

J . D . P E A B O D Y



PERFECTLY
SUITED

THE ARMOR OF GOD
FOR THE ANXIOUS MIND

This is the book I needed in my back pocket when I first was diagnosed with anxiety. Packed with wisdom, practicality, and truth you can hang onto, this book will be one you reference often and recommend to others. J. D.'s story is a must-read for anyone who has ever battled with an anxious mind or wondered, "Where is God?" in the midst of their own mental storm.

Hannah Brencher

*Author of **Fighting Forward** and **Come Matter Here***



J. D. Peabody offers a wise, kind, and deeply biblical understanding of what happens in the brain, body, heart, and soul of one who wrestles with anxiety. To be human is to fear. J. D. helps us understand and embrace how our body engages the process in a manner that will enable us to receive the presence of God as our comfort and ally.

Dan B. Allender, PhD

Professor of Counseling Psychology

The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology



This book is medicine to the soul—not just an important book but a very comforting and even paradigm-shifting book for all who think that God is on the side of winners. Christ is our armor! What better news can we have in our anxious lives?

Michael Horton

**Westminster Seminary California, host of the White Horse Inn
podcast and author of *Core Christianity***

I've been hearing sermons and studies on "putting on the whole armor of God" my whole life. But honestly, I've never known what it actually looked like to apply that idea to my everyday living. *Perfectly Suited* opened that door for me, and has given me an eminently practical, honest revelation on the topic. J. D.'s ability to transparently use his own mental health struggles as a backdrop helps him to use concepts and stories that for me, were at once both enormously encouraging and quietly convicting.

John Mays

Co-founder/Sr VP, Centricity Music



This book will be an excellent addition to the literature on Bible based treatment of anxiety disorders. Written by a man who knows its two subjects extremely well, the Bible and anxiety. Enthralling vivid descriptions of what it's like to suffer through and find ways out of obsessional fears.

Ian Osborn, MD

Author of *Can Christianity Cure Obsessive Compulsive Disorder?*



Perfectly Suited is an impeccable fit for anyone who's ever had a run-in with anxiety. J. D. Peabody encourages us to put on the armor of God not as a quick-fix for this mental, emotional, and spiritual challenge, but as part of a holistic, lifelong journey with Jesus—the one who walks beside us each step of the way.

Courtney Ellis

Author of *Happy Now* and *Uncluttered*

Author and pastor J. D. Peabody offers compassion, advice, and Biblical perspective to those who struggle with deep anxiety. Through honest reflections on his own struggles with OCD, Peabody becomes a beloved companion to all of us who find that our anxieties interfere with our relationship to God and our capacity to embrace God's infinite love for us.

Alice Fryling

*Author of **Aging Faithfully: The Holy Invitation
of Growing Older***



Jesus' grace is more than a proposition to be agreed with. It is meant to be lived out in freeing, healing ways. In *Perfectly Suited*, J. D. Peabody gives us a wonderful gift in this direction. Combining his ability to write engagingly with a disarming personal transparency, he takes us on a journey into the practical, life-giving implications of grace. Along the way he helps us to understand the strategic strength of our spiritual armor in whole new ways.

Dr. James Bradford

Lead Pastor, Central Assembly of God, Springfield, MO

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THE ARMOR OF GOD
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J. D. PEABODY



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To Karin, my favorite person,
whose love and encouragement have
made this book (and so many other things) possible.



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INTRODUCTION



Come help us in this fight because
human “help” is worthless.

Psalm 108:12

I’ve begun to think of writing as repentance.

I don’t mean in some self-punishing, doing penance type of way. I’m not trying to pay for my wrongs through scribbling. I would probably run out of paper and ink.

But if it’s true that the Greek word for repentance can mean “to turn around,” then that’s an appropriate description for my relationship to writing. It turns me around. The slow work of searching for words that are true shifts my gaze back to the Word who *is* Truth.

This book grew out of a series of Sunday morning messages I preached at New Day Church in Tacoma, Washington on the armor of God. I realize the world hasn’t exactly been waiting for one more sermon series to be regurgitated in book form.

But I have been.

