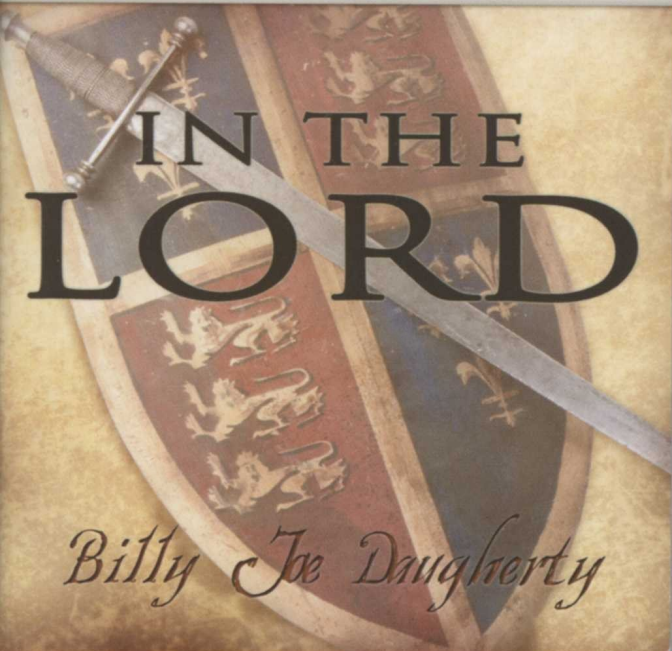
Be Strong

IN THE LORD



Billy Joe Daugherty

Be Strong in the Lord

by
Billy Joe Daugherty

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Contents

1 Be Strong in the Lord.....5

2 Areas in Which We Must Be Strong.....9

3 How to Tap into God's Strength.....13

4 Strengthening the Inner Man.....23

5 Be Strong for Others.....27

6 Select Scriptures on Strength.....31

Personal Prayer of Commitment.....39

1 Be Strong in the Lord

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might
Ephesians 6:10

You can be strong in the Lord. In fact, to "be strong in the Lord" is a command. It's not a suggestion, an invitation, or an option.

You can be strong academically, physically, financially, politically and yet be weak in the Lord. In Ephesians 6, Paul is talking about spiritual strength—the strength that the Lord imparts. He isn't talking about our wisdom or physical might. It is those who know the Lord who will win the battles in this hour. We are to be strong in the power and in the might of the Lord.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles (the plots, schemes, or plans) of the devil.
Ephesians 6:11, NKJV

The armor of God is the strength of the Lord. If we don't have the strength of the Lord, we will not be able to stand in this hour.

First Peter 5:8 says that we are to be sober:

> **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.**

To be sober means "to be alert, not slumbering spiritually." We are to be vigilant, which means "to be watchful and attentive."

Who is the devil going to devour? Scripture says he is going to devour the weak. Those who are strong will stand against the devil's plots and schemes. That's true in a flock of sheep. The wolf comes against the straggling, the weak and the separated sheep, not against the strong leader or a unified pack. If you have some goats, he's not going to come against the ram with horns and full strength. He will look for the weak one.

In Christ, we have the ability to be strong. We need the strength of the Lord to do what we are called to do and to stand against every plot and

scheme of the enemy. God's strength will put us over the top of any hurdle or circumstance.

2 Areas in Which We Must Be Strong

We need revelation strength to be able to discern which pathway to take, because one of the schemes of the devil is to get a person on the wrong path. John 10:3-5,27 says:

> **...The sheep hear his voice (the voice of the Lord): and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**
>
> **And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.**
>
> **And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.**
>
> **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.**

God's sheep will not hear the voice of a

stranger. You and I will not hear the voice of a stranger, because we are God's sheep.

If a person isn't strong in this area of God's Word, he will hear all kinds of voices and will never know which one is God, which one is himself, which one is the 6:00 news, or which one is the devil. We need to be strong in hearing from the Lord.

We must be strong against sickness and disease. One of the plots and plans of the enemy is to knock people off course and sideline them through sickness and disease. First Peter 2:24 says, **"...By whose stripes ye were** (past tense!) **healed."** Matthew 8:17 says, **"...Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."**

To be strong in an area is to believe and meditate upon what God says in His Word about the particular area and to put His Word above symptoms or a medical diagnosis. In other words, His Word is given first place in our lives, and it is held as the highest standard of truth! That doesn't mean we ignore a medical diagnosis. It simply means it is subject to God's Word.

We need to be strong so we aren't burdened

down under the oppression of financial bondage. The devourer must be stopped from stealing the harvest from the financial seeds we have planted. To be strong in this area, you can meditate upon 3 John 2: **"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."** As a tither, you can meditate upon Malachi 3:11 that says God will rebuke the devourer (Satan) from every area of your life.

