

# Demolishing Strongholds Video Series

God's Way to Spiritual Freedom

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Chapter 4, Steps To Identify and  
Demolish Strongholds (Part2)

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



Freedom In Jesus Series

*(Part 2)*

## Overview of Types of Strongholds (Part 2)

### STUPOR/PRAYERLESSNESS

Distanced From God

“Cold” Love

Hardened Heart

Distracted

Spiritual Blindness

Laziness

Deceived Self-appraisal

Unresponsive

When people sin but don't repent, the strongholds of stupor and prayerlessness will eventually form in their soul.

Everything about the conviction they once had toward God becomes foggy. Again, unrepentance is what opens the door for this stronghold to take hold.

Tolerated sin is like seaweed that wraps itself around you. This is why the writer to the Hebrews give us this warning,

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us THROW OFF everything that hinders and the sin that so EASILY ENTANGLES, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:1).

Notice that the scripture writer doesn't tell us to amble along lazily in our journey with Jesus. He exhorts us to RUN with perseverance on the course that the Bible commands the followers of Jesus!

You'd never leave on a long trip to someplace you've never been without checking a map to make sure you know how to get to your destination. Nor should you think you'll arrive at your heavenly destination if you ignore our life road map, God's Word!

But the Bible is not only an outline of how to get to heaven. It's also the Living Word, designed by our Father to pierce deeply into your soul, enabling you to be changed and conformed to the character of Jesus.

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

(**Explore:** High Places study guide, “Introduction”)

As you immerse yourself in His Word, the Holy Spirit pierces you with its truth. But you need what Jesus calls “ears to hear” if the Bible is going to mean anything more to you than a history book or a volume of moral advice.

When your soul is blocked by the stronghold of stupor and prayerlessness, you're not able to discern and apply God's truth to your own life circumstances. The prayerlessness portion of the stronghold will do everything to keep you from experiencing intimate communication with your Lord. Together with the spirit of stupor, prayerlessness convinces you that our Lord won't answer. Or, that you have no need to spend time with Him because He knows everything anyway.

If you find yourself HABITUALLY PLAGUED by any of the symptoms under this stronghold, ask the Holy Spirit to show you any sins you've been reluctant to confess and turn away from. You can't stay entangled in sin and hope to demolish this stronghold.

Stupor is all too happy to let others spoon feed you religious platitudes. No demands are made on you by God. You can feel good that you've put in time in the pew.

But that kind of spiritual laziness can eventually lead to a hardened heart that completely deafens itself to the voice of God.

## REBELLION

Self-willed  
Stubborn/Insolent  
Pouting  
Strife  
Factious  
Divisive  
Anger Leads to Argument  
Independent  
Unteachable  
Ungodly Influence  
Lawless

Because of rebellion, Satan and his demonic followers were thrown out of heaven. And, rebellion got Adam and Eve tossed from the Garden of Eden.

Rebellion is the complete opposite of everything that IS God, and is OF God. The stealth of this stronghold blinds many Christians, preventing them from recognizing that they're rebelling against GOD.

As you can see by the symptoms, this stronghold causes you to react with others, especially those in authority.

(Explore: Newsletter 2001/01 "When the Door of the Ark Closed")

The spirit of rebellion, more than any other, hungers to be in charge, or at least to make you want your own way no matter what.

As we've shared before, God is the source for all authority on earth. That truth is reinforced by Paul to followers of Jesus who were living under the extremely repressive Romans.

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves" (Romans 13:1,2).

That's about as plain as Scripture gets: Rebellion gets you in trouble with God. The most severe distress we've encountered among Christians occurs among the rebellious. Life isn't going well for them because of rebellion and bitterness in their hearts. And with the vast majority, this animosity began toward their *parents*.

One of the great promises of God is found in both testaments of Scripture. Yet for people plagued by the stronghold of rebellion, their stubborn self-will prevents them from taking hold of this promise.

"Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise—that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Ephesians 6:2,3).

If your life has been a struggle with a series of dead ends, closely examine the symptoms of this stronghold. Focus especially on symptoms that might apply to your relationship with your parents.