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People often joke that pastors only work one hour a week. Not to whine, but I find that hour is about all I can take. The pace of weekly preaching is relentless. No sooner do you make and share a discovery than it's time to lay it down and move on to the next passage or topic. Your spiritual metabolism speeds up to the point where you can no longer absorb all the nutrients before a thought has already passed through the system.

I had delivered these sermons, but what I needed was the chance to spend more time with the material, to let my soul digest it. Because more than nearly any series I've preached, this one pressed against places I felt broken in a way that demanded more attention. I was dying for armor, and I didn't even realize it.

So, I write this for one very selfish reason: survival. This is a book about protection and vulnerability, about defensiveness and pain and avoidance. Mostly it's about grace—grace I have unknowingly resisted for a long time. Grace I am slowly gaining capacity to receive.

I pray that it serves to help you receive it, too.

ONE

MEET LEO



The courage to be is rooted in the God
who appears when God has disappeared
in the anxiety of doubt.

Paul Tillich

When our neighbors were the victims of an attempted break-in, they decided it was time for a guard dog. So, they bought a Doberman Pinscher puppy and named him Leo. We watched Leo grow up, running around with little cones taped to his ears, training them to stand fiercely at attention.

Leo has seen members of our family regularly enough to know who we are. We live right next door. Our presence is an everyday occurrence in his life. But anytime he hears us leave or arrive home, he barks vigilantly as if we are dangerous intruders, as if we pose a menacing threat to his existence. He can't seem to distinguish between friend and foe. We always just say, "Hi, Leo," and walk past his alarmed yapping.

I have named my brain Leo in his honor.

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Since childhood, my conscience has had a high startle reflex, barking incessantly at me, often unnecessarily. I have frequently described it as a seared conscience, although I'm sure that's not how the Apostle Paul used the term. It just felt damaged in some way that made it hyper-vigilant.

A few years ago, things intensified. I found my head suddenly bombarded by a barrage of disturbing ideas and images that sent me into a tailspin. My mind raised the alarm at these thoughts that felt threatening and unstoppable, even when their only real power lay in my fear of them. I had no idea at the time that I was exhibiting the classic symptoms of someone with a full-blown clinical case of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Specifically, psychologists would categorize my experience as fitting in a subset of OCD known as scrupulosity. (But more on that later.)

The anxiety overwhelmed me. My response to the alarm was to try and tighten control of my mind. I circled my wagons and shrunk my world to avoid triggers—which only worsened the situation. Imagine noticing a leaky faucet, then cranking the knob so hard that it breaks off and water gushes out. The more I tried to rein in my mind, the stronger the torrent of thoughts became. This only increased my fears and made me try harder. It was a bewildering, corrosive cycle. And Leo barked ever louder.

Badly shaken, I went on a walk with my good friend, Bill, who just happens to be a therapist by profession. He listened graciously as the words and tears poured out. I tried unsuccessfully to make sense of what was happening. I was a terrified, jumpy wreck. When I ran out of words, in utter disbelief, I said emphatically, "I'm not an anxious person."

Bill laughed. Out loud.

Not the response I was going for. I wanted some comfort, some gentle reassurance that could bring me back to rationality. Instead, he laughed at my declaration that I wasn't anxious. He wasn't being mean; it was an involuntary, irrepressible reaction that seemed to say, "You're kidding, right? Have you even looked at yourself?"

That single laugh pulled me up short. I've always seen myself as an even-keel, unflappable type. And I took for granted I had a strong mind, with a firm grip on that mind at all times. This was not like me, was it? This fearful person battling unspeakable thoughts, this person who wanted to withdraw completely into a shell of avoidance—who was I?

One night, lying in bed, struggling against panic as my mind spun itself into another frenzy, I reached for the armor of God. I knew how Paul described it in his letter to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 6:10–17

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor 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 armor 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

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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.

That night, I imagined myself hunkering down under the shield of faith. I cried out for protection against what felt like a volley of flaming arrows. I prayed intensely and passionately, invoking the Lord's covering. Surely this was spiritual warfare and the very setting for which I most needed the armor of God.

I'm not sure what I expected, but I didn't get it.