We must be strong against the enemy's attacks against the mind. If he isn't stopped, he will come with negative thoughts, imaginations, feelings, emotions, opinions and world ideas. People often get weary and oppressed, and they are under a cloud of confusion. We need to be strong to continually maintain a clear, sound mind and to have the ability to accurately discern the things that could lead to undesirable consequences. You can meditate on 2 Timothy 1.7:

> **I HAVE NOT BEEN GIVEN A SPIRIT OF FEAR, BUT OF POWER AND OF LOVE AND OF A SOUND MIND.**

3 How to Tap into God's Strength

The Lord will give strength unto his people....

Psalm 29:11

God gives strength to His people, but there are some things we need to do to tap into it.

Knowing God Brings Strength

In Daniel 11:32, speaking about the end time, Daniel says there will be a group of people who will follow their wicked imaginations, but in this verse, he also gives the flip side of it. He says, **"...But the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."**

One of the ways to tap into God's strength is "to know Him." When we "know Him," we will have the things we need, including strength. It goes back to Matthew 6:33: **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."**

If we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all the other things we need, including strength, will be added to us. Those who know their God will be strong, and instead of being overcome, they will do great exploits.

One member of our congregation recently preached in Siberia. That took great spiritual strength. It took financial and mental ability. His family was strong enough so he could leave them. Each of these areas had to be strong for Jim King to do exploits for the Kingdom of God. He had to have something spiritually in him so he wasn't just going through the motions. He had power to deliver the Word of the Lord.

All of these areas in our lives must be strengthened with the might of God so when He has a door of opportunity open to us, we will be equipped to walk through it.

When a door opens to some people, they say, "I'd like to go. I really want to meet that need. I'd really like to do the exploits and see that work happen." We are not to be standing back with rationalizations, apologies, or excuses. We are to do exploits. They that know their God shall do exploits!

Abiding in the Word Brings Strength

John wrote to the young men, to the children and to the fathers, but he said to the young men: **"...I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one"** (1 John 2:14).

To the degree the Word abides in us, we will have strength. When the Word is on the inside and we are dwelling in it, meditating on it, chewing on it and feeding on it, we will be strong.

The time to get ready for sickness is not when you are sick. The time to get ready to be strong against sickness and disease is while you are in perfect health. Now is the time for you to be filled with the Word of God on healing.

The time to get strong on finances is not when the financial systems of the world collapse. Now is the time to meditate on the Word regarding God's provision of prosperity.

A few years ago, people were saying, "Major financial systems will collapse in America." It was spoken. In fact, we said it at Victory Christian Center, but who would ever have dreamed that we

would have so many banks fail across our nation, or the savings and loan fiasco that has cost our country billions of dollars? Organizations we used to think were "rock solid" suddenly crumbled apart.

Sharon and I flew back from our first crusade trip to St. Petersburg, Russia, on Pan Am. Today, Pan American Airlines is no more. It once was the largest worldwide airline, and now it is gone.

I remember being in the Carolinas, and it looked to me like every plane at every terminal was an Eastern Airlines plane. It was like they had a monopoly on the East coast, except for a few flights. Today, Eastern Airlines is gone.

It's not tomorrow that we need to get ready to handle and stand against financial difficulties. We need to be strong in this area right now.

We need to be full of the Word of God in every area of our lives. We need to be strong against the attacks on marriage, the home and the family. As we look back over the last 25 years, it is like a train ran through the American families, wrecking one after another. It's not the time in the middle of a storm to try to get everything settled.

We need to be ready for attacks and stand strong against them now.

Take the Word and apply it to the area where you recognize you are not strong. Maybe you don't have the strength of the sword of the Spirit on your lips like you need to. Then buckle up in that area of confession, boldly speaking God's Word.

You may be struggling with peace in your life. You need to get into the Word that deals with the peace of God, that it will guard and garrison your heart and mind.

In the epistle of John, the Spirit of God through John was saying to the young men, "I recognize that you are strong because the Word abides in you."

An angel of God was sent to Daniel and said unto him:

> **...O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.**
>
> **Daniel 10:19**

Proverbs 24:5 says, **"A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."**

Joy and Rejoicing Bring Strength

Another way to gain strength in the Lord is through joy and rejoicing. Nehemiah 8:10 says, **"...For the joy of the Lord is your strength."**

Rejoicing will produce strength in your life. Have you ever felt so down you didn't feel like rejoicing? We have all been there at one time or another where our feelings weren't ready to rejoice. It may be a revelation to you that you don't have to wait on your feelings to rejoice.

