

BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS

Ephesians 6:10-14 (NLT) ¹⁰ *A final word: **Be strong in the Lord** and in **his mighty power**.* ¹¹ *Put on **all** of God's armor so that you will be able to **stand firm against all strategies of the devil**.* ¹² *For **we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies**, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.* ¹³ *Therefore, **put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil**. Then **after the battle you will still be standing firm**.* ¹⁴ *Stand your ground, putting on the **belt of truth** and the **body armor of God's righteousness**.* ¹⁵ *For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the **Good News** so that you will be fully prepared.* ¹⁶ *In addition to all of these, hold up the **shield of faith** to **STOP** the fiery arrows of the devil.* ¹⁷ *Put **on salvation as your helmet**, and **take the sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God.* ¹⁸ *Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.*

1. One of the frequently repeated commands of scripture is to be strong.

2. This directive was given repeatedly to Joshua as he was preparing to replace Moses. Joshua 1:6,7,9, 18 10:25 Deut 31:6

COURAGE IS NECESSARY TO BEGIN AND STRENGTH IS NECESSARY TO FINISH

3. The Psalms express the need to develop strength.

Psalm 27:14 (NLT) ¹⁴ *Wait patiently for the LORD. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.*

Psalm 31:24 (NLT) ²⁴ *So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the LORD!*

4. Paul frequently encourages us to be strong in his letters.

1. STRENGTH AND COURAGE ARE REQUIRED BECAUSE OF OUR ENEMY

1 Peter 5:8-10 (NLT) ⁸ *Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.* ⁹ *Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith.* Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the

*world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.¹⁰ In his kindness **God called you to share in his eternal glory** by means of Christ Jesus. So, **after you have suffered** a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.*

John 10:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ *The thief's purpose is to **steal** and **kill** and **destroy**. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.*

1. We have an enemy is looking for someone to devour.

2. We have an enemy who is focused on devastation.

Devil—accuser

Satan—adversary

Tempter—entices compromise

Liar—deception is a main tool

Serpent—crafty

Angel of light—deception

He creates fear, doubt, and confusion to disrupt God's plan for your life.

3. The times and place we live in are evil. – The world

4. We have a human tendency to want to be comfortable. —
The flesh

Our response—

rebuke the devil in Jesus name

renounce the world and declare allegiance to God

crucify the flesh

2. STRENGTH AND COURAGE ARE DEVELOPED BY TRUSTING GOD

1 Peter 5:10b He will restore, support, and strengthen you, and He will place you on a firm foundation.

2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (NLT) ⁸ *Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. ⁹ Each time he said, “My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. ¹⁰ That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

1. God is the embodiment of perfect goodness.

2. God is working in my life to bring good from it.

Romans 8:28 (CEV) ²⁸ *We know that God is always at work for the good of everyone who loves him. They are the ones God has chosen for his purpose,*

3. My understanding is finite, but God's ways are perfect.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) ⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;* ⁶ *in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*

3. STRENGTH AND COURAGE ARE REASONABLE BECAUSE OF GOD'S PROMISES

1. God is with us.

Joshua 1:9 (NLT) ⁹ *This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”*

2. God has a plan for my life.

I would rather walk in the dark with God than in the light without Him.

3. Jesus has overcome the world. John 16:33

4. Nothing can separate Us from God's love.

Romans 8:35-39 (NLT) ³⁵ *Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?* ³⁶ *(As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.")* ³⁷ *No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.* ³⁸ *And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love.* ³⁹ *No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

5. God Himself will strengthen us.

Isaiah 41:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ *Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.*

2 Chronicles 16:9 (NLT) ⁹ *The eyes of the LORD search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.*

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (NLT) ¹³ *Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong.* ¹⁴ *And do everything with love.*