

## Strength of the Mind

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*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. (Mark 12:30).*

I grew up in the home of an ex-Navy Seal, and I always loved to hear stories of my father's military days, particularly boot camp and training. He would tell me stories of being called out of bed at three or four in the morning to go running down the beaches of Coronado, California, dressed in full-fatigues, complete with those big black boots that I swear must have weighed ten pounds apiece.

If you know anything about Navy Seals, you probably know that they undergo some of the most vigorous physical and mental training of all branches of the military. As one would imagine, the majority of those who sign up to be Seals are at the peak of athletic ability and strength. However, with a twinkle in his eye, my dad always enjoyed telling me that those with obvious physical strength weren't always the ones who would make it through training. The ones who walked across that stage on graduation day were the ones who mentally were able to push on when their physical ability began to fail.

We all have been there: an amazing General Conference, an awe-inspiring youth service, an anointed service at our home church, or a powerful revelation in our own personal prayer life. You know what I'm talking about – those experiences where you get up off your knees feeling like you are ready to take on the world! Break out the cape and tights, because you are SUPER-CHRISTIAN, ready to take on whatever obstacle hell throws in your path! But just as we all have had that spiritual and emotional high, the "physical training" of life makes us grow weary and weak. We may not be wearing ten-pound military boots, but we do carry our own personal burdens that make running the race of life difficult.

It's at this point we realize that living for God isn't always about the times we can "feel it." Sometimes the most crucial points of our lives are the times when we mentally have to make a conscious *decision* to go forward and push through the pain. We must learn to love the Lord with our mind, not just our heart, soul, and strength (Mark 12:30). It's when we are able to disregard the pain and discomfort that we truly find the strength we need to press onward toward our ultimate goal.

