

# Standing *Strong*

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# Outline

- *Challenges* in life
- Stand *strong* amidst *trials*
- Practice standing *strong*

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# Have you been facing *challenges* in your life?

- Walk/hike/run in the darkness alone
- Make decisions under pressure and uncertainties
- Live/study/work with bullies
- Feel weak, overwhelmed, or tempted to give up

## ***Trial**s* are inevitable for believers

- They are part of our spiritual journey
- They test but also refine our faith
- Read Job 1:13-19
- Read Job 2:7-10

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# What would *Jesus* do?

- Then *Jesus* was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the *devil*. – Matthew 4:1
- Read Matthew 4:2-4; 5-7; 8-10
- Then the *devil* left him, and *angels* came and attended him. – Matthew 4:11

# Facing crucifixion as the ultimate *trial*

- Betrayal by Judas
- Abandonment by many of his disciples
- Unjust arrest
- Physical suffering
- Emotional distress
- Public humiliation



**God** uses **trials** to build character and endurance

- Consider it **pure joy**, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face **trials** of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces **perseverance**. Let **perseverance** finish its work so that you may be **mature** and **complete**, not lacking anything. – James 1:2-4

# How to respond to those who are condescending and manipulative?

- You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' – Matthew 5:38
- But I tell you, do not resist an **evil** person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them **the other cheek** also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over **your coat** as well. – Matthew 5:39-40
- If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them **two miles**. – Matthew 5:41

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# Put God first

- Trust in the **Lord** with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. – Proverbs 3:5-6
- But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. – Matthew 6:33

## Stand **strong** with prayers

- Do not be **anxious** about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to **God**. – Philippians 4:6
- And the peace of **God**, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in **Christ Jesus**. – Philippians 4:7



# Stand **strong** in community

- And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward **love** and **good deeds**, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but **encouraging** one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. – Hebrews 10:24-25



A dark, atmospheric photograph of a forest path. The path is illuminated by a soft, ethereal light, possibly from the moon or a distant light source, creating a misty or foggy effect. The trees are tall and thin, with bare branches, suggesting a winter or late autumn setting. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

# Closing prayer