

## **156. AM I STRONG ENOUGH? - MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 28, 2026**

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. Happy Monday!

Have you ever had a week where you \*think\* you know how it's going to go, and then, all of a sudden, plans change? Well, that's exactly what's going on right now.

It all started Saturday morning at the Farmer's Market. I was chowing down on one of Brie's market-exclusive cinnamon rolls, when Ted Able came over with a big smile. Ted and his family own the farm that hosts the Market.

"It's squash week!" he said with glee.

"Squash week?" I asked through a mouthful of pastry.

"Yep. We've got a whole plot of winter squash – butternut squash, delicata. We've got some of those small acorn squash, and even a couple rows of the big Blue Hubbards. By the looks of it, we might even have a 40-pounder or two out there!" he said.

Forty pounds! That's... That's like a kindergartener! But instead of a kid, it's a big, round blueish-gray squash – known as a Blue Hubbard.

"Wow," I replied. "I might sound like a broken record because I'm pretty sure I say this every time you tell me about what you do out here, but... that sounds like a lot of work!"

"It sure is," Ted said. "I'll probably be as sore from this week as almost any this year. But the farm hands and I, we try to look at it like a challenge. Can we do it? Can we make it through? It actually makes it kind of fun."

I told him that I believed him, but I might use a different word than "fun." To be fair, that's coming from someone who spends a good bit of their week reading, thinking, and writing.

When I saw Ted after church on Sunday, however, his mood had changed quite a bit. Instead of looking excited, he looked concerned. I asked his wife Lilly if he was ok. She shook her head and said one word: mud.

Rain had been in the forecast for Saturday afternoon, but it ended up being a good bit more than anyone expected. In fact, it was still drizzling Sunday morning and had just started to let up as church was starting.

I made my way over to Ted and said, "Your wife tells me you're worried about the mud."

"I am," he replied. "Squash week is hard enough as it is, but with the amount of rain we got, I can't drive a truck out there. Even if it doesn't get stuck, it'll surely do damage I'd have to repair before next planting season."

"So, what does that mean?" I asked.

"It means a lot more lifting and carrying," he said.

"I've got a strong team, but I think we're going to need some help."

"Can't you just wait for everything to dry out?" I wondered aloud.

Ted shook his head. "Normally yes, but it's supposed to rain again later this week. And by next week, the overnight temperatures are going to be too low for the squash. We've got to get them up in the next two days."

Before I even realized what I was saying, I heard the words, "I'll come help" leave my mouth.

"Thanks," said Ted. "That means a lot. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to ask around and see if anyone else might be able to come out."

So, just like a couple weeks ago, you find me on a Monday morning getting ready to go out to the farm to help out. Last time, it was exciting. I was going to help with a few chores, hang with some animals, and get to know Ted and his family.

But, if you'll remember, I was sore for most of the rest of the week, and this? This sounds like a *\*lot\** more work. Harder work.

I don't know if I can cut it. I mean, I want to help, but I also don't want to be the guy everyone else has to work around! What if I get out there and just run out of gas?

Have you ever felt that way? Was there ever something you've wanted to do or help out with, but you were worried you weren't good enough or strong enough or coordinated enough to do it? When you think of something, go ahead and share it with each other.

If you need more time, feel free to pause the podcast, and I'll be right here when you get back.

[PAUSE]

This week, we're continuing our look at what Jesus said were the most important things we can do – love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This week, we're exploring loving with all our strength.

That's what I'm going to try to do today, but what if \*all my strength\* isn't enough? I guess we'll find out. I'll be sure to report back tomorrow.

For now let's close in prayer. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, we thank you for the ways our hearts want to jump in and help anyway we can. Sometimes what we want to help with is easy, and sometimes it can be hard. Give us the strength we need to make it through today. Amen.

Ok, Grace Harbor... I guess we'll see how today goes! If I can get out of bed in the morning, I'll talk to you tomorrow.

© 2026 Defining Grace, LLC | Written by Dan Wunderlich