

Pulling Down Strongholds



2 Corinthians 10:3-6

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, wrote about a battlefield on which Believers wage war. He talked about 3 fronts on which the battle is fought, and he never got out from between my ears in describing the place! The battle is won or lost in my mind!

The first battle he mentioned is casting down arguments. If you are arguing with God or with the people whom He sends to speak to you, you are at spiritual war whether you know it or not. If you do not stop arguing with Him and start agreeing with Him, you have already lost. How can you receive His instruction for battle if you will not listen? If you are not willing to see the argument, the stronghold, as sin, you will not be set free from it. If you agree with Him, you will win. If your stronghold is being used by a demon to torment you, you will never pull it down without agreeing with God and allowing His Holy Spirit to war with your adversary and set you free.

The second battle is regarding the knowledge of God. You cannot have the freeing knowledge of the Truth of God if you have lies in your mind that you are believing, because there is no room for both in your mind at the same time. If you are believing a lie, you cannot be believing the Truth at the same time. When a pretense of truth (something that is ***pretending*** to be true) is in your mind, it sets itself up ***against*** the knowledge of God. Just identifying the lie is not the end of the battle, however. “The name of Yahweh is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are protected.” (Proverbs 18:10). Until we have built up a new stronghold, one where the Spirit of God is free to dwell and do warfare, we are still subject to falling back into believing the same old lies when we are tempted to or when we are under pressure to make a decision quickly.

The third battle is to take every thought captive to make it obey Jesus. If thoughts are in your mind that you are not absolutely in charge of, you need to take them captive and make thoughts that are in line with the will of God for you replace them. If you are easily tempted by a certain sin, you must be well in control of your thoughts when you get into a situation where you could commit the sin, or you will give in to the temptation. Reminiscing about the “old days” when you used to enjoy a certain sin will release that set of thoughts to take you captive if you don’t take them captive first!

In order to pull down a stronghold, a *process* of identifying it and demolishing it must take place. There is no magic formula, and as Paul said, our

weapons are only mighty because they have *God's power*, not because we have anything about our flesh that will help. There are some things that must take place, however, whatever strategy is used, whether conscious or unconscious.

FIRST - Identify the sin that is related to the stronghold.

This is part of the agreement with God that there is a problem. Our spirits have been made perfect if we have been born again, but sin still dwells in our flesh (Romans 7:18-25). Even though we have intentions of never sinning again, our flesh has sin dwelling in it, and that sin will affect our lives if we do not allow the Holy Spirit to war against it and give us self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). The confession of the fact that we have sinned is the first step toward freedom because it gets the sin under the blood of Jesus so that we can be cleansed and may proceed to pull down the stronghold with God's mighty power. Before we can *confess* the sin, though, we must *identify* it. This is our declaration of *war*!

SECOND - Identify the lies that we are believing that are allowing us to justify the sin on the occasions that we give in to the temptation.

If we have been convicted by the Spirit of God of a certain sin, and we confess to God that we committed it and we have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, we should never do that same sin again. We have been shown our error, and we have agreed that it was wrong. Yet, we commit the same sins over and over again! The reason that we do is because we are believing lies. When we are walking down a path and suddenly are taken in by temptation, it is because we at some point along the way believed that something was true that was not. It was pretending to be true, and it set itself up against the knowledge of God, and we were deceived into sin. An example would be: it is never acceptable to God for me to steal. The Holy Spirit convicts me of sin regarding stealing, and I repent, deciding that I will never steal anything again. One day, I am hungry, and I think, "I have not got any money, and I am hungry. I will have to steal something so that I do not have to go hungry." I steal something, and the Holy Spirit again manages to convict me of sin, and also of His desire for me to have faith that He will provide for me in a righteous way, not making me depend on stealing to have bread. The lie was that I needed to provide for myself in a thieving way, because I could not trust God to provide for me. When I believed the lie, it caused me to also believe that sin was justified, or acceptable. If I identify that lie as a lie, I will

mark it as something that is a tool of my enemy, and I will not fall for that trick anymore!

THIRD - Find the TRUTH in Scripture that is the appropriate replacement for the lie.

As Jesus was teaching one day, He told about a person out of whom a demon was cast. He said that the demon would wander around, and if he came back to the person, he would find that the person would be like a house swept clean and put in order. So, the spirit would take with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and would invade the house (the person) again, making the end of the man worse than the beginning. If the demon came back and found the house *furnished*, however, and the Lord of Hosts resting there, he would flee in terror! When we cast down sin, we send away our tempter. If we do not build up in its place the strong tower of the Name of Jesus, we have not protected ourselves from a return of the sin. When we build up the Word of God in our minds, we have put there the *knowledge of God*, to set itself up against the *lies*! We want strongholds in our minds, but not the sort that our enemy can occupy and become able to use our minds against us. We want holy strongholds built there, where the Commander of the Lord's Army can come and wage war against our enemy, giving us vengeance against our adversary (Proverbs 18:10; Luke 18:1-8)! We must find the Scripture that directly combats the lie that we have been prone to believe if we are to be freed from its strong hold on our minds.

FOURTH - We must learn the combating Scripture.

Only when we commit the Word to *memory* will we be safe from the tempter every time he attacks us.

FIFTH - We must use His mighty power to take every rebellious thought captive and make our minds obey the Mind of Christ.

When we have our minds filled with His truth, lies will not have room to fit in! When we are seeking His power to overcome failure every day, and when we are walking in His Spirit instead of our flesh, we are preparing the battlefield for our enemy to be slaughtered!

SIXTH - If it is possible, we should become accountable to someone who is a mature Believer.

It is a normal, Biblical situation to make ourselves accountable to another Believer when we have a weakness which we are trying to overcome. “Iron sharpens iron,” (Proverbs 27:17). When we confess our sin and desire to overcome it to a mature Believer, asking them to pray with us and for us, and to challenge us regarding our progress, we are giving the Holy Spirit another opportunity to help transform us into the likeness of Jesus. He wants to minister to us in power through our Spiritual Family (the Body of Christ). When we submit to those whom He puts around us in the Body as unto Him (if they are mature and godly), we are actually submitting to *Him*! If we do not know someone like this, we simply must *pray* that He would send one of His leaders our way.

Pulling Down the Stronghold

- 1 Identify the sin
- 2 Identify the lies
- 3 Identify the Truth in the Scriptures
- 4 Memorize the Scripture
- 5 Walk in the Spirit
- 6 Seek accountability

The sin

The lie

The Truth

The Scripture

The sin

The lie

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