365 Devotions for Men by Men

Our Daily Bread
Andrew Carroll has been urging people not to throw away letters written by family members or friends during war times. Carroll, director of the Center for American War Letters, says, “Younger generations are reading these letters, asking questions, and saying, ‘Now I understand what you endured, what you sacrificed.’”

When Paul was imprisoned in Rome and knew his life would soon end, he wrote a letter to a young man he considered a “son in the faith,” Timothy. Paul opened his heart to him: “The time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day” (2 Timothy 4:6–8).

When we read the letters in the Bible from heroes of the Christian faith and grasp what they endured because of their love for Christ, we gain courage to follow their example and to stand strong for those who come after us.

David McCasland
Strength of a Man
1 CORINTHIANS 16:9–13

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. —1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

Some years ago I found myself in an elevator with a couple of men. It was late at night, and we all looked weary. The elevator stopped, and a larger-than-life cowboy ambled in, wearing a battered hat, an old, stained sheepskin coat, and rundown logger boots. He looked us up and down and growled, “Good evening, men.” All of us straightened up and squared our shoulders. We were trying to live up to the name.

Let’s talk about living up to the name man. We try to be strong and macho, but often it’s just a façade. Underneath the bravado we harbor a host of fears, insecurities, and shortcomings. Much of our manliness is pure bluff.

Paul was man enough to admit it: “We are weak,” he said (2 CORINTHIANS 13:4). That’s a humbling fact. Yet Paul also insisted that we are to “be courageous” (1 CORINTHIANS 16:13).

How can we be the strong person God meant for us to be? Only by putting ourselves in God’s hands and asking Him to make us that way through His power and enablement.

David Roper
The Best Is Yet to Come
DEUTERONOMY 34

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out your enemies before you, saying, “Destroy them!”—DEUTERONOMY 33:27

Are the best days of your life in front of you? Our outlook on life—and our answer to that question—can change with time. When we’re younger, we look ahead. Once we’ve grown older, we yearn for the past. But when we walk with God, whatever our age, the best is yet to come!

Over the course of his long life, Moses witnessed the amazing things God did, many of which happened when he was no longer young. Moses was eighty when he confronted Pharaoh and saw God miraculously set His people free from slavery (EXODUS 3–13). Moses saw the Red Sea part, saw manna fall from heaven, and even spoke with God “face to face” (14:21; 16:4; 33:11).

Moses lived expectantly, looking ahead to what God would do (HEBREWS 11:24–27). Even when he was one hundred twenty years old, he understood that his life with God was just getting started and that he would never see an end to God’s greatness and love.

Regardless of our age, God’s “everlasting arms” (DEUTERONOMY 33:27) faithfully carry us securely through each new day.

James Banks
As Is

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14–21

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

—2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

The beat-up old car sits on the used-car lot, rusty and forsaken. Years of abuse and hard driving have taken their toll.

A man walks onto the lot and is attracted to this rust bucket. He plunks down cash, and the salesperson hands over the keys while saying, “I’m selling you this car ‘as is.’” The new owner just smiles. He knows his cars, and he’s about to restore this castoff to its former beauty.

Across town, a troubled man sits in forlorn sadness, contemplating where he went wrong. Years of abuse and hard living have taken their toll. He’s been rejected so many times he feels he has little value. After all that misery and pain, he’s sure he will be left on life’s junk heap forever.

Then someone tells him about Jesus. Someone mentions that Jesus specializes in castoffs and that He is waiting to transform anyone who trusts Him. Someone tells him that Jesus will take him “as is.” He believes. He trusts. And Jesus begins to restore another lost person to the abundant life He has promised.

◆ Dave Branon
The Big Comeback
1 JOHN 1

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

—1 JOHN 1:9

While playing in the NFL, Chad Pennington suffered multiple career-threatening type of injuries. Twice his injuries forced him to endure surgery, therapy, and extensive training to get back onto the field. He not only returned to playing but he also excelled so much he was twice named Comeback Player of the Year. Pennington’s efforts were an expression of his determined spirit.

Spiritually, when sin and failure break our relationship with God and sideline our service, determination alone cannot restore us to rightness and usefulness. When we are sidelined by sin, the path to a comeback is confession. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 JOHN 1:9).

For us to be able to recover from our spiritual failings, we depend on the One who gave himself for us. He gives us hope. Christ, who died for us, loves us and will respond with grace as we confess our faults to Him. Through confession, we can find His gracious restoration—the greatest of all comebacks.

*Bill Crowder*
A successful Christian businessman shared his story at church. Candid about his struggles with faith and abundant wealth, he declared, “Wealth scares me!”

“But,” the businessman stated, “I’ve learned a lesson from Solomon’s verdict on the abundance of wealth. It’s all ‘meaningless’ (ECCLESIASTES 2:11). The man determined not to let wealth get in the way of his devotion to God. Rather, he wanted to serve God with his assets and help the needy.

Throughout the centuries, God has blessed some people materially. We read of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 17:5, “The LORD established the kingdom . . . so that he had great wealth and honor.” He did not become proud or bully others with his wealth. Instead, “his heart was devoted to the ways of the LORD” (V. 6). Also, “he followed the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD” (20:32).

The Lord is not against wealth, but He is definitely against the unethical acquisition and wrong use of it. He is worthy of devotion from all His followers.

Lawrence Darmani
Windtalkers
2 PETER 1:19–21

For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. –2 PETER 1:21

Their contribution to victory in World War II was enormous, but few people even knew about them. In 1942, the US Army trained twenty-nine young Navajo Indians and sent them to a secret base. These people, called “windtalkers,” had been asked to use their native language to devise a special code the enemy couldn’t break. They succeeded! The code was never broken. It secured and speeded up war communications.

By contrast, the Bible was not sent down to us in some unbreakable code impossible to understand. Although it contains rich imagery, vivid metaphors, and the record of magnificent visions, it was written by human authors to give people the message of God’s love and salvation.

That message is clear and unmistakable. The biblical writers were moved by God’s Spirit to record exactly what He wanted us to know. For centuries people have been freed from their sin and guilt by believing His message.

We owe a great debt to the writers of Scripture, who received God’s Word and wrote it down. So let’s read it often.

David Egner