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The rebellious resistance you displayed under your parents' roof doesn't depart once you leave home. You continue to carry rebellion with you into your workplace and faith communities—any place you encounter other authority figures.

You often misperceive the reaction of those in authority whenever you speak up. It's not *what* you say, or that your ideas have no validity. It's the *WAY* you present them that turns people off.

People influenced by the stronghold of rebellion find it compelling to recruit others to be like them. They become evangelists for rebellion.

And because rebellion so typifies this society in its rejection of correction or boundaries, you don't have to look hard to find others to join with you. But note that this spirit isn't looking for the relational warmth of close friends. Each person in a group of rebels has an emotional shield up. Proximity with others of like anger is OK, but make sure no one gets inside your heart.

Until you're willing to rid yourself of this Satan-like stronghold, you'll never find rest and comfort in your relationship with our Lord.

### **FEAR & INSECURITY**

Inferiority  
Inadequacy  
Timidity  
Pleasing People, Not God  
Lack of Trust/Worry  
Phobias  
Anxiety Over Injury, Death  
Perfectionism  
Dread of Failure  
Inability to Set Goals  
"Motor-mouth"

The stronghold of fear and insecurity enjoys Demeaned people. It not only belittles the one in whom it's abiding, but it often uses that person to bring down the dignity of others.

Fear and insecurity causes you to be obsessively focused on what's *WRONG* with you. It doesn't want you to experience any dignity in your relationship with God or with others!

Our Father created us to have fellowship with Him. Only humans are capable of that wonderful privilege. That's why He made mankind in His image and likeness. (See Genesis 1:26)

As we shared in chapter 1, our Lord made us with a need for dignity because we *ARE* made in His image. And it's that precious image that Satan hates!

A stronghold of fear and insecurity tears down your dignity and replaces it with the torment of anxiety and dissatisfaction.

How many followers of Jesus have been deterred from bringing Him praise by believing this spirit's lie that they're worthless!

And how many *HAVEN'T* walked in the gifting the Holy Spirit has given them because they felt they'd either fail or be embarrassed?

It's impossible for you to grow in loving relationship with others if you're trapped by fear and insecurity whenever you're around them!

**(Explore:** Newsletter 1997/12 "*Apprehension*")

If apprehension is a key element of your relationship with someone, you're most likely being influenced by this stronghold.

When you refuse out of fear or insecurity to confront another person, he or she in turn feels anxious because they KNOW something's amiss between you. And that barrier to openness keeps you from both giving AND receiving the relational warmth our Lord calls for in His people.

If you're influenced by this stronghold, you may be demonstrating one of the more common symptoms of the spirit of fear and insecurity by being a motor-mouth. Constant chatter is another barrier to letting others in to your deeper self. Your endless babble keeps them from asking questions. And it gives you the satisfaction that you've dominated the conversation.

Others may hear a lot FROM you, but not really KNOW you. And to the spirit of fear and insecurity, that's just fine.

It has you convinced that if people really knew what was going on inside your mind and heart, they'd turn away from you.

So you hide behind your frivolous chatter, or draw away entirely from interaction with others.

### **CONTROL**

Manipulative

Striving

Lack of Trust

Devil's Advocate

Insensitive

Desiring Recognition

Seductive Empowerment

Cursing

Emotional Outbursts

Schemes, Intrigues

The stronghold of control is often interwoven with a stronghold of fear and insecurity. In other words, wherever you find the stronghold of fear and insecurity, you'll very often find control.

When you're influenced by a spirit of fear and insecurity, you can't experience the dignity our Father wants for you. And, the spirit of control keeps you from reaching out to others for help.

Over the years many have discovered that when they try to help someone who's influenced by fear and insecurity, the stronghold of control attacks them: "You're trying to CONTROL me!" That spirit has no room for ANYONE else's input!

We've found the combination of fear and insecurity, along with the stronghold of control to be very prevalent among Christian business people.

**(Explore:** Newsletter 2003/07 *"You Belong To Me!"*)

They've worked so hard to get where they're at, that receiving input is very difficult. Being IN CONTROL is the driving force behind their thinking.

