

Demolishing Strongholds Video Series

God's Way to Spiritual Freedom

Mike and Sue Dowgiewicz

Chapter 2, The Demonic Forces in
Strongholds (Part 4 of 4)

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed"



Freedom In Jesus Series

(Part 2)

Chapter 2. The Demonic Forces in Strongholds (Part 4 of 4)

Christians CAN Be Demonized

Have no doubts about this: Christians CAN be demonized! Such a huge percentage of Americans claim to be Christians. But, despite several hundred thousand congregations in the US, our nation leads the world in sinful lifestyle choices, divorce, and the export of pornography. How can this be?

First: Because so many who are churched have misperceived God's grace, excusing it as a license to sin. They've been deluded that some sort of blanket forgiveness allows them to disregard God's ways and live for their own gratification.

Second, many have totally discarded God's commands, rejecting them as restraints on their self-fulfillment. Again, human sin nature is not as predisposed to wanting to obey God, as much as it is to give into Satan's temptation.

(Explore: Newsletter 2001-10/11 "Making Level Paths for Our Families")

Studies show that there's absolutely no moral difference between people who call themselves "Christian" and unbelievers! Can you see that demonic influence permeates both groups? Both equally give in to sin.

This failure to resist temptation is sharply confronted by Paul in his letter to the Roman believers.

"Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal bodies, so that it makes you obey its desires; and do not offer any part of

yourselves to sin as an instrument for wickedness" (Romans 6:12,13a)

Paul also denounces a deception that many Christians have been seduced by: that grace means they can go on sinning with impunity. No way!

"Therefore, what conclusion should we reach? "Let's go on sinning, because we're not under legalism but under grace"? Heaven forbid! Don't you know that if you present yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, then, of the one whom you are obeying, you are slaves — whether of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to being made righteous? (Romans 6:15,16, CJB).

Many today might deny that followers of Jesus can be demonized in a particular area of their lives yet be obedient to Him in the rest.

Again, whatever areas of your mind, will and emotions that you yield to Satan by habitual disobedience, you provide his demons the foundations for establishing strongholds in your soul.

As we shared in a previous segment: Those who disbelieve the reality of demonic influence in Christians are misinterpreting the Greek word for demonization.

By wrongly translating it as "demon-POSSESSED", a correct conclusion is built on a faulty premise. It's true: Christians CAN'T be demon-POSSESSED.

But when *daimonizomenoi* is correctly translated as "demonized," it indicates influence or control or oppression *in certain areas of your soul*.

That understanding brings about a different and true conclusion: Christians CAN be influenced or controlled by demons in their soul when they habitually give way through disobedience.

And let's remember that any form of demonization in your soul hinders your ability to:

1. Experience the Love and Truth of God
2. Understand and Apply God's Word.

Generational Strongholds

As we've seen in previous segments, habitually giving way to sin, and failing to repent, is one source of strongholds.

Another major source of strongholds in people's lives comes from past generations in their families. In other words, spiritual strongholds that aren't dealt with in one generation are passed along to succeeding ones. How does this happen?

As we shared in segment two of this chapter, spiritual influence is inherited through your soul, which you received from your parents at conception.

Remember, your PREDISPOSITION to sin is your sin nature that was handed along from generation-to-generation going all the way back to Adam.

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through [Adam], and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Our Lord is JEALOUS for a love relationship with each generation of His children on earth. He offers precious promises to those who LOVE Him. But grave consequences face those who choose to hate Him and ignore His commands.

"I, THE LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but, displaying grace to the thousandth generation of those who love me and obey my commands" (Exodus 20:5b,6).

Our God desires, and in fact *commands*, that each generation LOVE Him. The Hebrew word for love in this passage is *ahav*. It means a devoted passion for the One you love. You yearn to be in His presence.

This same emphasis on deep, intense love for God is repeated in Deuteronomy 6:5, and Matthew 22:37.

When a generation FAILS to love God or to repent of their sins, He chastises them AND their successors to the third and fourth generation.

We need to realize that the generation that doesn't love God, sins. And their habitual failure to love Him opens the way for strongholds to be erected in their soul. I know what this is like: I was raised in a very religious family. We practiced all the usual religious observances. But no one would accuse us of loving God.

So when you inherit your soul from your parents, THEIR sins, iniquities, and strongholds come right along with it. The demonic influences you inherit are called "generational strongholds".

It may be a new idea for you that God uses Satan and his demons at times to serve His purposes. For instance, when our Lord wanted to test Peter's faith we're told,

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:31,32).

Knowing that God uses Satan for redemptive purposes, Paul commanded the Corinthian believers, “Hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 5:5).

When a generation fails to love God and repent, He allows demonic forces to oppress, control, and influence them until they choose to turn back to Him.

When ANY generation receives light concerning the oppressed sin burden that’s been handed down from their forefathers, they can respond to God and repent of not only their own sins, but also those of their ancestors. Then our loving Father mercifully forgives them for the sins of all prior generations.

In essence, our Lord waits for a repentant generation that chooses to love Him. They must take responsibility for the sins of their family members that have preceded them.

This is what Nehemiah and the people who returned to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity did:

“I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you” (Nehemiah 1:6b). (See also Jeremiah 3:24,25, Daniel 9:4-11; Ezra 9:5-15.)

None of these prophets we’re citing had

themselves walked in habitual sin, but they bore spiritual responsibility anyway for not only the guilt of their own generation, but also that of their ancestors.

(Explore: Newsletter 1998-06 “*Repentance, Part 1*”)

You may come from a family that’s been under the influence of strongholds for several generations. For whatever reason, our Father may be showing YOU the light even through this material so that you can repent on behalf of your family.

Your repentance on behalf of your ancestors results in God’s forgiveness. This frees our Lord to show his mercy to succeeding generations — beginning with yours!

As this segment ends, why don’t you get on your knees and ask our Father, just as Nehemiah and the other prophets did, to forgive the sins of your past generations. Don’t carry them with you any longer.