No peace that passeth understanding settled over me. The torment in my mind did not abate. I certainly didn't fall back to sleep the rest of the night. But as I have reflected on that experience and others since, I realize that I was up against a combination of misunderstandings.

For one thing, I didn't know myself as well as I thought. Emotionally, I was far more disconnected (and yes, anxious) than I realized and out of touch with my own needs. OCD simply put a new label to realities that had been lurking below the surface for decades. This meltdown that felt like a sharp break from the norm was not so far from where I had been living for a very long time. I simply reached a tipping point.

Beyond that, I discovered I had a very underdeveloped grasp of the armor of God. I was treating it more like magic, a secret power I could summon in a crisis and wait to be surrounded by an

MEET LEO

impenetrable shell. My prayer was childlike and desperate, which God thankfully hears regardless of theological savvy. But my limited vision of how he might answer could only leave me disappointed.

I share all this to give you a small, partial glimpse of what has led me to write this book. I don't know what has compelled you to pick it up. Perhaps you, too, are sensing a need for some armor. Maybe you feel exposed and embattled and are

I don't want to explain the armor of God—I want to wear it.

reaching for anything that might soothe and protect your frayed nerves. Maybe you're losing the fight and you need reinforcement. Or maybe the whole concept of the armor of God is new to you and you're just curious what I'm even talking about.

My hope is that this will not be an academic exercise. Thomas à Kempis once wrote that he would much rather *feel* guilt than be able to define it.¹ Well, I don't want to explain the armor of God—I want to wear it. As much as I value good scholarship, I'm less interested in analysis of the text in Ephesians than I am in connecting with one simple yet profound truth: I am in God's care.

What would it look like to live out of being loved by him? What would be different if I thoroughly trusted what he says he will do in terms of protecting me? I'll admit that is not my natural mindset. Yet nothing else reaches my deepest anxieties the way that truth does.

Back in 2012, Army Staff Sgt. Thalamus Lewis was serving in eastern Afghanistan. Along with the rest of the 41st Engineer

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Company, he had just marched through a village when they came under heavy enemy fire.

Sgt. Lewis found himself knocked to the side of the road, ears ringing and head pounding. At the time, he was completely unaware that he had taken a bullet to the temple.

Incredibly, his Advanced Combat Helmet prevented the round from reaching his skull. The bullet entered his helmet on the right side. But the inner padding rerouted the bullet around the perimeter of his head and out the front of the helmet, completely protecting his brain from what would almost certainly have been a fatal shot.

In a special ceremony afterwards, Sgt. Lewis was presented with the remains of his helmet mounted on a plaque. He told reporters he used to resent all the protective gear he was required to wear. “I don’t complain anymore,” he said. “I’m a walking testament.”²

A walking testament.

That’s it, isn’t it? I want to be living, breathing proof of all God has absorbed on my behalf. I’m not asking for a Damascus Road moment. I don’t need drama and emotion or a mystical experience. I just want the truth I affirm intellectually to sink more deeply into the soil of my soul. Because most of the time I feel like I’m still trying to be the one protecting myself. I’m still squirming around in this armor when I want to be able to appreciate it and take full advantage of it.

Maybe none of us will grasp more than a fraction of grace this side of eternity. But if we can begin to catch glimpses of it, to

MEET LEO

receive it and even enjoy it, maybe we also can become walking testaments.

I have two hopes for this book. The first is that it will encourage you to see that although the armor of God may sound like something from another era, it's exactly what you need right now for whatever battle you're currently waging. Rather than being an abstract spiritual concept, it is crucial, practical truth for where you live.

My second hope is that you will see that the armor is not another Christian duty to perform and "get right." It's there to help you, not to add to the weight. I've lived most of my life focused (very earnestly) on my own valiant, well-intentioned efforts for God, and an inadequate grasp of God's armor has proved costly. I'd love it if my story can help unburden you in your journey.

FOR REFLECTION

1. Have you ever had someone give you feedback about yourself that was a surprise, but turned out to be true? How did that shape you?
 2. What might be a way to practice receiving grace? What about that feels difficult or awkward?
 3. What are you hoping to get out of reading this book?
-

TWO

A STRONGER STRONG



A good cry never hurt nobody.

