

# **JESUS ZONE: THE FUSION OF FAITH & FITNESS**

## **THE MEANING OF STRONG LIFE 610: Living Strong in the Face of Evil**

### **The Book of Ephesians, Chapter 6, Verses 10-20 Written by Strong Life Chaplain Paul Simmons**

There are many lessons we can take away from the gym. At my age (old), an intense workout leaves me feeling as though I've been beaten up; to the point sometimes that I am tempted to quit. Powerlifters know, however, that this is simply the process of tearing down our muscles so they can grow and give us greater strength to lift heavier weight. One of my favorite expressions about the process (which I believe originated with the Marines) states that "pain is simply weakness leaving the body."

The mission of Strong Life Christian Ministries, which is encompassed in Ephesians 6:10, contains a similar challenge to believers: **"Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might."** This principle applies to life as well. Paul, who authored the Book of Ephesians, was no stranger to facing evil. And at the same time, no one was more determined fight that evil off, grow stronger in their faith, and help others in that same journey.



***STRONG LIFE Chaplain Paul Simmons leads lifters in prayer at the 2013 Mid-Atlantic Open***

Another parallel is that the evil that we fight against is invisible. According to Paul, our battle is against forces which we cannot see. Isn't this evident when we watch the news and see people doing all sorts of evil? Recently, we have witnessed the bombing of innocent people in Boston, the kidnapping, rape, and ten-year abuse of three women and a little girl in Ohio, and the indiscriminant

murder of children in Philadelphia by a doctor with no belief in the sanctity of life. When these events occur, our television sets are bombarded with talk shows and news stations featuring so-called experts debating and discussing *why* these things happen. As believers we know why: there is evil in the world, and we must fight against this very powerful and invisible force.

Be encouraged - we will be fighting evil in the power of Almighty God, not in our own strength. And He provides us with the proper equipment for the battle in Ephesians 6:11-17:

**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. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery**

**darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**

In recent months, lifters within the R.A.W. United family have faced financial and occupational struggles, life temptations, relationship disappointment, and even tragedy. The only way we can lift the heavy weight that life puts on us is to reach to the body of Christ found in this community and fill our bodies with these simple but powerful God-given weapons. As believers, we are able to stand strong against evil armed with *God's Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Good News, Faith, Salvation, and Word*. No evil force can stand against them ... ***just ask the devil how successful he was keeping Jesus in the grave!***

**Be strong!**



**FAITH, FELLOWSHIP, & FOCUS**