The stronghold of control isn't always abrasive or bossy. Many women who are influenced by this stronghold, control the atmosphere of their HOME through stony silence, withholding affection from their husband or children, or making decisions that impact others without discussing them first.

We were recently made aware of another strategy of the spirit of control. A married friend mentioned that she often

found herself showing undue interest when she was talking with men. It's NOT that she had any sexual desire for them. But her responsive interaction in conversation held the man's attention, and that was a form of empowerment for her. She was able to control him by her words and expression, almost as though she was seducing his MIND.

If you find yourself with ANY of the symptoms of this stronghold, we encourage you to look closely at fear and insecurity as well. You might find them working in tandem to keep you isolated emotionally as well as spiritually.

Control is the guardian of fear and insecurity.

### **SEXUAL IMPURITY**

Lust

Sensual Enticement

Denial/Rationalization

Control

Masturbation

Fornication

Adultery

Frigidity

Homosexuality

Pornography/

Fantasy

The stronghold of sexual impurity rarely develops on its own. It's generally manifested because you've opened a foothold for it through other strongholds, particularly rejection, and fear and insecurity.

The spirits in these strongholds can plague your emotions so intensely that you're constantly down on yourself because of their influence.

Then, to compensate for your despair,

you give way to addictive behavior, or activities that will help you gain recognition, or in sexual pursuit.

One of the most devastating ways to compensate for the impact of other strongholds is the pursuit of sexual sins. Not only is your dignity diminished, you grow INCREASINGLY enslaved to unholy desires. Your thoughts, and finally your heart, can be OBSESSED with seeking gratification to appease that spirit of impurity.

Fantasies fuel your hunger, and the world system is all too eager to provide ways for you to appease it. You feed your desire through sexual situations on TV, at the movies, on the Internet, or in magazines. You finally grow hardened to the Holy Spirit's voice of conviction, and yield fully to your sin nature instead. Tragically, this stronghold causes you to thirst for more grotesque forms of sexual fantasy.

The apostle Paul warns about the consequences of making sexual impurity an idol in your life:

"Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another" (Romans 1:24).

Don't think that this spirit is confined to men. Even teenage girls have discovered the perverse power they exercise over boys through misuse of their sexuality.

The spirit of impurity deceives these girls into thinking they can find acceptance and relational connectedness through their promiscuity. Yet all they find after being used is tattered self-esteem and shattered hopes.

If YOU have lived immorally, even in your youth, and HAVEN'T repented, your children are at risk for giving way to this spirit. Make sure they understand the consequences of being dominated by impurity, and be honest with them about your own disobedience to God's ways.

Show them through God's Word the joy that our Father has intended ONLY for the marriage covenant. If they've already given ground to sexual sin, guide them back to the right path through confession, repentance, and receiving the forgiveness and cleansing that our Lord gives.

During a seminar with an inner city congregation, we shared about Jesus' promise to make all things NEW — to make us a new creation when His Spirit moves in!

A contingent of teenagers came to me afterward in tears, grief-stricken that they'd so polluted themselves with sexual sin. I reminded them of Jesus' promise to fully forgive and to completely cleanse when they turn AWAY from their sin and are washed clean through His sacrifice. Those tears of regret became ecstatic tears of joy! They no longer HAD to listen to that impure spirit that had enslaved them. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, they could say NO to temptation. Through Him they could slam shut their minds to entertaining even a THOUGHT of their old nature's ways.

You may try to rationalize that your private harboring of this spirit isn't harming anyone. Don't you believe it! By entertaining that impure spirit, you're choosing to keep the HOLY Spirit from working out His purposes in and through you.

Our Father can't use a vessel that's deter-

mined to wallow in filth. He needs you to be spiritually cleansed and available for the work He wants to do *through you*:

"In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work." (2 Timothy 2: 20,21)

If you find yourself habitually affected by ANY of the symptoms of this stronghold, be sure to take a closer look at the strongholds of rejection, and fear and insecurity.

You need to demolish the whole combination of these strongholds *together* if you want to STAY free of sexual impurity.