Uncle Lumpy,

The Adventures of Little Orley

I still have the brown, imitation leather New American Standard Bible my parents gave me when I was in elementary school. On the front flyleaf, my boyish scrawl records a few key markers along my early spiritual path.

There is a brief note about rededicating my life to Christ . . . at the age of seven.

By the time I reached ten, I was no longer convinced my forgotten sinner's prayer from kindergarten had been adequate, so I re-dedicated my life and wrote it down in my Bible to be sure. That's followed by another entry memorializing the Sunday afternoon I prayed to be filled with the Holy Spirit (after feeling conscience-stricken for not going forward during the morning altar call at church).

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I then jotted down this melodramatic gem when I returned from summer camp later that year: “Made Christ Lord, Master, Boss of my life. I am his slave.”

I’ve shared those notes with friends, and the reaction I’ve gotten is, “How sweet!” Maybe a bit of a laugh at the adorability of such a spiritual fourth grader. But as I look back at my youthful self, I ache for that burdened boy, working so hard to make sure he got things just right for God. It turns out that my meltdown as a middle-aged man echoed the same concerns and misgivings I had felt back when I was ten.

I wanted to be a strong Christian. Most of the time, I just felt guilty. And uneasy.

Apparently, I’m not alone. I frequently have conversations with well-intentioned, believing people who are also full of striving and a vague insecurity. If blessed assurance is supposed to be the Christian’s experience, something seems off.

Whenever we gather for corporate worship, we talk and sing about the wonders of God’s amazing grace. We praise him for his ability to save and forgive us. Yet as we return to the everyday world, those concepts fade into the background. The available evidence suggests we don’t place much confidence in grace when it comes to the most practical aspects of life. We’re still relying heavily on our own defenses.

Such reluctance to trust is not without reason: our experiences and training conspire to tell us everything hangs on our own capacity to achieve our way to God. We’ve been shaped to consider grace as

A STRONGER STRONG

more of a backup quarterback who only gets called into play when things are especially dire for the team.

My point is not to critique, but as I've observed my own actions and those of others, an unsettling realization has emerged: *much of the activity we bill as Christian isn't generated by faith at all.*

A bold generalization, to be sure. But ask yourself: does trusting Christ produce the fear and anger so many Christians display toward the world he died to save? Does faith in the cross call for so many books and sermons promising some additional “secret” to a deeper life with God? Does belief that we are all equally in need of—and fully invited to—the table of grace generate the endless comparison and judgment found within church circles?

That is not to say our efforts at being good are insincere. In fact, the opposite is true. Large numbers of Christ-followers are driven by a genuine desire to be faithful servants. We live in the hope of pleasing God. We want him to smile and make his face shine upon us.

But that's just it. We're not entirely sure he *is* satisfied. There is a bone-deep insecurity, no matter how strong of a show we're presenting to the world. Even those of us steeped in a lifetime of walking with Jesus don't always live as though we are counting on the fact that the Son within us perfectly pleases the Father already, let alone that God could truly find us lovable.

We've been shaped to consider grace as more of a backup quarterback who only gets called into play when things are especially dire for the team.

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We default to dependence on our own striving. In short, we supplement Christ's work any way we can to shore up the ground beneath our feet.

During the Beijing Olympics of 2008, one TV report profiled an American athlete and her visit to an ancient Buddhist temple near the Olympic village. She herself wasn't religious, but she stopped to rub the belly of a Buddha statue on her way out, just for some pre-event good luck. She knew her athletic abilities were solid, but if there was a little extra boost of something that could tip fate her direction, she told the cameras she figured it couldn't hurt.

Such pragmatic superstition creeps into the way we think about the relationship between our deeds and God's blessing. And why would we think otherwise? We have so little context in life for unearned grace, so few relationships where we've encountered it firsthand. While we're grateful for the cross, we can barely conceive of what it represents. So we're not above tacking on some insurance, reinforcing our eternal standing with whatever might cover a few more bases, just for good measure.

Even still, we feel a bit precarious, because a nagging voice in the back of our heads reminds us that there's something in the Bible about how we all fall short. What if that is what's truest about us? We convince ourselves that in the end, what God cares about is that we're trying our best and that we want to be good. He's looking for effort and heart, isn't he?

