

You Are Strong

Ready:

“Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength.” -- Ephesians 6:10

Set

In the world of sports, strength matters.

Sports require a constant turn of the wheel, and we often pride ourselves on how much we can tackle on our own and rise to the top of our team, conference and sport. We think the more we have on our shoulders, the better we look to those around us. We want to give the impression we can handle the weight, but inside, we're really crumbling.

True strength lies in surrender, in submitting to the Lordship of Jesus and laying our burdens at His feet. Through *His* strength and perfect capability, He will handle what we've been holding. Our job is to trust and obey. As He works in and through us, His Spirit strengthens us for exactly what we need, when we need it. Pushing pause on rushing to deal with things on our own leads to growing pains, but they teach us dependency and intimacy with the God who made us and wants a close relationship.

We become strengthened:

In Christ

This is the key from which everything turns. Through the completed work of Jesus' life, death on the cross and resurrection, He has taken away our sins and brought us into the family of God. Sports can build up physical strength, but it's the spiritual strength of the Lord that sustains us. In Christ, we have freedom, acceptance, everlasting life, fullness, love and so much more. And the same power that raised Christ from the dead lives in us, moving through us and transforming, shaping and empowering us to share Him within our sport and community that are in need of a Savior.

To Stand

When you're competing, your opponent's job is to do everything possible to knock you down and get you off your game. It's the same trick of the enemy. But we are not left on our own to find our footing. God empowers us to rely on His Word to fight back and remind ourselves of our worth, our purpose and the greater plan of His Kingdom come. The Lord is too good to leave us on our own, and the more we notice His movement in our lives, the more our confidence grows. We find firm footing when we dig our heels in the ground and stand against the lies, temptations and sorrow that want to take us down. We will stand victorious in Christ, able to resist worldly pressures with godly wisdom and power.

To Equip Others

We can't keep all this good news to ourselves. It's a two-way street: We receive forgiveness, the Holy Spirit and transformation, and we engage, equip and empower others. We're meant to share what God has shown us and equip our teammates, coaches and parents. Through our own time in the Bible, prayer and communion with church family, God strengthens and shows us how to share what we've learned. This can encourage a teammate who's looking for acceptance, a classmate who just wants someone to see them, the person bagging our groceries and whoever else God puts on our path. We can't keep Him to ourselves; we're meant to share. God will strengthen our hearts and minds to put our faith into practice.

The more we become like Christ, the stronger our spirits become. Humility and surrender may seem like an upside-down way of living, but they make all the difference.

Christ has paved the way; it's time to put what we know into practice as we do daily in our sport.

God will give you what you need. When you rely on Him, you are more than secure; you are strong.

Go

- Have you considered humility as weakness? Why or why not?
- How can God's perspective on this change your thinking as you compete to consider it a strength?
- Choose a person in the Bible to study and take note of all the ways they were strong through God.

Workout

Romans 8:11; Ephesians 6:13; Philippians 4:9

Overtime

"Father, it is such an upside-down way of thinking that we are made strong when we are weak. But we gain Your strength when we are vulnerable, and You have a soft spot for the weak and brokenhearted. Help my heart to rest in You and trust that You are giving me strength. In Jesus' name, Amen."



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