Many people think, "I would be a hypocrite if I praised God when I didn't feel like it." You may not have your feelings into it, but if you are into obedience because of what God says, God is pleased with your obedience. If you make the effort to obey, trusting God that your feelings will follow, then God will honor that, and feelings will follow faith.

When we come back from our Russia trips, it is rejoicing that gives us strength to preach on Sunday after getting back late Saturday evening,

following a week of crusades with meetings twice a day. You can talk about how tired you are until you become more tired than you were before you started talking. People will say to me, "Pastor, don't you get tired?" I never agree with them. I say, "No, the Lord is the strength of my life, and He has given us great strength every time we have gone to Russia." As we have believed, God has honored our faith.

Psalm 68:28 says, **"Thy God hath commanded thy strength...."** God commands His strength according to the task He gives to us.

Deuteronomy 33:25 says, **"...As thy days, so shall thy strength be."**

Whatever strength you need each day, God will give you more than enough. The Word says, **"...Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"** (Romans 5:20). For whatever sin or temptation you face, there is grace to match it. There is forgiveness to match the sin. There is strength to match the things that you have to do.

When you begin to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice and sing unto Him, not just in public meetings, but privately, it will produce

strength in your life.

Waiting Upon the Lord Brings Renewal to Your Strength

Isaiah said that those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength.

> **Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.**
>
> **He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.**
>
> **Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:**
>
> **But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.**
>
> **Isaiah 40:28-31**

The word wait means "to expect, look for and hope in Him." In your confident attitude of trusting in the Lord, you will renew your strength. The word renew means "exchange." You will exchange your weakness for God's strength. Hallelujah!

Every day you need a divine exchange of strength. When you get up in the morning and you minister to the Lord and wait in His presence, you are serving the Lord. In His presence, those who have no might will be increased in strength. To the faint or to the weak, He will give His power, and they will mount up with wings like eagles. If you are tired of being weak, wait on the Lord!

4 Strengthening the Inner Man

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

Ephesians 3:14-16

Jude 20 says, **"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost."** When you pray in the Spirit, you build yourself up and you are strengthened in your inner man.

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul taught the Corinthians about tongues, interpretation of tongues and prophecy. He said, **"He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself..."** (1 Corinthians 14:4). To edify simply means "to build

up and strengthen."

It's the same context or thought as Ephesians 3:16. You will be strengthened with might by His Spirit in your inner man. Paul was saying, "I am praying for you that you will be strengthened on the inside."

Some people think to edify yourself is selfish. The truth is, if you aren't edified, you probably won't edify anyone else! Another way of saying it is, if you aren't strong, you aren't going to strengthen anyone else. If you're not built up, you won't build anyone else up. But when you are built up, you charge other people with strength, encouragement and edification.

When you work with people who have attitudes of negativism, weariness and heaviness, they will either pull you down or you will lift them up.

Have you ever talked with someone and you are smiling and happy, yet they never crack a smile? Their eyes look away from you. After a while, you quit smiling at them, and soon you are talking with the same attitude as them.

It takes strength not to be moved by what you

see, not just in people, but in circumstances.

How are you going to rejoice and be strong when circumstances look so bleak? There must be a river in you that comes from the very throne of God!

Strength is not dependent upon man. It is not dependent upon others. Our strength comes from God's presence. In the presence of the Lord there is strength. Psalm 16:11 says, **"...In Your presence is fullness of joy..."** (NKJV).

We know that the joy of the Lord is our strength, so if we will live in His presence, we will be strengthened.

Please make the following confession aloud:

> Thank You, Father, for strengthening me in my inner man with might by Your Spirit. I am strengthened and edified as I pray in the Spirit. As I wait in Your presence, Lord, l am strengthened with Your wisdom and might. Hallelujah!

REJOICE!
THE LORD
IS

YOUR
STRENGTH.

5 Be Strong for Others

Romans 15:1 says, **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."** In other words, we are not just to be strong for ourselves, but we are to be strong for others.

Aren't you glad that someone lifted you, helped you, talked to you and encouraged you when you were down, when you needed to be witnessed to and when you needed understanding? Aren't you glad someone was strong enough in the Word to instruct you? It's your time to be strong.

We are strengthened when we come together with other believers. That's why we shouldn't forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the writer of Hebrews stated.

> **Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

Hebrews 10:25

When you assemble together, you are in the presence of the Lord. You are in the presence of other believers. You are in the presence of God's Word. When you pray in the Spirit and you minister to the Lord, you are strengthened.