So we put in the work and hope no one notices the cracks in our confidence. Meanwhile, the fear remains, driving all we do, keeping us vigilant, anxious, and exhausted.

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If you had suggested this idea to me a few years ago—that my life was more performance than faith—I would have been offended. I love the gospel message, the profound beauty of God stepping in to resolve what was humanly impossible. Jesus offering us life through the counterintuitive move of his death. A comprehensive restoration generated entirely by holy love.

As a pastor, I've worked hard to keep my preaching centered on what Christ has done instead of a list of things we need to be doing. The very notion that I might be living an essentially proving-my-worth existence would have been too painful to consider, because it violates my core beliefs.

And yet.

Functionally, practically, realistically—we gravitate toward reliance on that self-generated struggle more than resting in God. Think about how you might finish the following sentences:

If I want God to bless me, I need to _____.

*In order to experience closeness with Christ,
I must _____.*

*If I am going to mature in my faith,
that will require _____.*

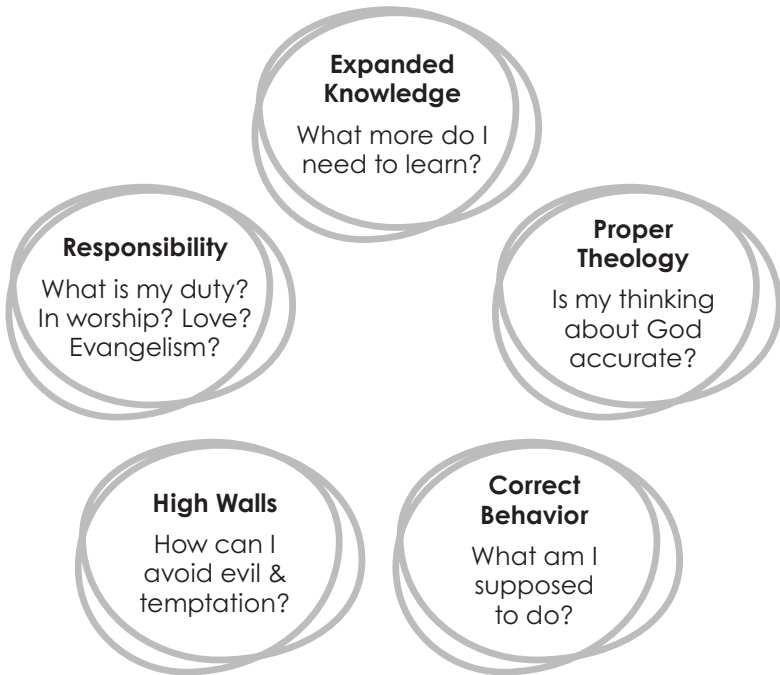
There are many possible answers. We would fill the blanks with good things: wholesome, productive, worthy things. And God certainly invites—even delights in—our participation in our own formation process. Entering into the work is part of the joy.

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But if we're not careful, the way we complete those sentences can turn us into the primary actors and our accomplishments into the source of our acceptability. The scramble substitutes for faith.

I don't need to look any further than my own history to see evidence of this. Being a disciple of Jesus has normally revolved around a few key ideas for me:

MY DEFAULT DISCIPLESHIP WHEELHOUSE



A STRONGER STRONG

Those all sound like worthwhile endeavors for any Christian to pursue. And yet I can talk at length about any of them without once mentioning anything Christ has done.

They all revolve around expectations of myself.

**He never asks
us to earn
his love.**

Back when I was attending seminary, theologian James Torrance came from Scotland as a visiting professor for one quarter. In his thick brogue, he would frequently remind our class, “The mandates of Scripture always flow from the indicatives of grace.”

The language may be academic, but his point was essential (and often forgotten). Whatever God tells us to do stems from his compassion *that is already in place*. He never asks us to earn his love. And when we miss that, we miss the gospel.

This is not a rare form of confusion among churchgoers. A recent survey found that over half (52%) of Americans who consider themselves Christians believe that salvation can be attained by effort and being a good person.³ That is a sobering and wide departure from the essence of faith.

