

## Keys to the Abundant Life – Living in Standing Mode

If we are to have and enjoy the abundant life that Jesus came to secure for us (John 10:10), there are keys we must use and apply regularly. In addition to living in “receiving” mode we must also live in “standing” mode. Yes, it’s vital that we learn to receive from God, but after having received it’s also necessary to **stand** and keep standing. Have you noticed how much of the time God’s blessings do not manifest immediately? After you’ve exercised your faith, **believing** and then **receiving**, it’s preceded by a period where you come under attack from the enemy. You see, the devil wants to steal the blessings of God.

**Ephesians 6:10-20**, *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and **after you have done everything, to stand**. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”* (NIV)

This passage starts by telling us to, **“Be strong.”** Maybe you are emotionally strong. Maybe you can handle a lot of pressure, work for long hours, day after day after day. Maybe you are the one who is the anchor in your family and everyone leans on you for support. There are many kinds of strength. But the most important one is the strength you have **“in the Lord.”** The strength you need to keep standing! True Christian strength is not of the body. True Christian strength is of the spirit, measured in faithfulness, trust, and perseverance. By Grace we live by Faith. Our (true) struggle is against powers and principalities and therefore, the Lord wants you to be strong - to be able to **stand** and keep standing.

There are many things to fight in this world. For instance you can fight sickness, fatigue, failure of your plans and hopes, questions without answers, and pain without reason. Yes, we all fight in this world. But we also fight in the spiritual world. It is Satan who opposes you. It is he who seeks to sift you and destroy your bodies and souls and trap you in the darkness that he inhabits. Yet the blood of Christ has guaranteed your deliverance from that awful existence. Jesus bought you with His blood and ensured that none of those so bought would be lost. Praise the name of the Lord!

So let's look at the word of God to see what He has to say about that spiritual battle. God wants you to be strong **in Him** because you are in a battle against the powerful forces of darkness. What is this spiritual battle? Verse 12, *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms”*

In Christian’s lives these battles take many forms - financial difficulties, sexual temptation, serious illness, the loss of a loved one, hatred of others, coveting, addictions, and even simple pride. This is not to say that the devil causes you to do all these things and that every bad thing is his fault. For your will is involved. But there are spiritual forces ready to weaken you, to cause you to fall, and then to trample you under foot. They seek to make worse the failings that are already in you. Therefore, being **strong in the Lord** is the only sure way to be able to resist the devil (and keep standing). You are not merely fighting frail men with all their physical and mental deficiencies. You are fighting the innumerable host of fallen angels. It is they who are in control of the world system, and therefore, you must be **strong in the Lord** and fight the battle with spiritual weapons.

I want to speak briefly of three men: Solomon, Samson, and David.

(1) **Solomon** was the wisest of all men. He had great wealth and great power. (2) **Samson** was the strongest of all men. He killed 1000 men with the jawbone of an ass and he toppled a temple with his own hands. (3) **David** was gifted with

devotion. He loved the Lord and sought to honour and glorify God. Just look at the Psalms and their beautiful poetry of adoration.

Yet, all three fell. As strong as these men were they were no match for the schemes of the devil. Satan, in his evil cunning led Solomon to marry many foreign women and through them he fell to the temptation to serve false gods. Samson, as strong as he was, was unable to resist the persistence of a woman. Delilah hounded him into telling the secret of his strength, and through her betrayal, he ultimately fell. David fell into the temptation of lust, then adultery, then murder. Are you any stronger than they?

God wants you to be strong **in Him** because the spiritual battle can only be won, first of all, by putting on **His armour**. Relying on God, not yourself. Why do you take on the whole armour? So you won't be exposed and rely on your own strength, so that you may remain strong. That is why these 6 things were given to you. So that you might remain steadfast in your faith, rooted in the gospel, living in truth, and victorious in battle. It is the armour of God which you wear, that keeps you safe and strong. It has already been field tested and proven itself worthy of your trust. To trust the armour of God is to trust God.

You can trust God's provision for battle, not your own. God's faithfulness to you has already been manifested in the cross. You have already tested the armour of God. You have already trusted in Him and His provision. In regard to testing the armour, I would like to return to David for a moment. When David was about to fight Goliath, Saul wanted to give David his own armour. But David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these, for I have not tested them." So David took them off. Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch, which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine.

Now let me ask you: What kind of protection is a sling against a giant 9-foot tall giant who could crush you between his hands. It is very little protection indeed. But David did not go out onto the battlefield alone. He went with the company of the Lord God. Earlier in his life, David had killed a bear and a lion with nothing more than a sling: Moreover David said, "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." David met Goliath. But it was not the sword that brought the giant down. It was not the arrow, but a stone, that crushed the opposer's head, the way God promised in the garden that the head of the serpent would be crushed. Goliath was a manifestation of that serpent.

Remember, the Armour of God has already been tested. Faith in God is never misplaced. God wants you to be **strong in Him** because the spiritual battle is already won. Jesus came up with the spoils and made a show of them openly. The devil has been disarmed - his weapons have no power to prosper. In order for you to be strong, in order for you to fight the good fight of the faith, you must put on the whole armour of God. And last, but not least, you must stand. Will you? Will you stand, will you be faithful, will you trust in the Lord and rest in His provision for victory in Christ? You must decide. You must act – by keeping on, keeping on! You must live in "standing" mode!