We need to understand that strength is not just a matter of a vacation. Sometimes people go on a vacation and they need a vacation from their vacation, because it wasn't restful. They didn't get into the presence of the Lord. They didn't get into prayer. They didn't get into the Word. They sought strength in something that didn't provide it. Now, there is nothing wrong with taking a vacation if you can get into the presence of the Lord and into prayer, making it a time of refreshing.

My prayer for you is that you will be strengthened to stand against the devourer. You may know Christians right now who are being chewed on by the devil. They have been led astray. The devil has them under his paw, and they are being devoured, either financially, physically, in their family, in their mind, or in some area of their life where there wasn't the strength to stand against

the devil. You should desire to be strong to set those people free.

This is not meant as condemnation, but people are hit sometimes where they lack knowledge. We are to pray that they will be set free and that God will use you and me to help strengthen them *with* the truth of God's Word.

Psalm 84:7 (AMP.) says we go from strength to strength.

> **They go from strength to strength [increasing in victorious power]....**

Though you may be strong, there is a new level of strength available to you in Christ.

BOLDLY
CONFESS
GOD'S
STRENGTH
IN
YOUR
LIFE.

6 Select Scriptures on Strength

As you meditate on the select scriptures that follow, you will be strengthened in the Lord.

Exodus 15:2

"The Lord is my strength and song...."

Deuteronomy 33:25

"...As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

2 Samuel 22:33

"God is my strength and power: And He maketh my way perfect."

1. Chronicles 16:11

"Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually."

Job 12:13

"With him is wisdom and strength..."

Job 17:9

"...He that hath clean hands shall be

stronger and stronger."

Psalm 8:2

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

Psalm 18:1,2

"I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

Psalm 18:32

"It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect."

Psalm 27:1

"...The Lord is the strength of my life...."

Psalm 21:14

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine

heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Psalm 28:7,8

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped:

therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

"The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed."

Psalm 29:11

"The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace."

Psalm 31:24

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

Psalm 43:2

"For thou art the God of my strength...."

Psalm 46:1

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Psalm 68:35

"...The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people...."

Psalm 71:16

"I will go in the strength of the Lord God..."

Psalm 89:21

"With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him."

Psalm 118:14

"The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation."

Psalm 119:28

"...Strengthen thou me according unto thy word."

Psalm 138:3 (NAS)

"On the day I called Thou didst answer me; Thou didst make me bold with strength in my soul."

Psalm 144:1

"Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my

fingers to fight."

Proverbs 10:29

"The way of the Lord is strength to the upright...."

Proverbs 24:5

"A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."

Proverbs 31:25

"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come."

Isaiah 12:2

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."

Isaiah 35:3 (NAS)

"Encourage the exhausted, and strengthen the feeble."

Isaiah 41:10 (AMP.)

"Fear not; [there is nothing to fear] for I am with you; do not look around you in terror and be dismayed, for I am your

God. I will strengthen and harden you to difficulties, yes, I will help you; yes, I will hold you up and retain you with My [victorious] right hand of rightness and justice."

Daniel 11:32

"...The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."

Joel 3:10b

"...Let the weak say, I am strong."

Habakkuk 3:19

"The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places...."

Haggai 2:4b

"...Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."

Philippians 4:13 (NIV)

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

2 Timothy 2:1

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

Personal Prayer of Commitment

Father, I acknowledge that I have not been strong in You in many areas of my life, and I now recognize the need to be filled with Your strength.

I believe Jesus Christ is Your Son, Father, and that He died at Calvary to pay for my sins to redeem me to new life in You. I confess You, Lord Jesus, as my personal Lord and Savior.

I ask for Your help, Lord, in becoming disciplined to spend daily time in the Word and in prayer that I might become strong in You, abiding in Your presence that my relationship with You might also be strengthened.

Lord, help me to become strong in You so I will be able to pull others from the path they're going on which is headed to hell. I yield to You, Lord, to become a pure, holy vessel, equipped to do the work of the ministry in bringing salvation, deliverance and healing to those around me who are hurting and who have no hope.

Thank You, Father, that because of Your mercy and grace, the old part of my life is gone and today is a new day. In Jesus Christ, I shall fulfill the destiny You have set before me, Lord.

_____ _____

Signature Date

BILLY JOE DAUGHERTY is founder and pastor of Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Victory has a Christian school, Bible Institute and Missions Training Center. Other Victory outreaches include taking the gospel via radio and television to North America, along with shortwave radio and television to other nations, plus the distribution of books, tapes, and videos. He and his wife, Sharon, minister God's healing, saving, and delivering power as a team. Their family works alongside them in the ministry.

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