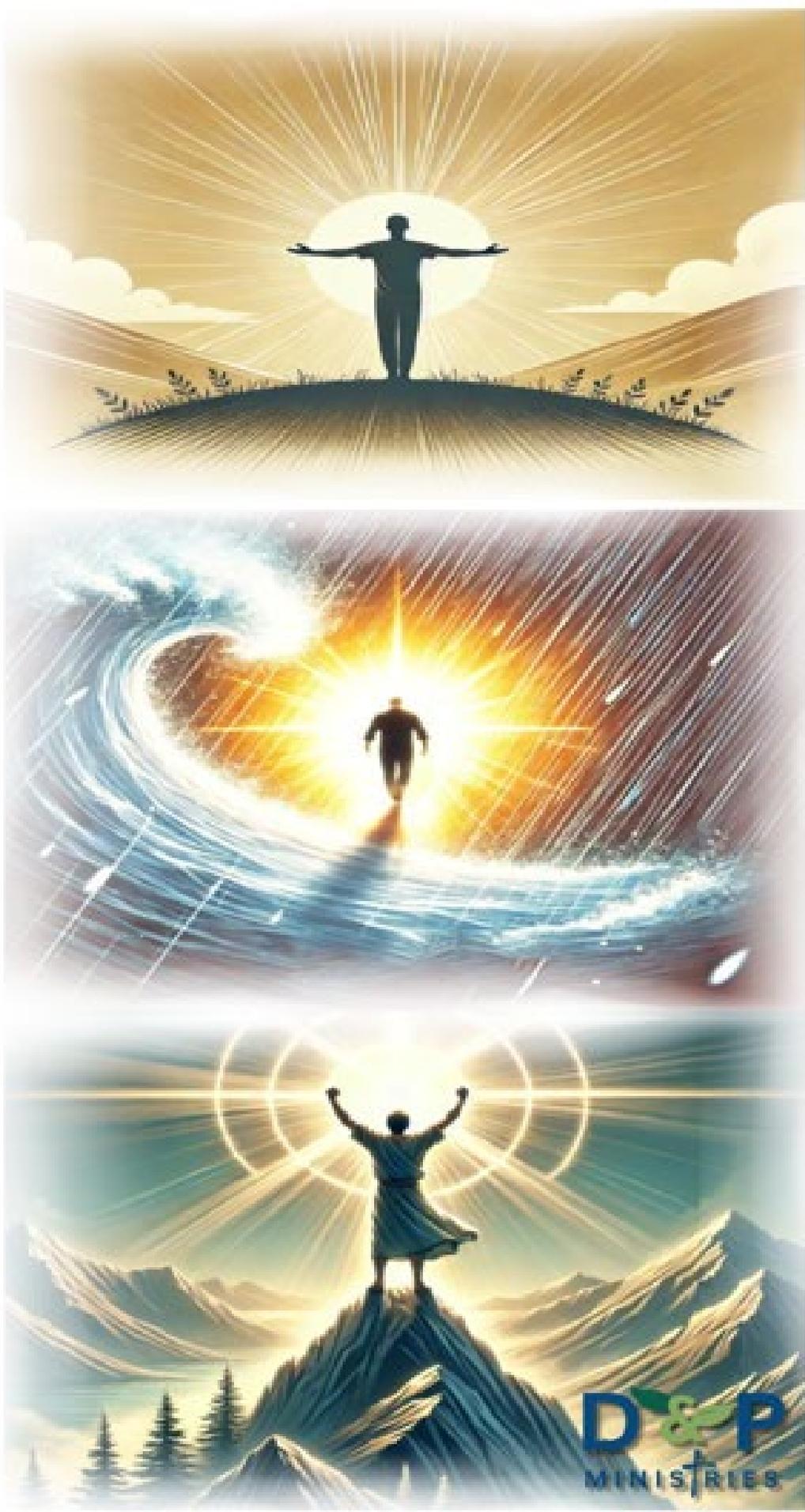


# TO BE STRONG IN GRACE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



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MINISTRIES

# TO BE STRONG IN GRACE WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

2 Timothy 2:1 says:

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

Every Sunday evening, during my prayer and devotion time, I read 2 Timothy 2:1-4. This practice has been a source of joy for years, and much of the passage is now etched in my memory. However, the last time I read these verses, something felt different. What do I mean by "different"? The phrase "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" stood out in a way it never had before. It echoed in my thoughts, making me realize I hadn't fully grasped its meaning. At that moment, the Holy Spirit was teaching me not just for my own growth but to prepare me to extend grace to a brother in Christ who also needed it. I wanted to understand it deeply, not just intellectually, but in a way that truly shapes my life.

