consider a separate figure who faced a sexual temptation. In Genesis 39, the young man Joseph found himself propositioned by his boss's wife over and over, yet without giving in. This seduction came to a head when, alone in the house, she tried to force herself upon him. Yet, Joseph's response was very different from that of Samson's. Instead of staying put and trying to fight off the temptation, Joseph ran, leaving his outer cloak behind. Even with false imprisonment, this choice to flee temptation was the winning action on Joseph's part. His integrity was eventually rewarded by God. He understood that sin was not faster than he could run.

Hopefully, the applications are easy to see. Many times, we find ourselves succumbing to sin because we have too much faith in our own strength to say know. We purposefully put ourselves in situations we know will result in temptations (often recurring ones), which we justify by saying, "THIS TIME I'll be stronger." Giving in once more, we think, "Well, I wasn't strong enough this time. But next time..." How much wiser would it be if, instead of arm-wrestling sin, we decided to get in a foot race! The best way to avoid temptation is to go the opposite direction, especially when you know it will be there. We want our faith to be strong. We want to be heroic in our spiritual endurance. However, we must never forget that, in head-to-head matches with temptation, sin is usually stronger, but not faster.

# WEEKLY PRAYER REQUESTS

- Courtney Connor will be traveling home soon
- Andy Caddell will be traveling
- Mike Marlowe spot on arm biopsied awaiting test results
- Alma Parrot, Edwards brothers' sister, not doing well
- Bekah Vining, West Blocton resident, has breast cancer. She is young.
- Alexis Hughes, Heather's cousin, has been diagnosed with GBS.
- Harry Green, member of the Church, has cancer and is on ventilator.
- Eric Hiott blood clot in the brain after heart surgery
- Cindy Rooker is at home now
- Lesa Manzella, friend of Debbie, has an upcoming surgery
- Yvonne Cicero's great aunt Nell Tomlin is starting radiation for cancer.
- Bridgett Hobson friend of Juanita, her brain tumor is back. Treatment plan figured out
- Sarah Martin, Heather's Mom, recovery from knee surgery
- Ladon Bracken, friend of Ramays, diagnosed with bone cancer
- Marilyn Shackelford health struggles and is at home.
- Corah Kinard 3 year old is recovering and doing well
- SHANE ACRE'S DAD, Eddie, still in hospital with a stomach abscess
- Kyson Farley, Donna Dailey's grandnephew, has kidney cancer and is on Chemo
- KEN AND BETTY RAMAY and health struggles
- TOM NOLAN and his health
- APRIL HOWTON, friend of Bethany, was diagnosed with Breast cancer
- RHONDA HOLISTER was diagnosed with cancer. Recovering from surgery.
- SHIRLENE CARGILE, friend of Barry, her cancer has come back
- KENZI SWINDLE, 6 years old, is fighting cancer. Treatment plan changing.
- BARBIE SMITH'S FATHER and all of health issues

### ATTENDANCE

Worship A.M. ... 67  
 Worship P.M. .... 32  
 Wed P.M. ....34

### CONTRIBUTION

Last Week.....\$3,625.00

### BUDGET

Weekly.....\$3,000.00