If we are counting on anything we do, think, believe, know, feel, or experience to secure our standing with God, we’re no longer living in grace. We’re living in the imagined strength of striving. And that’s not strong enough.

It’s disturbingly easy for even the most seasoned, Bible-cherishing believers to end up there, and it can show up in the way we interpret

Scripture. Consider Paul's admonition in Ephesians, just before he launches into his description of the armor of God:

Ephesians 6:10

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Paul is speaking a word of encouragement, and I want greater strength in my life. I need it. But when I read that sentence through my flawed filters, the words, "Be strong," sound more like, "Man up." The verse takes on a chastening tone, telling me to pull myself

together. It's the voice of a personal trainer who shows no mercy, shouting in my ear to be tough and dig deep and go for one more rep. Everything is depending on me.

**Strength lies
within the ready
reserves of God's
storehouses, and
he gladly offers to
share it all.**

I hear a series of *oughts*: "You *ought* to be stronger. You *ought* to be able to handle this better. You are not where you *ought* to be right now." What

started out as an uplifting, life-giving statement gets twisted into a reminder that I'm not cutting it. And I respond by redoubling my efforts or retreating into a shame-filled corner.

But that's loading up Paul's words with meaning he never intended them to carry. A more precise translation of his phrase, "Be strong in the Lord" would be, "Strengthen yourselves in the Lord."

Strengthen yourselves. That conveys a decidedly different tone. That tells us strength is something we can find outside of us, a well we are invited to draw from rather than energy we manufacture. Strength

lies within the ready reserves of God's storehouses, and he gladly offers to share it all.

In the book of 1 Samuel, the author tells the story of David using language that parallels Paul's:

1 Samuel 30:6b (ESV)

But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

This is remarkable, considering the context in which it happened. Before becoming king, David was being hunted by his predecessor, King Saul. For roughly eighteen months he lived under the protection of Israel's enemies, the Philistines. About six hundred fighting Israelite men and their families threw their lot in with David, and together they lived in the town of Ziklag.

Knowing the Philistines were planning to attack King Saul and his armies, David took his men and marched for three days to join them. But the Philistines doubted David's troops could be trusted battling their own countrymen, so they turned down the offer and sent them packing.

After making the three-day hike back to Ziklag, the men were met by a horrific sight. The Amalekites had attacked the village while the warriors were away, burning it to the ground and taking the women and children captive. It was more than the men could bear.

1 Samuel 30:4 (ESV)

Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep.

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What a raw, heart-wrenching scene. Hundreds of grown men crying their eyes out, inconsolable over the loss of their families. No one rushed to put a positive spin on the situation, spouting sunny takes such as, “At least there are no bodies!”

No one tried to minimize the pain by assigning meaning to the tragedy. It was just sad and awful and wrong. So, they cried. They cried until they didn’t even have the energy to do that anymore. They were completely spent.

**Receiving
empowerment from
God goes hand in
hand with realizing
we’ve exhausted
our own.**

It is in this poignant moment that we’re told David strengthened himself in the Lord. *When he didn’t even have the strength to cry, he found strength in God.*

The timing is no coincidence. Receiving empowerment from God goes hand in hand with realizing we’ve exhausted our own.

As a rule, most of us prefer never reaching that point. We’d rather not feel the more difficult feelings. We don’t like to admit how devastated we are, how hurt, how confused, how sad, how lonely, how inadequate, how scared. We invest tremendous amounts of energy denying the depth of those feelings, working very hard to appear strong against them.

We resist going there with everything we’ve got. We negotiate ways to keep life small enough to handle on our own. We cut ourselves off from God’s incomparably great power because we are pouring all our effort into not needing it.