Prov 3:5-6

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

The Lord provided help by reminding me of this passage in Prov 3:5-6 that became a permanent part of my thoughts daily. The result was a walk with the Lord that was the foundation for learning how to be strong in His grace. This passage aligns perfectly because both emphasize complete dependence on God rather than on ourselves. What we learn about being strong in His grace is that strength requires trusting the Lord in everything that we do. To do that, He has given us

His Word, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. These elements that make all this work are found in Prov 3:5: *with all thine heart*. This exact phrase is also referenced in Matt 22:37, which is God's greatest commandment: *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

The command to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus is the key connection. Grace is received by faith and trust, not by self-reliance. Just as Proverbs 3:5 warns against leaning on our own understanding, grace reminds us that our strength is in Christ, not ourselves. Strength in grace means letting go of self-sufficiency. To give this meaning, we must consider how many things we do during the day without uttering a prayer for the help that grace provides. Then, all of a sudden, we find ourselves in trouble, and we think, "If only I had prayed!"

Learning about grace can be painful. The Apostle Paul prayed three times for God to remove his thorn in the flesh, but the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient." This is echoed in 2 Corinthians 12:9: *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*. The Lord wanted Paul to learn how to be strong in His grace, which leads to seeing God's direction and purpose for our lives. Grace is not just unmerited favor; it's also His hand directing us in the paths of His will. When we depend on grace, we trust His direction over our own, which keeps us on the right path.

Think of the grace Paul and Silas had in that Philippian prison and what strength it took to praise God for the privilege to suffer for serving Him. We see from this that being strong in grace is essentially living out Proverbs 3:5-6 while trusting in God completely, not relying on ourselves, and allowing His grace to guide and sustain us. Strength in grace isn't about human effort; it's about yielding fully to God's wisdom, power, and leadership.

This teaches us that Christian service must be rooted in God's grace, not human ingenuity or willpower. When we depend on grace, we remain humble and effective. Grace becomes the source of strength in serving the Lord.

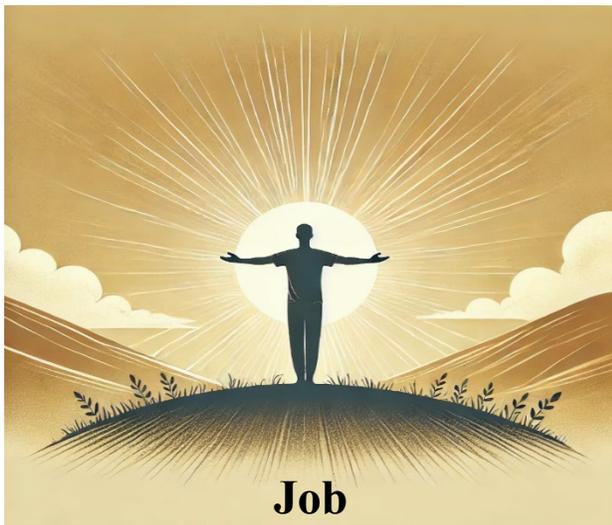
Paul was writing to Timothy, a young pastor who faced false teachers, persecution, and the weight of shepherding the church. He needed strength, but Paul directed him to find it in grace rather than in human strategies. Grace supplied Timothy with wisdom, enabling him to teach, preach, and guide others. It also sustained him under persecution and was the basis of his perseverance. This then enabled him to pass on the faith to others.

Fighting the good fight of faith must be done through grace. Our opposition is overcome not by force but by the power of God's grace. When we rest in our identity in Christ, meaning to follow Him, the grace we need is already there to empower us.

2 Timothy 2:1 is not a verse just of encouragement but a command. We must actively choose to be strong in grace and lean on Christ rather than relying on our own abilities. We must live out our calling from a place of security in Christ, not striving to earn what God has already given us in grace.

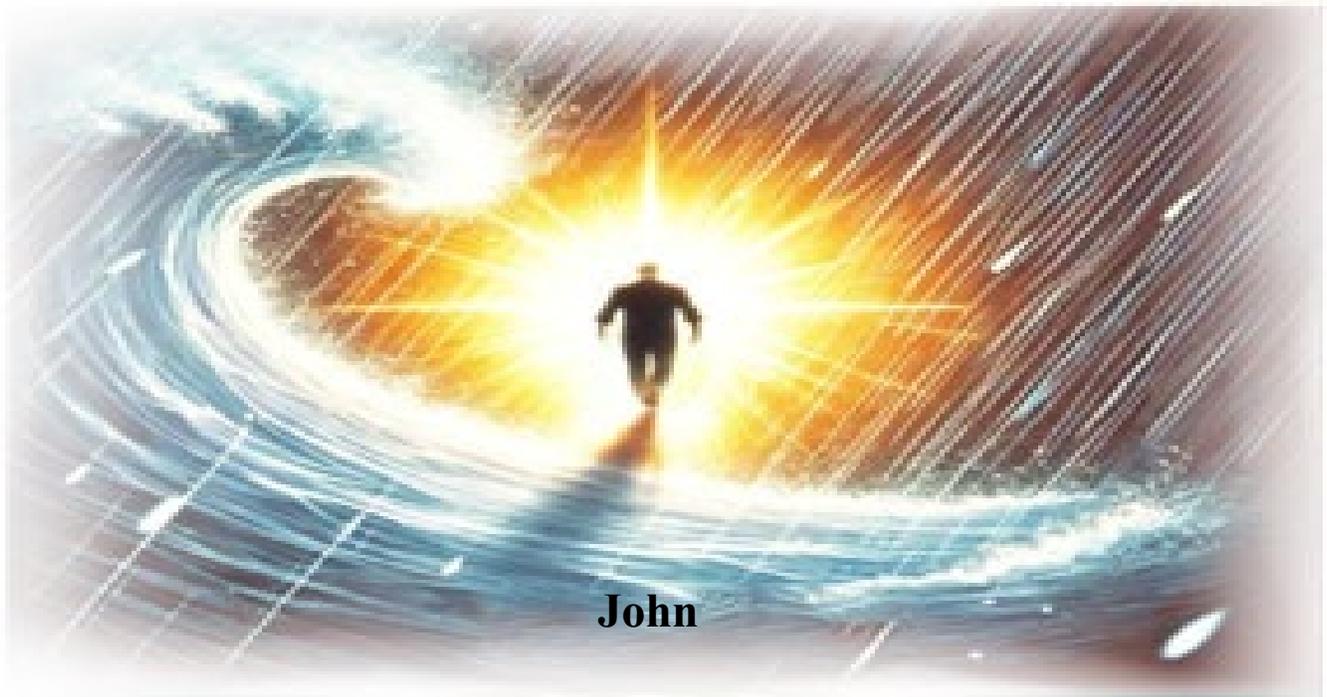
Even in moments of weakness, God's grace remains steadfast. The Lord said in 2 Corinthians 12:9, *My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.* The very fact that you would recognize your need for grace and have a desire to grow in it proves that grace is at work in you. Trusting in His strength is your strength.

