

Demolishing Strongholds Video Series

God's Way to Spiritual Freedom

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Chapter 5, After You've Demolished
the Strongholds (Part 1)

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



Freedom In Jesus Series

(Part 2)

After You've Demolished The Strongholds

We want to begin this segment with wonderful words of hope for you! Let them permeate your innermost being as you listen.

“Now the Lord is the SPIRIT, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is FREEDOM. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:17,18).

You've renounced your spiritual strongholds through relying on the authority of Jesus' Name, and have fully repented of your sins. That means you're FREE of demonic influence and control! You're free! A new and COMPLETE relationship with your Lord can now take place.

This new freedom is now possible because the truth and the love of God that were once blocked out by the strongholds are now able to penetrate your mind, will and emotions. And, if you'll REMAIN repentant, you'll marvel over the changes the Holy Spirit can work in you!

The Holy Spirit now has FULL ACCESS to your entire soul. His ability to sanctify you into Christ's likeness is no longer blocked by demonic strongholds.

Before we share with you some steps that will help you to both sustain AND grow in your freedom, we want to show you your true condition now that the strongholds are gone. If you're like most people who've used our workbook, you filled in symptoms for more than one stronghold. Remember, these spirits were lying,

demonic forces at work IN you. And, over the years that these strongholds were in your soul, they affected your beliefs. They tainted your perception of others, even of God. They even influenced how you think about YOURSELF.

This may be hard for you to grasp, but your values, opinions, and even your religious beliefs were wrapped around what the DEMONS wanted you to think. After years of helping thousands of people, Mike and I know that NO ONE likes to think they've embraced the lies of demons. But you did!

So our first point to you is this: Even though the strongholds are gone, your mind, will, and emotions have been polluted by a lot of demonically-inspired misperceptions.

But if you'll listen with your SPIRIT to what we'll be sharing with you, you'll not only become painfully aware of how duped you've been. You'll also pursue these steps of freedom with eager determination.

Let me share an observation we've made over the years: As followers of Jesus who've been freed from strongholds learn to STAY free, they're able to understand more clearly how the strongholds DISTORTED what they thought was truth.

You Are Very Vulnerable

When lobsters molt and lose their old shell, they're dangerously vulnerable to predators until their new shell hardens.

In a similar way, now that you're free from the strongholds, you too are vulnerable to DEMONIC predators. The steps you take in the days and weeks to come are critical if you're to maintain your freedom.

And, the demons recognize your vulnerability better than you do. Remember Jesus' warning that we quoted in Chapter 4:

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first..." (Matthew 12:43-45).

At this point you're in a precarious position in the spirit world. You've never been free from demonic agitation before. How distorted are your relationships, and beliefs because of the influence of strongholds on you over the years?

It's hard to tell unless you use God's standard to gauge your relationships and beliefs by. And, you have no idea how broad are the changes the Spirit of Jesus wants to make in you in the days, weeks, and years to come.

We hope that as we share, you'll listen with your spirit. We'll be offering you vital steps as a WAY OF LIFE for you to walk in the freedom that makes you fruitful in our Lord's Kingdom.

How Much of Your Faith Practice Is Stronghold Based?

We shared earlier that when we gave out the *Overview of Types of Strongholds* on pages 36 and 37 to faith communities, the majority of the people had the same strongholds. There was never an exception! Your beliefs have been developed in the midst of demonic influences on your faith community. Think about that!

Strongholds that hid behind the spirit of deceit controlled and influenced the teaching that you, and those with whom you fellowshiped, heard and believed.

Each of you was under the influence of the same strongholds, and collectively, you bought into the same lies and misrepresentations. Whether you're an individual watching this, a family, or a faith community: We ask you to prayerfully consider the steps we present so that ALL of you can fellowship in freedom together.

With over 22,000 denominations competing with creeds that oppose each other, SOMEONE'S been listening to the father of lies! So be careful that you don't react with a quick knee-jerk, and conclude that YOU have the truth while everyone else is wrong.

(**Explore:** High Places study guide, Chapter 19. "High Places")

The steps we'll be sharing are those that the earliest followers of Jesus used to verify, and confirm God's truth.

We encourage you to follow in their footsteps by putting into practice their process of determining truth. It's the method our Lord gave them!

First, in Your Home

The material in this segment and in those to follow is vital for your future. Rely on the directives the earliest followers of Jesus depended on:

1. Let the *Holy Spirit* and *God's Word* be your only standard and source of determining truth.
2. Use God's method of determining truth by the *confirmation of two or three* people.

Now that you're free from the influence of strongholds, you owe it to yourself, and to God, to scrutinize your current faith practices. Everything needs to be reviewed with your soul free from strongholds.

The Holy Spirit now has complete access to your whole soul — your mind, will, and emotions. Give Him the opportunity to bring your faith into conformity to Jesus. If you want to LIVE day by day in the freedom that Jesus offers you, we encourage you to embrace the same foundational processes of determining truth as the earliest followers of Jesus did.

Keep in mind that your HOME is the basic building block for all spiritual development. Your home is where you first must learn to live in conformity to Jesus.

It's a sad testimony that many of today's Christian husbands and fathers have been deceived into outsourcing their wives and children for OTHERS to spiritually train.

Sunday schools and youth groups, for example, reflect the HELLENIST principalities. Programs like these are designed to separate a husband or father from his biblical responsibilities.

