

STAND STRONG

**365 DEVOTIONS
FOR MEN BY MEN**

OUR DAILY BREAD



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Stand Strong: 365 Devotions for Men by Men

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FOREWORD

It was one of the scariest moments of my life.

I was trying to be the cool dad, so I took my son into the waves to boogie-board. He was holding on to my back, and we took the first wave without a problem. He loved it, and I was the hero.

On the way back out, he and I broke a few waves before lying back down on the boogie-board. A large wave came, and I knew it was the one we should ride. I grabbed the board with my left hand and grabbed my son with my strong right hand. Unfortunately, the wave was larger than I realized, and it threw us off the board. My son fell off my back. I jumped up and looked around. For what felt like much longer than it probably was, I couldn't find him. I looked right and left, desperately searching for my boy. Finally, he came up for air.

Waves are strong. If you try to keep them from coming, well, you will look silly. You can try to keep



yourself from being moved by a large wave, but it's nearly impossible. In the waves we struggle to stand firm because the sand moves with the tides and is stirred by the very waves that push us from here to there. We can't gain the footing we need.

Life often feels like standing in waves. Sometimes our lives are calm, and the waves undetectable as they roll in. Other times, life sends waves of change, anxiety, or problems that knock us down. The firm footing we thought we had in calm waters betrays us as our feet sink into the unsettled sand or get pulled out from under us with the current.

Unlike the ocean sand, however, there's a strong foundation available to us—a firm place to stand when life's waves are more than we can bear. The apostle Paul, a man who dealt with his share of storms, both literally and metaphorically, had a foundation to stand on. In Ephesians, a letter he wrote from prison (4:1), he gives us a hint as to what that foundation looks like.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that



is, Christ. . . . [You] were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. (4:14–15, 21)

How can we stand strong in a world full of powerful waves? By standing on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ. But what does that mean?

This book offers short, daily snippets of how to stand strong because of the truth in Jesus. If you want to find that firm footing available to you through the Scriptures, this book is a great place to start. Our prayer for you is that God will use this devotional to strengthen your faith and help you *Stand Strong*.

May God give you eyes to see and ears to hear His voice in these pages.

Daniel Ryan Day

Author and cohost of the Discover the Word radio program





Stand Strong

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-8

*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.* —2 TIMOTHY 4:7

Andrew Carroll has been urging people not to throw away letters written by family members or friends during war times. Carroll, director of the Center for American War Letters, says, “Younger generations are reading these letters, asking questions, and saying, ‘Now I understand what you endured, what you sacrificed.’”

When Paul was imprisoned in Rome and knew his life would soon end, he wrote a letter to a young man he considered a “son in the faith,” Timothy. Paul opened his heart to him: “The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day” (2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8).

When we read the letters in the Bible from heroes of the Christian faith and grasp what they endured because of their love for Christ, we gain courage to follow their example and to **stand strong** for those who come after us. ❖ *David McCasland*



Strength of a Man

1 CORINTHIANS 16:9–13

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. —1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Some years ago I found myself in an elevator with a couple of men. It was late at night, and we all looked weary. The elevator stopped, and a larger-than-life cowboy ambled in, wearing a battered hat, an old, stained sheepskin coat, and rundown logger boots. He looked us up and down and growled, “Good evening, men.” All of us straightened up and squared our shoulders. We were trying to live up to the name.

Let’s talk about living up to the name *man*. We try to be strong and macho, but often it’s just a façade. Underneath the bravado we harbor a host of fears, insecurities, and shortcomings. Much of our manliness is pure bluff.

Paul was man enough to admit it: “We are weak,” he said (2 CORINTHIANS 13:4). That’s a humbling fact. Yet Paul also insisted that we are to “be courageous” (1 CORINTHIANS 16:13).

How can we be the strong person God meant for us to be? Only by putting ourselves in God’s hands and asking Him to make us that way through His power and enablement. ❖ *David Roper*



The Best Is Yet to Come

DEUTERONOMY 34

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemies before you, saying, 'Destroy them!' —DEUTERONOMY 33:27

Are the best days of your life in front of you? Our outlook on life—and our answer to that question—can change with time. When we're younger, we look ahead. Once we've grown older, we yearn for the past. But when we walk with God, whatever our age, the best is yet to come!

Over the course of his long life, Moses witnessed the amazing things God did, many of which happened when he was no longer young. Moses was eighty when he confronted Pharaoh and saw God miraculously set His people free from slavery (EXODUS 3–13). Moses saw the Red Sea part, saw manna fall from heaven, and even spoke with God “face to face” (14:21; 16:4; 33:11).

Moses lived expectantly, looking ahead to what God would do (HEBREWS 11:24–27). Even when he was one hundred twenty years old, he understood that his life with God was just getting started and that he would never see an end to God's greatness and love.

Regardless of our age, God's “everlasting arms” (DEUTERONOMY 33:27) faithfully carry us securely through each new day.

❖ *James Banks*