The pictures on the cover page symbolize three different patriarchs who found great strength in God's grace. Here are their stories, which speak to each of us who needs to be strong in God's grace.



Could any of us imagine what it must have been like for Job? A man who was perfect in God's sight. Perfect in the sense of being blameless and having such a great love for God that he always kept his heart clean before Him. We all owe Job a great debt of gratitude, for he is one of the greatest examples of being strong in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we have. Job's spiritual stamina is unparalleled. When we think of him, his words often echo in our hearts: Job 13:15 *Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him: but I will maintain mine own ways before Him.* Thank you for your exemplary life, Job.

Now, the Scriptures do not reveal how long Job suffered before the LORD, but some clues help us measure some of the time gaps. At the beginning of his narrative, Job has ten children (Job 1:2), all of whom are grown and feasting in their own homes (Job 1:4). This suggests that they are adults. Then, after his test has ended with God's blessing, he has ten more children (Job 42:13), and his daughters are noted for their beauty (Job 42:15). One of the clearest references to time is the phrase "months of vanity," which suggests several months of suffering at the very least. Job 42:10 tells us that the Lord restored Job's fortunes when he prayed for his friends. He lived 140 more years after that (Job 42:16), which is likely a doubling of a previous 70-year lifespan, fitting the context of double restoration. All these clues can help estimate to some extent Job's and his wife's longevity.



**John**

The picture of a man walking comely through the storm is symbolic of the Apostle John. Imagine a man, now aged, but still walking with the quiet strength of one who knows he is beloved. His eyes, though dimmed by years, still burn with the memory of Jesus, his Savior's gaze, who looked down from the cross and entrusted his own mother to John's care. He is the disciple *whom Jesus loved* (John 13:23), not because he was greater than the others, but because he never ceased to marvel at being loved by the Son of God.

Banished once to Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:9), he received a vision that would shake the heavens and echo through the centuries. But even that glorious unveiling did not swell his pride; it only deepened his awe.

He was once called a "son of thunder" (Mark 3:17), a bold and fiery figure, ready to call down judgment. But age, grace, and the presence of Jesus mellowed him into the Apostle of Love. Still, his words are not soft; they are strong. In his letters, he speaks with the clarity of an old warrior who knows the enemy and guards the truth of God's Word.



This portrait of the Apostle Paul symbolizes a warrior who finished his race with victory. There he stands, weathered, scarred, and unshaken on the mountain peak of a life poured out for Christ. His clenched fist rises toward heaven, not in defiance of death, but in victory over it.

He does not speak like a victim; he roars like a victor. The fight was brutal. The course was long. But he never let go of faith. And now, with one foot in eternity, he sees the reward not as a crown of gold, but as a crown of righteousness. It was a crown not only for him but also for all those who *love His appearing*.

Paul's life was a battlefield, and he wore the armor of God to the very end (Ephesians 6:10–18). His clenched fist is not a gesture of rebellion but of fulfilled purpose. It says to every generation:

“This is how you live. This is how you die. This is how you finish.”

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- Prov 16:3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

### The Holy Bible – The King James Version

- Matt 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

### Proofreading, Grammatical, and Content Support

- The Microsoft Word 365 Ap
- The Grammarly Ap
- The ChatGPT OpenAI, 2024

Now, do you know what it means to be strong in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ? If you want to be strong, He will surely help you. Amen!

Our Father, which art in heaven, please help us to be strong in the grace of Your Son that we may be more like Him each day of our lives.

Love and prayers,

Dave Weeks