

(Ephesians 6:10-17, NIV84)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

July 18

Afraid To Launch Out?

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:13

We are told that at the top of every music manuscript of the great Johann Sebastian Bach appear the two Latin words: "Iesu, iuva!" "Jesus, help!" The world's mightiest master of music did not dare place his fingers on the organ or compose a single melody without first calling on his Lord for help.

In Luther's Small Catechism we are instructed to begin every day with a prayer to God for guidance and protection and then "go joyfully to our work, singing a hymn", trusting that God will grant success to all that we undertake in his name.

The secret of successful living, of progress and achievement, lies not in mastering the techniques of applied psychology or in the bold confidence which comes from "knowing all the angles"-but in remaining close to the Savior, who is the Source of all our strength.

"I am the Vine, ye are the branches", says Jesus, "he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing." Paul had experienced the truth of this assertion. That is why he could say: "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

Let us make sure that in every task we undertake, be it great or small, we are undertaking it with Christ and for Christ; then let us be confident that we will prevail through Christ! Having committed our endeavor to him in prayer, let us launch forth cheerfully, boldly, confidently-knowing that in

all things he will guide and bless us. Whatever the outcome, be it success or seeming failure, we will know that our tasks have been performed in his name, and the results will be in accord with his good and gracious purpose.

With the Lord begin thy task, Jesus will direct it;  
For His aid and counsel ask, Jesus will perfect it.  
Every morn with Jesus rise, And when day is ended,  
In His name then close thine eyes; Be to Him commended.

(Devotion from: Daily Walk With God - Meditations for Every Day, by Herman W. Gockel)