

## A Strong Church

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As a Christian, what is important to you in a local church? Large membership, extensive budgets, numerous “ministries”, an active “youth group”, etc.? Or, are you interested in a spiritually strong church which will help you get to heaven? Let’s take a look at where spiritual strength is found:

Spiritual strength is found in being taught the **WORD OF GOD** (Acts 16:5; Ephesians 6:10; Colossians 1:11; 1 John 2:14). Spiritual strength is found in having a strong **FAITH** in God’s word (Romans 4:20; Ephesians 1:19; 3:16-18, 20).

Spiritual strength is found in being a **GENUINE CHRISTIAN** (Philippians 3:10; 2 Timothy 3:5). Spiritual strength is found in being **UNIFIED** with all members (Ecclesiastes 4:12; Ephesians 4:3).

Spiritual strength is found in spiritual **MATURITY** (1 Corinthians 16:13; Hebrews 6:1). Spiritual strength is found in a **FOCUS** on serving God (Matthew 6:22; Acts 2:46; Ephesians 6:5; James 1:6-8).

Each Christian in a local church determines the overall strength of that church. Are you a Christian taught in the word of God? Do you have a strong faith in God’s word? Are you genuine and authentic? Are you unified with all the members? Are you growing toward maturity each day? Do you have a single-minded focus and focus to Christ? - Chris Reeves

## News and Notes

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- September 21-24: Gospel meeting with Tim Haile, 7 pm weeknights, regular times on Sunday.

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290 Warfield Blvd.  
Clarksville, TN 37043

Website  
WBCOC.org

Assembly Times  
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6 pm  
Wednesday: 7 pm

Everyone Is Welcome!  
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# THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.  
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

We often hear this question following natural disasters. I just heard it this week in connection with the Texas / Louisiana flooding from hurricane Harvey. The question is loaded, in that it assumes that God directly and supernaturally intervenes in the affairs of men today as He did in biblical times.

One assumption is built upon another. It is assumed that God directly controls and manipulates weather properties and patterns. It is then assumed that God could (should) also supernaturally interfere with weather patterns in order to prevent destructive weather forces. Hence the question... "Why does God allow (this or that) to be done?" The question is built upon a faulty premise.

While it may be profitable for us to occasionally examine God's reasons for designing things a certain way, this isn't a matter of what God "allows" or doesn't allow — it is a matter of how God works through His established laws. Hurricanes, tsunamis, typhoons and tornadoes do not happen because God arbitrarily decides to afflict and kill certain people at a certain time and location.

These weather events are the occasional consequences of natural weather patterns. Can lessons be learned from these events? Yes, the destruction caused by these powerful forces of nature reminds us of our own frailty and mortality

(James 4:14). They remind us of the uncertainty of material possessions (1 Timothy 6:17). They force us to focus upon the value of the soul (Matthew 16:26) and the importance of preparing for eternity by serving God and meeting the conditions of His grace (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 36-38; 10:43, 47-48; 16:14-15, 30-33; 18:8).

There is also the lesson of neighborly love: As we are seeing right now in Texas, with the tremendous outpouring of help and support given to victims by other people, whether given by those who are nearby or far away, by strangers or by acquaintances, we learn the value of God's second greatest commandment — "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39). While the loss of property is a tragic thing, some of the greatest and most powerful memories that disaster victims and their helpers will have is the help that they were given by others and the help that they gave to others.

While it is understandable for people to think of God during natural disasters, people must be careful to avoid attributing such disasters to God. Solomon wrote, "*I returned and saw that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill, but time and chance happen to them all*" (Ecclesiastes 9:11). Any objective observer knows these things to be true. Injury or death is often the result of being in the wrong place and the wrong time. Many of us have personally experienced situations where we could re-

late to this principle (fatal vehicle situations just seconds in front of or behind you while traveling, weather events...etc). Even those who live in hurricane-prone locations might go for decades without experiencing one. It is a matter of time and chance.

According to Scripture, God created the universe as a sophisticated machine. Scientists are only now beginning to realize and appreciate the complexities of this huge machine. This machine works according to natural laws that God created and initiated at the beginning of Creation (Genesis 1). The Bible says that Christ is the divine force behind these laws (Colossians 1:17), but no New Testament passage teaches that He manipulates or overrides His laws in order to afflict certain people in certain places.

It is a simple matter of divinely established **natural law**. Those who live on the US Gulf or Atlantic coasts are more likely to experience a hurricane than those who live elsewhere in the United States. Those who live in tornado alley are more likely to experience a tornado than those who live elsewhere. It is a simple matter of physics.

Let us be careful what we attribute to God, either as action or inaction. The Bible is the only place that we can go to learn God's will. Human speculation is dangerous. - *Tim Haile*