### **IDOLATRY/WORLDLINESS**

- Worldly Values
- Frustrated
- Hopeless
- Greedy/Selfish
- Financial Problems
- Wrong Goals/Decisions
- Living a Lie
- Apathetic
- Pleasure in Wickedness
- Syncretistic

The stronghold of idolatry and worldliness is the fastest growing of the strongholds. During the 15 years we've been teaching people about demonic strongholds, idolatry and worldliness have spread pandemically in the Christian community.

Through a number of factors beginning in the 1970's, the values and methods of

corporate America have become the guiding force for many Christians communities today.

Size and prestige are how many religious leaders measures success. Holiness, righteousness, and any other biblical mandate that relies on humility and repentance have been set aside so congregations can attract people without regard for God's standards.

In pursuing the goals and values of corporate America, religious leaders have set aside God's criteria for repentance and communal righteousness. By using the ways of this world to attract people, clergy must also cater to their sin nature. And they do this by altering God's definition of grace.

They have come up with what is called "Greasy Grace" — our Lord's license to let people go on sinning.

(**Explore:** Newsletter 2004/0506 "*Be Warned! Greasy Grace Fuels the Fires of Hell*")

The stronghold of idolatry and worldliness has caused many clergy to redefine grace. This has led so many today to believe they can go on sinning, because they're ALREADY forgiven.

Remember, God's definition of grace is the desire and the power to do HIS will. It has nothing to do with God permitting His people to go on sinning.

As we discussed in Part 1 of our *Freedom In Jesus* video series, the values and goals of this world are those of Satan himself.

Since so many well-known Christian

leaders today use the values and goals of worldly corporations, the Christian community at large has been duped into the same idolatry. That's why our God cries out,

"You ADULTEROUS people, don't you know that friendship with the world is HATRED toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a FRIEND of the world becomes an ENEMY of God" (James 4:4).

Any *goal*, any *thing*, or any *person* that's more important to you than God is an *idol*. An idol is anything that you are more devoted to than our Lord and His Word. Pushing God and His Word aside to gain success in the eyes of the world is an idol. Your devotion to people that is greater than to God is an idol.

When the world system invades homes as well as congregations, LAWLESSNESS rules. The boundaries of God's holy Word are disregarded in exchange for personal gratification — people want whatever pleases them.

To the detriment of their children, many Christian parents are readily passing along the stronghold of idolatry and worldliness!

The unrestrained quest by Christians for newer cars, bigger houses, and designer clothes is the direct result of this stronghold.

You can't keep the world from following goals, methods and values that are contrary to the will of God. But, with this stronghold demolished you CAN keep those goals, methods and values from intruding into your HOME, and making your family enemies of God.

(**Explore:** Newsletter 2001/02 “*Don’t Let the Coyote Eat Your Children*”)

Be especially diligent as you look through the different symptoms for yourself. You don’t want to consider yourself a Christian but be an enemy of God through loving the world system.

### **FALSE PROPHECY/ ANTI-CHRIST**

Denies Jesus as God and Man  
Bondage to Man-made Teaching  
Manipulation  
Prophecy for Pay  
Prey to Cults, Heresies  
Encourages Lawlessness  
Counterfeit Miracles  
Contrives Dreams/Visions

Ever since the early 1980’s this stronghold has proliferated. False prophecy and anti-Christ spirit now deceives many well-meaning Christians down paths contrary to God’s Word.

The spirit within this stronghold convinces you that you’re receiving a special revelation from God. Don’t forget, except for creating life, Satan can counterfeit the things of God. So if God uses prophecies, dreams, and visions, so can Satan.

Demonically inspired false prophecies, dreams, and visions have led many to very painful outcomes. They suffer because they fail to test all revelations according to the Bible. Just so you know, Sue and I truly believe that our Lord is still revealing specific guidance for His children through prophecy, dreams, and other means of revelation. But the distinguishing factor of true revelation is that the Scriptures prove GOD as the Initiator of the message. And all revelation needs to be tested by 2 or 3 others according to His Word.

(**Explore:** Restoring the Early Church, Chapter 12. *The Home Fellowship: Loadbearing Relationships*)

The stronghold of false prophecy/anti-Christ has produced prophetic schools where people go to learn “how to prophesy.”

