

# Fortitude

*A Necessary Possession*

ROBERT L. MARTIN

# Introduction

I was awakened by the Spirit of the Lord one morning with the following thought: Robert, you are to go *deeper into My Word* because right now you do not have the *Fortitude* to handle what is coming. The urgency of these words stirred my soul. Trials had come and gone and by the grace of our Lord Jesus I was on the other side of them. However, as these words continued to burn within my spirit, I was moved to seek the heart of our heavenly Father for fortitude, though I didn't fully understand what it was.

It is for this reason I have written down the thoughts God has given me as I earnestly sought Him. For, as my Lord Jesus revealed to me, others will struggle with trials yet to come and my children need the fortitude to overcome.

I laid out the work to be done in order to obtain this *Necessary Possession* and through my daily walk I have endeavored to write down my discoveries. My prayer is that all who read this will be given understanding. However, though a great degree of wisdom may be given concerning fortitude as we seek, this cannot take the place of your own personal study of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is the only Person who is able to guide you into all truth, for He is the Spirit of Truth.

To all who read this; may the Holy Spirit of God guide and direct your heart and may you be given the *Fortitude* to overcome in THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD!

# Chapter 1

## *First Things First*

The Lord instructed me to seek to understand what fortitude means in depth. He made it known that as I sought His Word regarding this matter, I would find what I was searching for. Our Lord's counsel comes in various ways and when the Father brings this type of word by His Spirit to our hearts, we are not to take offence regarding what we hear. For, the Word of the Lord is both instructive and corrective. On the contrary, we are to discern whether or not the words we are listening to are true or false, as defined by the Living Word of God, which was given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Consider this for a moment, if you will, our past reveals to us that the flesh never dies out quietly or willingly. For, when correction is given we rarely receive it as good. At times, we deceptively believe it to be condemnation. We want to defend our position or give an opinion on the matter. If we allow offence to enter our hearts because of correction, then the blessing that follows will be lost. Rather, may our hearts grow in the ways of our Lord, knowing His instruction is

for life eternal. He will cause us to understand when we lack wisdom, if we come asking for it. Let us then rejoice and bless His Holy Name. Thanks be to our Holy Father in heaven for His gracious care. He will never bring a word to our hearts unless He plans to give us the thing we are lacking!

So, the first thing I was directed to do was to seek to understand the meaning of *Fortitude*. Why? Because, I can't petition something from God if I don't know what it is I am asking for. The Lord wants us to receive answers to prayer. After all, He said: "Ask, and it shall be given you..." (Luke 11:9) The *Merriam Webster Dictionary*<sup>1</sup> provided clarity about this word. It is defined as: "strength of mind that enables a person to encounter danger or bear pain or adversity with courage."

Studying this definition caused me to realize it is by the counsel of the Holy Spirit that I'm able to obtain fortitude or accomplish any task set before me. Contemplating these words, I was reminded of the passage of Scripture found in Romans 12:2. Paul said, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Thus, confirming to me that fortitude is something tangible which can be acquired.

While attentively meditating upon this definition, the word "strength" occupied my thoughts. I understood strength from a natural perspective as one who spent time in the past lifting weights. Strength can be improved through activity and it can be lost through inactivity. This same principle is a spiritual one as well. Our strength

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Online *Merriam Webster Dictionary*.

in the Spirit is increased as we exercise ourselves in the Living Word of God, or it can be diminished by our lack of fellowship with our Lord Jesus!

The word “enables”, also part of this definition, caused me to reflect still further. As the Holy Spirit directed my thoughts, insight was given that we can be empowered with divine strength to deal with or overcome a difficult situation. This word “enable” is a present tense expression implying action. We are enabled, empowered, by the Holy Spirit with strength to handle the obstacles before us, no matter what they might be. John 15:4,5 gives us clarity about this very thing. Jesus plainly said, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” Strength comes as we abide in our Lord and wait for Him.

The last word in the definition of fortitude which caught my attention was “courage”. God often teaches us through His Word to be of good courage. Psalm 27:14 says, “Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.” In Psalm 31:24 we read, “Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.” Through these passages of Scripture, I began to realize that only the LORD God can give the courage we need to handle the difficulties confronting our lives; the courage to run the race of life to the very end with the full assurance of victory, knowing we kept the faith!

## Chapter 2

# *Seeking to Obtain*

I asked the Lord to give me the Spirit of truth and understanding for the purpose of obtaining *fortitude*, realizing that without His Spirit it would be impossible to understand or acquire this necessity. While waiting upon the Lord, He directed me to read the following Scriptures:

- Psalm 119:17–20
- Psalm 119:88–89
- Proverbs 8:1–36
- Philippians 4:8

I read the above mentioned Scriptures several times, seeking earnestly to grasp and perceive what my Lord was saying. While I have meditated upon these Scriptures for years, and felt I had some understanding gleaned from my study, the awareness came that if Scriptures are read without applying wisdom, which only Father God can give, one can actually become ignorant of His Holy Word. It is also a fact that our hearts can become boastful with our perceived knowledge if we fail to seek for wisdom with humility.