Religious programs and activities that are segregated into age-specific groups and season-of-life subdivisions such as single's, divorced groups, and seniors classes are widely accepted today. But they were DEFINITELY not part of the earliest Church, which was intergenerational and interconnected as extended family.

(Explore: Newsletter 2001/02 "Don't Let the Coyote Eat Your Children")

We hope that this video series, and ALL the material our Lord gave us in our research in Israel, will be discussed in your HOME. Do you recall the relational priorities of the earliest followers of Jesus?

First was their relationship with God,
Then with their family in their home,
Then their spiritual family that fellow-shipped in homes,
Then their CONGREGATION of home fellowships who met in homes.

Hellenism has deceived people into believing that the place for spiritual development is under the steeple at the congregational level. But this is NOT the biblical pattern!

It's in your HOME that your relationship with your Father and His Son, Jesus grows and is lived out FIRST. Everything else that has to do with your spiritual growth should SUPPORT what's taking place in your home, not replace it.

(Explore: RTEC Ch. 9 "One on One: Marriage" & Ch. 10 "One on One: Parenting")

As we researched in Israel, we were amazed by the extensive impact the Hellenists of the second and third centuries had, as they altered the faith practices of the earliest Church. The majority of faith practices we see throughout Christianity today were introduced by these Greek philosophers. Today, in error, they're called "Church Fathers."

(Explore: Restoring the Early Church, Ch.6: "Greek Philosophy in the Church")

These converted Greek philosophers introduced a myriad of pagan practices that, over time, were adapted by the Church. This included the lecture format from behind a pulpit to which you've become accustomed. As you'll see shortly, the earliest followers of Jesus used interactive discussion.

It was sickening for us to see how far-reaching the influence of the demonic forces of Hellenism has been on the home.

When we returned from Israel, I visited some clergy I'd worked with during my years at the retreat center. Each one admitted that his congregation's programs were meant to compensate for *irresponsible husbands and fathers*, men who failed to carry out spiritual responsibilities within their own homes. What they didn't realize is that their programs only bred more irresponsibility.

As you watch this series, be sure to pause the DVD as often as you need to. Stop and discuss with your FAMILY what we share.

If you don't have a family, discuss what we share with those who are in close fellowship with you. As you'll see in a moment, you need to be DISCUSSING these truths to determine how you want to apply them, not just watching them for information sake!

Confirmed by 2 or 3

Beginning within your home, discussion among two or three TOGETHER is crucial. This is the biblical pattern for confirming both your understanding AND your application of God's Word.

(Explore: Pastoring By Elders, Ch. 1. "The Assault on the Hebraic Foundations")

As just mentioned, during the second and third centuries, Hellenism promoted the lecturer-listener format you're accustomed to.

But God's way of understanding His truth so that you'll *apply it to your life* is through discussion, and *confirmation* by two or three witnesses.

As our research found, the Hebraic Stream of Judaism, which ultimately became those who trusted Jesus, had been teaching long before the coming of our Lord:

"Whenever 2 or 3 study God's Word for application, the Holy Spirit is in their midst giving them understanding."

Let's examine this principle of two or three, so that you can pursue making this biblical mandate a part of YOUR life.

In the Older Testament, God gives the Israelites a criterion for confirming that a guilty person deserves death:

"On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness" (Deuteronomy 17:6).

Jesus affirms this principle when he discusses dealing with an unrepentant sinner:

"But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'" (Matthew 18:16).

Our Lord continues with His emphasis on COLLECTIVE CONFIRMATION when He promises that His followers have AUTHORITY to apply His Word:

“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:18,19).

What you confirm to be true TOGETHER is recognized in heaven. And Jesus confirms the beauty of His special presence as His followers apply this principle of collective confirmation:

“For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20).

You bring the Spirit of Jesus into your midst when two or three are gathered to apply His Word.

He’s at work in your MIDST as you discern and apply the Bible to your lives. And that’s what makes this principle vital for you. His presence means that you’re NOT engaging in an INTELLECTUAL discussion about the Bible. Far from it!

With one or two others in your family or close fellowship, you’re seeking, with earnest hearts, to apply the Bible to *every area of your life*. Why would you do this?

Because you LOVE JESUS, and want to walk in obedient trust BECAUSE of that love.

(Explore: Christian Halakhahs, Ch. 2. “How Was the Halakhic Process Lost?”)

A few more verses from the Newer Testament show that the principle of two or three had other faith applications:

“Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses” (2 Corinthians 13:1)

“Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses” (1 Timothy 5:19).

Never lose sight of this point: Discussion among two or three brings the Spirit of Jesus into your midst in a *special way*. His presence makes a level playing field for each person who’s involved. It’s not an issue of *who’s right*, or *who’s more knowledgeable*. His Spirit produces a humble desire to determine *truth to live by*.

That’s right! The discussion and confirmation of two or three with the presence of Jesus in your midst is our Father’s method of keeping His children humble as they seek His ways. Remember how God humbled the Israelites?

“He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 8:3).

Humble pursuit of truth is foundational if you truly want to live free. Use this method of COLLECTIVE CONFIRMATION so that YOU can pinpoint any lies you may have believed in the past.

Then establish your faith practices on the solid assurance that the Spirit of Jesus is with you; and, that what you do agree upon is acknowledged in heaven.