

## BUILDING RIGHTEOUS STRONGHOLDS

***We have spent many sessions covering the destruction of strongholds and the weapons of our warfare that are mighty through God to tear them down. We will review some of the things we have said that define strongholds and how to dismantle them, and we will 'flip the coin' and look at how we can construct healthy spirit-empowered strongholds that are part of partnering with the Lord unto our transformation.***

***<sup>3</sup> For though we walk (live) in the flesh, we are not carrying on our warfare according to the flesh and using mere human weapons.***

***<sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood], but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds,***

***<sup>5</sup> [Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One),***

***<sup>6</sup> Being in readiness to punish every [insubordinate for his] disobedience, when your own submission and obedience [as a church] are fully secured and complete.***

***<sup>7</sup> Look at [this obvious fact] which is before your eyes. If anyone is confident that he is Christ's, let him reflect and remind himself that even as he is Christ's, so too are we. 2 Corinthians 10:3-7 AMPC***

### REVIEW OF STRONGHOLDS

- ***A stronghold is a house, a fort, a structure built of thoughts.***
- ***The word for stronghold means 'hard' or to make firm (like a fortress is established and entrenched). Self-defensive behavior and self-protective sin are based here.***
- ***A spiritual stronghold is a mind-set impregnated with hopelessness that causes us to accept as unchangeable, situations that we know are contrary to the will of God.***
- ***A stronghold is a pattern of thoughts that gives the appearance of truth but that is rooted in a lie.***
- ***Strongholds produce double-mindedness and instability in our lives...causing us to attempt to balance competing agendas in our thinking (see James 1:5-8).***
- ***A stronghold is to your spiritual life what cancer is to your physical health. When thoughts have declared 'independence' from the 'head' and are operating on an agenda that is detrimental to the rest of your being then you have a stronghold to tear down.***

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- ***Building a healthy spirit empowered stronghold (mindset) is completely different.***
  - ***Such a fortress or mindset is humility and transparency.***
  - ***This is a mindset impregnated with faith, hope, and love that leads us to readily change our thinking as the Spirit opens up God's Word to us and strengthens us by giving us truth and light.***
  - ***We grow in our walk to be rooted and grounded in His Word and His love and refuse thoughts and ideas that are not aligned with God's heart.***
  - ***We turn our back on double-minded speculations and half-hearted 'positions' or beliefs.***

### **HOW ARE STRONGHOLDS FORMED? (2 Corinthians 10:3-7)**

- ***They come from the accuser, the deceiver, the tempter in many forms.***
- ***2 Corinthians 10:5 says strongholds come via arguments, theories, reasonings...***
- ***Philosophies, religions, speculations, and imaginations that do not have their origin in the truth.***
- ***The word 'reasonings' implies that the conflict of thought is not with other people but the conflict within our minds when human reason and divine revelation contradict each other.***
- ***2 Corinthians 10:5 says that strongholds come via proud, lofty, or 'high' thoughts that oppose the knowledge of God.***
- ***Any thought process that is able to diminish or minimize the truth and replace it with an alternative source of belief. The word here can be translated 'height' which means we have a trust-base that we value 'over' the truth.***
- ***This is a subtle deception that causes people to find it more comfortable to comply with human reasoning that grapples with the truth.***

***2 Corinthians 10:5 says that strongholds also come via thoughts or 'purposes or devises of the mind'***

- ***This word is used in 2 Corinthians 2:11 as 'schemes'.***

***So that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes. 2 Corinthians 2:11 NASB***

- ***When our thought patterns and reasonings get infiltrated by the spirit of this age then our mind becomes a place where the enemy's schemes appear to us as our own reasonings. Strongholds are often the product of such deception.***

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- ***A stronghold can become an arsenal or 'weapon' depot of destructive thoughts in our lives.***
- ***We develop a system of reasoning that gets used to perpetrating the enemy's purpose upon us and frustrates God's plans for our lives.***
- ***The stronghold becomes a 'command post' from which the enemy works to influence our beliefs and life choices.***
- ***Our focus on building a healthy stronghold or fortress of thought begins with God...He is our stronghold and our fortress.***

