

Chapter 1 : Be Strong In The Lord - SongSelect

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Long before the world was formed, Satan and those who followed after him raged against the forces of good and tried to overthrow the work of God. That struggle has not ended, only shifted battlegrounds. It is ruthless and relentless, and the objective of the battle is your eternal soul and mine. The Apostle Paul spoke of how to arm ourselves for this conflict in these very graphic terms: I like to think of this spiritual armor not as a solid piece of metal molded to fit the body but more like chain mail. Chain mail consists of dozens of tiny pieces of steel fastened together to allow the user greater flexibility without losing protection. I say that because it has been my experience that there is not one great and grand thing we can do to arm ourselves spiritually. True spiritual power lies in numerous smaller acts woven together in a fabric of spiritual fortification that protects and shields from all evil. I would like to suggest to you six ways we may protect ourselves by eliminating any chinks or gaps in our personal spiritual armor. What a wonderful promise! In this spiritual warfare that rages over individual souls, that is what we want more than anything elseâ€”to conquer Satan and to escape the hands of evil men and women who carry out his work. I cannot stress too highly the protective power that comes into our lives through earnest, humble, consistent, yearning prayer. I know you believe that, but in the hectic, pressure-filled schedules you face, I also know how easy it is to let prayer slip. Some of you hit the snooze button on your alarm clocks, thinking you can eke out just another minute or two of sleep; then jerk awake, realizing that you are going to be late for school or work. On such mornings, prayer gets pushed aside, perhaps with a feeble promise to yourself that you will do better tomorrow. Sometimes you return home late at night, exhausted and eager to collapse into bed. You may go through the motions of prayer in a perfunctory and superficial manner, but that is not the kind of prayer that helps us conquer Satan. You need to find a time and place where you can be alone with Heavenly Father and pour out your heart to Him, that you might add strength and power to your spiritual lives. Every honest and sincere prayer adds another piece to chain-mail armor. Perhaps there are some of you who have slipped into patterns of behavior that you know in your heart are displeasing to the Lord. Nephi said it very clearly: It is when we are lost in the mists of darkness and cannot find our way that we most desperately need the influence of the Lord. Nowhere in all of the scriptural injunctions on prayer do we find the suggestion that we must first be perfect in order to communicate with God. My friends, one of the most important ways to clothe yourselves in the armor of God is to make sure that prayerâ€”earnest, sincere, consistent prayerâ€”is part of your daily lives. Knowledge gained through our study of the scriptures teaches us how to get protection from the devil for ourselves. Note the choice of verbs Nephi used. He did not talk about merely reading the scriptures. He did not suggest that we only study the word of God. This implies much more than a cursory, occasional reading. Not only do we need to read and study and learn the scriptural content; we must hearken to it, follow the principles taught therein, and cling to those principles as though our very lives depended on itâ€”which, if we are speaking of spiritual life, is literally true. Here are some practical suggestions that I hope will help you derive greater power from your study of the scriptures: If possible, set a consistent time and place to study when you can be alone and undisturbed. Always have a marking pencil ready as you study. Make notations in the margins. Make the scriptures yours by marking them. Commit yourself to study for a set amount of time rather than to just read a chapter or a certain number of pages. Study topically as well as chronologically. Both approaches have merit, but we need to go to the Topical Guide or the index from time to time and read all that the Lord has said on repentance, faith, or some other principle. Take time to ponder, reflect, meditate, and pray about what you read. There are several interesting things about this scripture. First is that the Lord gives us weaknessesâ€”not sin, but weaknessesâ€”so that we may be humble. Think about that for a moment. If we were perfect in every respect, it would be hard to be humble. Even in specific things, humility comes harder to those who are very strong in one area or another. The woman or man who is remarkably beautiful or handsome can easily become proud of her or his appearance. A brilliant scholar may look down in condescension on those less intellectually blessed.