Listen, no one can just conjure up a true revelation from God. And, our Lord never takes misrepresenting Him lightly.

The Hebrew Scriptures abound with warnings from the true prophets to stay away from those who proclaim dreams and visions that are CONTRARY to God’s will, character, and purpose. (See 1 John 4:1)

That’s why it’s so important that you TEST AGAINST SCRIPTURE the prophecies and revelations people pronounce.

The confirmation of two or three is a biblical requirement before you jump feet first into a supposed “revelation” someone has for you!

We strongly encourage you: If you find you have any of the symptoms manifested by this spiritual stronghold, renounce them and repent! Your words and actions may lead others astray, and provoke our Father to get your attention through means that may not be pleasant.

### **WITCHCRAFT / FAMILIAR SPIRIT**

Blasphemy  
Preoccupied with Evil  
Psychic Experiences  
Rebellious  
Manipulation  
Devalues Life  
Identifies with Sinful Nature  
Fixated on Future

When you manipulate people and circumstances to bring about an outcome that's contrary to God's will or His Word, you're giving way to the spirit of witchcraft.

This stronghold is more prevalent among Christians than most people think. ANYONE can CALL himself a Christian, and even go through the motions of religious ritual and practice.

But the stronghold of witchcraft and its partner, the familiar spirit, induces people to follow a god of their own making.

How do you MAKE a god? Well, you take a few Bible verses out of context and use them as the basis for your beliefs. For instance, because God's character is LOVE, you project what YOU think a loving god is like — perhaps a doting grandfather who turns the other way when you sin. Anything that has to do with walking righteously or arousing God's anger, you disregard. You've created your own custom-designed god, and in the process, blasphemed the one true God by CALLING yourself a Christian.

You may remember, because of witchcraft, King Saul lost his kingdom. The stronghold of witchcraft is a first cousin to rebellion. Saul had been commanded to await the arrival of the prophet Samuel to offer sacrifices to God. Yet the king, overcome by fear of the people, rebelled against God. (See 1 Samuel 15)

Saul's disobedience influenced the people to turn astray from God's commands. And evil actions and beliefs that are eagerly copied by others is the work of a familiar spirit.

Listen to the disastrous consequences Saul faced because he entertained that rebellious witchcraft spirit:

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he also has rejected you from being king" (1 Samuel 15:23).

Many who have been consistently controlled by this spirit have chosen to forsake their trust in Jesus and follow the dark powers of Satan.

If you find yourself constantly giving in to temptation, especially when you're with others who are urging you to sin, you're listening to the siren call of a familiar spirit.

## **INFIRMITY/DESTROYING**

Physical Manifestations

Unconfessed Sin

Abuses Body

Devalues Life

Chronic Grumbling

Thoughts of Suicide

Drawn to Danger

The stronghold of infirmity and the destroying spirit have one goal: to inflict such emotional pain over your circumstances that life seems meaningless, and your trust in God diminishes.

As we mentioned earlier, you're made in God's image, and Satan hates God. Satan ESPECIALLY hates those who know Jesus as their Lord. He's declared WAR on all who follow Jesus. (See Revelation 12:17.)

Remember, within the body you see in your mirror each morning, are your unseen soul and spirit. You're precious to

our Father because, when He looks at you, He also sees the Spirit of Jesus within you! “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Because of this, you’re the object of Satan’s wrath. And his strategy is simple: By stirring you to continually grumble against God about yourself and your life, you become trapped in increasing ungratefulness. Keep in mind that habitual grumbling is self-destructive.

Ungratefulness moves you to abuse your body through gluttony or intoxicants. You really DON’T CARE what happens to you. Nor do you care about how much you’re hurting those who love you.

If you’re strongly attracted to activities that are extremely dangerous, you may be beset by this stronghold.

Don’t let this spirit go unchallenged, or you will find hopelessness and self-hatred growing in your soul.

How you respond when you’re confronted with catastrophe can affect your health and emotional well-being. This stronghold will use these events to draw you away from emotional dependence and trust in Jesus. And you don’t want to go that way!