***"I love You, O LORD, my strength." <sup>2</sup> The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.***

***<sup>3</sup> I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. Psalm 18:1-3 NASB***

***In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be ashamed; in Your righteousness deliver me.***

***<sup>2</sup> Incline Your ear to me, rescue me quickly; be to me a rock of strength, a stronghold to save me.***

***<sup>3</sup> For You are my rock and my fortress; for Your name's sake You will lead me and guide me.***

***<sup>4</sup> You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, for You are my strength.***

***<sup>5</sup> Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have ransomed me, O LORD, God of truth. Psalm 31:1-5 NASB***

***In You, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be ashamed.***

***<sup>2</sup> In Your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline Your ear to me and save me.***

***<sup>3</sup> Be to me a rock of habitation to which I may continually come; You have given commandment to save me, for You are my rock and my fortress.***

***<sup>4</sup> Rescue me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the grasp of the wrongdoer and ruthless man,***

***<sup>5</sup> For You are my hope; O Lord GOD, You are my confidence from my youth.***

***<sup>6</sup> By You I have been sustained from my birth; You are He who took me from my mother's womb; my praise is continually of You.***

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***<sup>7</sup> I have become a marvel to many, for You are my strong refuge. Psalm 71:1-7  
NASB***

***He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.***

***<sup>2</sup> I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust!"***

***<sup>3</sup> For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper and from the deadly pestilence.***

***<sup>4</sup> He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you may seek refuge;  
Psalm 91:1-4 NASB***

***<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts;***

***<sup>24</sup> And see if there be any hurtful way in me and lead me in the everlasting way.***

***Psalm 139:23-24 NASB***

- ***We ask Him to search our hearts and know our thoughts and empower us to break agreement with any wicked or hurtful ways of thinking and to give us the power to think in ways that flow from His everlasting wisdom and understanding.***
- ***We refuse any patterns of thoughts that conflict with a kingdom (lordship) perspective.***
- ***We acknowledge the truth consistently until it is 'commonplace' to value His truth above any opposing or contrary point of view, including our own.***

***<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. <sup>26</sup> Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. <sup>27</sup> All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. <sup>28</sup> "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Matthew 11:25-30 NASB***

- ***We choose to apply the principle of 'the double rest' we find in Matthew 11:25-30. We pray for His wisdom and restful peace to flow into us in our inner man.***

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- ***We recognize the schemes of the enemy and proclaim that they are no match for God's ways and His wisdom.***
- ***We pray in the Spirit to militate against the devices and deceit of the enemy.***

***12 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2 NASB***

***<sup>22</sup> that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. Ephesians 4:22-24 NASB***

- ***We pray to be transformed via the renewing of our mind and the revelation of the Holy Spirit.***

***<sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; <sup>21</sup> and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Ephesians 5:18-21 NASB***

***<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. <sup>17</sup> Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. Colossians 3:16-17 NASB***

- ***We must pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit...He will lead us into all truth.***
- ***We must have the Word of God richly dwelling in us and we must 'make room' for the Spirit to cause the Word to grow us up with the wisdom and revelation of the knowledge of Him. This will cause our mindset to progressively be aligned with God's will.***
- ***Remember...a mind that is being renewed by the Spirit and the Word is founded on the facts that God has granted us; His acceptance and approval by our being in Jesus and Jesus being in us...we don't 'think' up ways to gain God's acceptance and approval, rather we respond to His grace and mercy***

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***out of gratitude for what He has already completed for us. We will stand on the truth and not permit the enemy to deceive us in this matter.***

- ***We choose to pray, sing, say, believe, proclaim, and declare the truth of God's Word and the power of His Spirit. Ephesians 3:14-21 is a great example.***

***<sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. <sup>20</sup> Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup> to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:14-21 NASB***

***<sup>27</sup> And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." Luke 10:27 NASB***

- ***Teach us to love You and those that You bring into our lives with all our heart, our soul, our mind, will, emotion, and strength. Empower our minds to be fortresses of God – enriched choices and actions.***