Our weaknesses help us to be humble. Then comes the promise. Can you see the significance of that promise? One of the signs of our day is how frequently we use the word addiction to describe destructive behavior. We talk about being addicted to alcohol, to drugs, to pornography. These are all insidious and powerful evils. One of the most devastating effects of sin is that it weakens you, binds you, brings you down to slavery. If you will but humble yourselves and turn to Them, then Their grace, Their enabling power, can not only help you throw off the chains of sin but actually turn your weaknesses into strengths. Brothers and sisters, how I long to have the reality of that promise sink into your hearts. Are you struggling with some sin or weakness? It can be something as simple as not having the willpower to rise in the morning early enough to have time for scripture study and prayer. It can be something so powerful, such as Internet pornography or lack of moral self-control, that you feel you have been pulled down into an abyss and there is no hope for you. Do you find yourself hating what you are doing but not able to find the willpower to turn away from it? Then reach out and humble yourself. But you must make the first move, which is to humble yourself and realize that only in God can you find deliverance. Watch Yourselves In his last great address to his people, King Benjamin said: A watchtower is generally raised so that someone can climb to the top and see a greater distance. In this way, they are alerted to danger or threat much sooner than they would otherwise be. The same principle holds true in our lives. We can raise watchtowers that help us deal with threats before they actually descend upon us. Let me give some examples. Bishops often hear in confessions of moral transgression a statement something like this: Somehow, we got carried away, and then it was too late. These are simple things, such as limiting the time they are alone together; strictly avoiding dark, isolated places; and setting strict limits on the bounds of their physical affection. To wait until you are caught up in the passion of the moment to start building watchtowers is to wait until the enemy is upon you, and often it is too late. I know that some of you are struggling with the tenacious power of Internet pornography. You come away from such encounters ashamed and sickened, vowing that you will never again allow yourself to give in to such temptation. Such determination is good, but you need to take intervening action when you are calm and away from the influence of those images. Move your computer into a room where there is always the possibility of someone walking in on you. Make sure the monitor faces the room so that others can see what is on the screen at any time. There are inexpensive software programs that help screen out pornographic sites and unsolicited pornographic e-mail. Take action when you are strong so that if you are tempted you will have armed yourself and it will be much more difficult to fall. It is such a logical thing to prepare for danger or discomfort in the natural world. Mountain climbers are very careful to pack the proper gear. Arctic explorers do not wait until the blasts of subzero winds strike them to decide what clothing they need. How does one waste the days of his or her probation? Turning to sin is surely part of it, but there is another, more subtle way, a way that may not seem evil at all. In the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord gave a similar warning in these words: Why would I speak of that with you? Because one of the ways Satan lessens your effectiveness and weakens your spiritual strength is by encouraging you to spend large blocks of your time doing things that matter very little. I speak of such things as sitting for hours on end watching television or videos, playing video games night in and night out, surfing the Internet, or devoting huge blocks of time to sports, games, or other recreational activities. These activities are not wrong in and of themselves unless, of course, you are watching salacious programs or seeking out pornographic images on the Internet. Games, sports, recreational activities, and even television can be relaxing and rejuvenating, especially in times when you are under stress or heavily scheduled. You need activities that help you to unwind and rest your minds. It is healthy to go onto the soccer field or the basketball court and participate in vigorous physical activity. But I speak of letting things get out of balance. It is not watching television, but watching television hour after hour, night after night. Does not that qualify as idling away your time? What will you say to the Lord when He asks what you have done with the precious gift of life and time? Surely you will not feel comfortable telling Him that you were able to pass the ,point level in a challenging video game. One devastating effect of idling away our time is that it deflects us from focusing on the things that matter most. Too many people are willing to sit back and let life just happen to them. It takes time to develop the attributes that will help you to be a well-balanced person.

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I Must Tell Jesus What A Friend Just As I Am Files will be available directly after payment is complete. It has been tremendously enjoyable for me. I can say without a doubt that GOD gave me these arrangements, because they are very beautiful. Some examples are piano with flute, or piano and guitar, or piano with violin. I truly believe GOD wanted it to be included in this volume. HE is so worthy to be praised! Get all five volumes 75 songs! See the individual listings above for all the song titles. We all need to be reminded that we should be very thankful for our freedoms. Many lives were sacrificed, and many lives were damaged beyond repair with permanent scars. I pray these arrangements will touch hearts, as they are sang and played. This volume came during the toughest time of my life. On June 2, , my Dad went to heaven. It was a joyful graduation for him, but I miss him terribly. He was a godly man with a soft and tender heart, yet a strong man, whose life touched so many people and is continuing to do so. Since he also had a love for music and was a song leader in church for many years, he would be pleased to know this volume is in honor of him. Enjoy playing and singing these songs. HE paid for us to be free from sin by His death on the cross. And remember 2 Chronicles 7: It has been even more than I expected. Once a student has a grasp of the basic fundamentals of music most can begin playing many of these songs in their beginning year. This brings me such great satisfaction and is very rewarding. Jason and Monica were married in , and they give GOD all the glory for any accomplishments in their lives. Contact Monica with questions about the books or to order hard copies. I practice it even more than my Lesson book! Some of them make me think of my childhood days, when we used to sing them. May I play another one? These services are funded by grants, donations and fundraising enterprises such as the one you are looking at now. We would like to thank Monica and Jason for making this possible. It is the mission of AAEC to serve adults in Avery County with developmental disabilities, and their families, by providing vocational, educational, residential, and social opportunities and support.

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