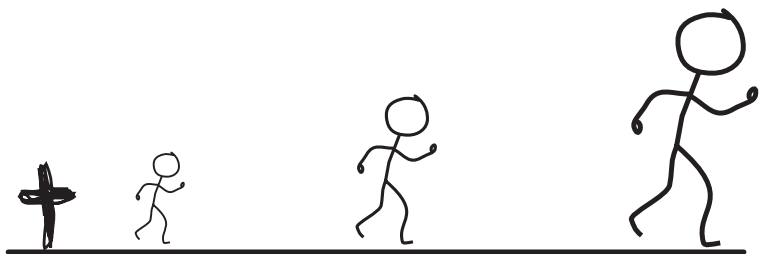
A STRONGER STRONG

Philip Yancey once observed that grace, like water, flows to the lowest places.⁴ If that's true, and I want to experience grace, I need to quit scrambling to reach high ground. It does me no good to distance myself from the true state of my heart, when if I admit just how low I am, the grace will flow down to meet me. God's best is most discoverable in our worst. His strength, he says, is made perfect in weakness.

And here's where my perception has needed to shift. In my mind, growing stronger in the faith equaled needing less grace. Becoming more self-sufficient. As I mature, shouldn't my struggle with sin diminish? Isn't it our goal to need the cross less and less the closer we get to eternity?

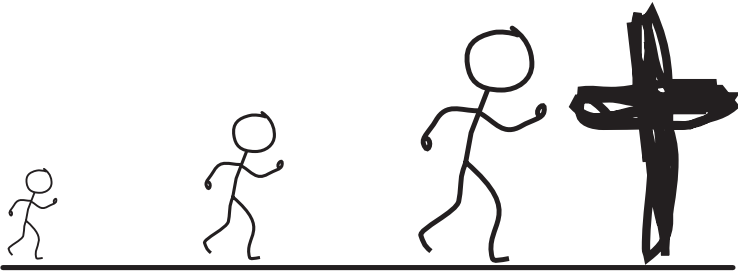
In a word, no. Scripture points the other direction, as does the experience of saints down through the centuries. Those we would consider from our vantage point to look the holiest and furthest along in faith are in fact the ones most humbled by their utter dependence on God for everything.

OLD VIEW OF GROWTH



Maturity = less need for cross

GOD'S VIEW OF GROWTH



Maturity = moving toward cross

The Bible says we are to grow *in* grace—not outgrow it. We lean in as redemption seeps ever further into hidden layers of our souls we never realized were aching for it. I’ve spent too many years straining to be sinless instead of learning what it means to live like a forgiven person.

To become stronger in faith is to own the reality of our “unstrong,” to cry ourselves out (literally or metaphorically) and cling ever more tightly to the cross the longer we know Christ. It’s all him. The life we now live we live by faith.

Faith. Banking entirely on what he has done. Entrusting ourselves more to what we can’t see than to the things we can control. Living out of the belief that we are loved by a holy God.

David could have immediately led a search party into the desert. With a pack of angry men calling for blood (and his own emotions running high), it required enormous restraint to not jump into action. But he turned to God first, before making any move. He

A STRONGER STRONG

allowed the time he needed to lay his situation before God and wait for a response.

We have such a demanding internal drive to resolve our crises for ourselves. Circumstances make it feel urgent that we do so. I am learning to read my own urgency as the voice of my anxiety and an indicator that it's time to wait on God. Panic often masks itself as clarity, which gives good reason to pause. Staying in that tension—where we are desperate to act but choosing to wait and listen—is where we strengthen ourselves in the Lord.

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FOR REFLECTION

1. Do you agree that much of what passes for Christian isn't generated by faith?
 2. What have you relied on to make you feel better about your relationship with God?
 3. How does living like you're forgiven look different from attempting to be sinless?
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WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR OWN MIND TURNS ON YOU?

Fear, anxiety, and the critical voices in your head can be overwhelming, even if you believe Christ died to free you from those things. When he found himself in a mental and emotional meltdown, J. D. Peabody reached for the armor of God. In the process, he discovered God's protection and grace were far greater than he had previously imagined.

Perfectly Suited explores the armor of God through the lens of personal struggle, showing how the ancient metaphor for God's care is powerful for his embattled children in every generation.

This is the book I needed in my back pocket when I first was diagnosed with anxiety. Packed with wisdom, practicality, and truth you can hang onto, this book will be one you reference often and recommend to others.

HANNAH BRENCER

Author of Fighting Forward and Come Matter Here

To be human is to fear. J. D. helps us understand and embrace how our body engages the process in a manner that will enable us to receive the presence of God as our comfort and ally.

DAN B. ALLENDER, PHD

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