



**FREE  
EXCERPT**

pray  
a word for  
strength

*Connecting with God One Word at a Time*

editors of guideposts

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Do you not know? Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of  
the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired  
or weary, and his understanding no one can  
fathom. He gives strength to the weary  
and increases the power of the weak.

—Isaiah 40:28–29 (NIV)

## Introduction

Strength. How many of us have watched as a friend or acquaintance dealt with a challenging situation and thought to ourselves, *If only I could be so strong?* It's almost as if some of us consider strength a perpetual state of mind or a hereditary trait that never fluctuates. But it's altogether different than that. It doesn't simply happen. Just as we build up muscle mass with consistent physical training, our spiritual strength requires steady immersion in prayer and the Bible to thrive.

As believers, our source of strength is God.

Dwight L. Moody put it this way: "Real, true faith is man's weakness leaning on God's strength." God's limitless might is available to us everywhere and always. Like all of His attributes, it is unshakable and unfailing.

When David entered the battlefield to face off against Goliath, his courage was rooted in his deep faith in God. He brought five stones to accomplish a task that to most seemed impossible, even foolhardy. Yet he only needed to sling one rock at the giant. It hit its mark perfectly, defeating Goliath. David's trust and God's hand formed an invincible duo.

The same holds true when we move forward in faith. Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians, verse 4:13 (NKJV), "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Jesus understands our needs and provides us strength in ways that fit us as individuals and every unique situation we encounter. He might offer us His strength through a friend's support or a Bible verse that speaks directly to our challenge—or even a word to meditate on throughout the day. Words carry power. When we focus on a specific word, we can gain God's strength through it.

This empowering collection is undated, providing you the freedom to enjoy it at your own pace. An inspiring prayer and a page of scripture accompany each devotion as you delve into a deeper, more intimate experience of God's presence in your life. Space is offered for recording thoughts, prayer requests, or whatever you wish. As you reflect on each encouraging devotion, apply it to your life. And be strong and courageous, for God will be with you wherever you go.

—Heidi Gaul

day 1

## warm-up

My husband teaches and trains people to move from the couch to running a 5K race. Every session begins with a warm-up. He takes them through a series of gentle stretches to warm up their muscles, preparing their bodies for what's to come.

Prayer is my spiritual warm-up. When I take the time to present myself before Jesus, shedding the chaos of whatever's distracting me, I move into a place of deeper connection with Him and prepare my soul for the day to come. The more time I take to warm up my spiritual muscles in His presence, the more apt I am to be like John in the book of Revelation: able to hear the Lord's voice like a trumpet, regardless of how noisy my world is.

—Claire McGarry

***Lord of Peace, quiet my heart so I hear Your voice no matter how loudly or softly You speak. Amen.***

## Words to Pray On

On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.

—Revelation 1:10 (NIV)

The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest. Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.

—Psalm 85:12–13 (NIV)

And it will be said: "Build up, build up, prepare the road! Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people."

—Isaiah 57:14 (NIV)



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## reach

“Let’s ride bikes across the Brooklyn Bridge,” I said. It sounded like a good way to spend a muggy New York day.

By the time we biked into Brooklyn, cruised a few miles along the waterfront, then circled back to ascend the looping incline onto the borough’s famous bridge, I was spent. I pedaled at a snail’s pace.

And then I felt it. The strong, stabilizing boost of my husband’s hand on my back offered hope that we might actually reach Manhattan before the end of the calendar year. He gave my bicycle seat a push, caught up to me, and then reached over, placing his hand on my back again—this time leaving it there and cycling alongside me.

God’s like that, isn’t He? When we’re at our weakest, He reaches into our story, and with a strong, stabilizing hand He propels us on. I love Him for that.

—Laurie Davies

***Jesus, thank You that Your strength is on display most powerfully when we are weak. Remind us to call upon Your mighty name. Amen.***



## Words to Pray On

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

—2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NIV)

I will strengthen Judah and save the tribes of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

—Zechariah 10:6 (NIV)

They realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

—Nehemiah 6:16 (NIV)



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day 3

## clutter

I'm cleaning out the basement. Some of the "treasures" I've collected over the years I can sell, and a few I'll donate. A large part of the accumulation comprises broken things I should have tossed in the trash long ago.

This mess is much like the clutter that fills my mind. Many of my preoccupations don't even belong in my thoughts, like situations and people I can't fix, and emotional baggage I hang on to.

Getting rid of mental clutter and worries is an ongoing process for me. Long after I've completed my basement project, I'll still be handing Jesus my emotional "stuff" and asking Him what I should hold on to and what to let go. And He will continue guiding me, building my trust in Him as He clears out the clutter.

—Heidi Gaul

***Jesus, help me discern the thoughts You desire for me as You declutter my mind. Amen.***

## Words to Pray On

So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

—Matthew 6:31–34 (NIV)

I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him.

—Philippians 3:8–9 (NIV)



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