The passage of Scripture in Psalm 119:17 motivated me to pause and reflect for a great while. For, David said; “Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word.” This has become my prayer as I have grown to understand what our heart’s passion should be toward Father God.

Deal bountifully — what a beginning! Isn’t it wonderful to know that our Father in heaven wants us to pray to Him, like King David, with such boldness and sincerity?

The Hebrew word for “deal bountifully” is *Gamal*. It means to reward, to do good, wean, to ripen, recompense, to bestow, and deal bountifully with.

Are we able to observe how this is both corrective as well as pleasurable? It may happen that we are being weaned. If so, some of the things our God is removing might cause discomfort or pain. We may even become angry out of our selfishness because He is choosing to remove a hindrance from our lives. Or, if we are in a position where we have learned to walk in maturity, the blessings, which include corrective instruction, that we receive from His Hand become a delight to us. So then, if we ask for the counsel of our heavenly Father in the Name of Jesus Christ His Son, we can expect to receive His guidance, obtaining the very thing we are seeking. When we begin to understand this, our hearts are assured that the trials which come along this journey of life are allowed by our heavenly Father and are ultimately for our good. We pray for His will to be accomplished in us and He will do that! David asked for the sure mercies of God and His care over him with this one word!



The second word I examined was “servant”. A number of years ago I did a study on the bond servant. The Lord revealed to me, through my endeavor, that a bond servant is a servant of love who has bound himself to his master because he loves him. This person doesn’t ever want to leave the loving care of his master.

I imagine David’s cry to God the Father from the depths of his soul was: deal bountifully with me Father God because I am your servant of love. I have found that you love me without measure and I don’t ever want to leave your care. I know that whatever you give will be life to me.

This is why I believe David makes the next statement, “that I might live.” He was asking the Lord to deal bountifully by reminding Him that he belongs to Him out of love, in love and through love. He is very courageous in doing this. Likewise, we are granted access to enter into His presence by the blood of the Lamb.

What a wonder that God the Father desires us to come to Him in this fashion, with a confidence, assured that He loves us without question and will answer our cry with an abundance of life. We too can pray as David did, asking the Lord to deal bountifully with us as His servants of love, knowing we belong to Him and He loves us. So, we can petition our heavenly Father for these blessings trusting in His love to give us what is best. We ask for God’s bounty toward us in all fullness so we might grow in Him, be strengthened in Him and live in Him!

Now look at, “that I might live.” This phrase is joined to the first portion of the verse. Through prayer, David asked the Almighty to

reward him with life. The Hebrew word for “life” is Chayah. It is defined as: live, alive, save, quicken. The word that captivated me as I considered this definition was “Quicken or Quickening”. I personally believe it is speaking of everything pertaining to true life.

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## Chapter 3

# *Intimacy: The Path to Fortitude*

In the pursuit of Fortitude we must follow the path called *intimacy*. Without *intimacy* with Christ Jesus we can't obtain this necessary possession. Since fortitude requires strength of mind, it must follow that our minds need to be equipped to bear the thing that tests us. How does this relate to intimacy? Well, Paul stated in Romans 12 that we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Our minds are renewed by the things we meditate upon, as Solomon penned. Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) says, "For as a man thinks in his heart, so is he..." Paul writes in Philippians 4:8 (NKJV), "Finally my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

The Hebrew for "think" is *Siyach*, which means to meditate, speak about and commune with. If fortitude is obtained through communion (fellowship) with our Lord Jesus, then intimacy can be

understood as true fellowship and communion with someone, in and through love.

The love I speak of here is Agape, which is the highest form of love and is demonstrated through our walk or manner of life. Jesus demonstrated His love for the Father by His walk or manner of life. His only desire was to do the will of His Holy Father who *sent* Him. What He was sent to do wasn't pleasant. When Jesus was brought before Pilate and questioned, He said, "...for this cause I came...to bear witness of the truth." (John 18:37) We can't be a witness to something we haven't seen. Again, in John 8:38, Jesus states, "I speak that which I have seen with my Father..." This is a manifestation of love. Jesus demonstrated the Shema of Deuteronomy 6 loving His Father with all His heart, mind and strength.

As we are enveloped in and embrace the Word of God, we become like-minded and are strengthened with fortitude. How then do we embrace the Word of God? If intimacy is the path to fortitude, how is it obtained? Please read the books of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John, as they will provide a deeper understanding of intimacy.

What do I mean by embracing the Word of God? To embrace the Word of God means to immerse oneself in Him and to ask for an understanding of His heart. I embrace His Word by purposely asking the Lord what His desire is and in what way I should demonstrate it. This is what Jesus did. He saw the Father doing and asked the Father how He was to do it and obeyed.

What thoughts fill your heart when thinking of intimacy? How do you relate intimacy to Jesus Christ or His Holy Word? How long

Robert L. Martin

has it been since you've said, "I love you" to the Lord deeply from your being?

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