

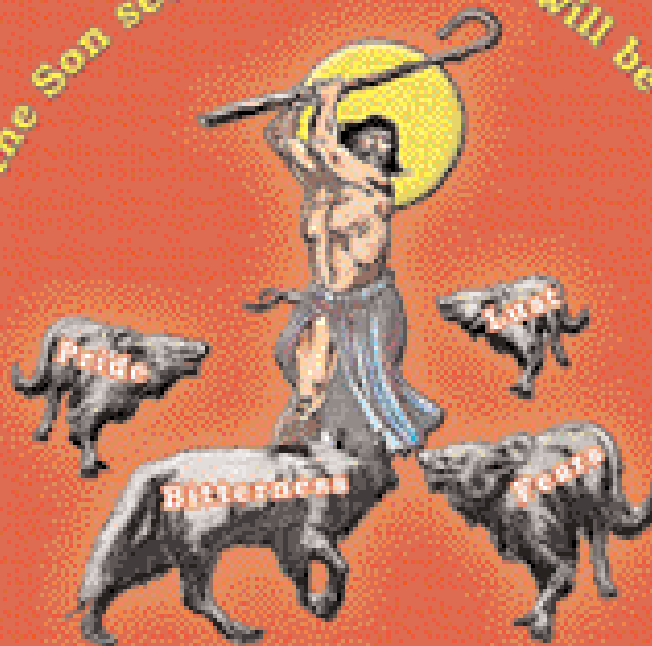
# Demolishing Strongholds Video Series

God's Way to Spiritual Freedom

Mike and Sue Dowgiewicz

## Chapter 5, After You've Demolished The Strongholds (Part 2)

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



Freedom In Jesus Series

*(Part 2)*

## After You've Demolished The Strongholds (Part 2)

As you follow along with us, you'll recognize that we want you to release the Holy Spirit to work *in* and *through* you. Your goal is for ever-increasing dependence on His GUIDANCE and His POWER. Only by the Spirit can you ever live a life that glorifies our Father.

We encourage you to read and discuss our article, *The Gospel of the Covenant is the Pilgrimage to Salvation*. (Also available on DVD in our *Jesus In Your Home* Video Series) This Gospel is the life-changing Good News which the earliest followers of Jesus embraced.

The Gospel of the Covenant not only resulted in their receiving the Holy Spirit as we see in the Book of Acts. It also clearly defined THEIR responsibilities to God. We encourage you: if you haven't done so yet, read, watch, or listen to *The Gospel of the Covenant Is the Pilgrimage to Salvation*.

It's vital that you understand the truths of your relationship with our Father in union with Jesus. This will help you take giant steps toward the relational intimacy and spiritual power that the earliest followers of Christ experienced.

In the upcoming segments, we want to share with you some very particular steps that must become a way of life for you if you want to HOLD ON to your freedom in Jesus.

**(Explore:** Jesus In Your Home Video Series: The Indwelling Holy Spirit (Parts 1-3)

## Faith is Action

The Hellenist influence on the Church over the centuries has brought about an intellectual PASSIVITY rather than a vibrant way of life. Knowledge-based agreement has triumphed over trust-based action.

I'd like to emphasize right now that you can't be PASSIVE in your faith journey and remain free in your spirit. Your freedom requires your determination and obedient trust to STAY free. And this is what the Holy Spirit does IN you. HE prompts you to put your faith into action.

That's why James warns each of us,

"...faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do" (James 2:17,18).

Note that the apostle is NOT emphasizing a faith that's based upon works. NO! He's assuring us that our responsive action is the EVIDENCE that we're people of faith. Your faith-in-action is a clear sign that the Holy Spirit is exercising His control in your life.

Many of the strongholds from which you've just been freed were used by the principality of Hellenism to enslave you. These demonic spirits deceived you into studying the Bible for *knowledge sake only*.

Hellenism offers you religious programs in which you can sit in a pew and SPECTATE, rather than PARTICIPATE by representing Jesus to the people you encounter.

**(Explore:** A Hebraic-Greek Comparison. See page VI of *Demolishing Strongholds*)

Now that you're free from strongholds, the Holy Spirit is able to conform your attitudes and actions to those of Jesus. In the days and weeks to come, you'll find yourself increasingly fulfilling His purposes.

Jesus means it when He promises,

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father" (John 14:12).

You can't be a follower of Jesus, yet make Him out to be a liar through your distrust or disobedience to His Word. From this day forward, regularly ask yourself: Do those close to you in your family and faith community see the lifestyle and character of Jesus INCREASING in you?

Each of the Newer Testament writers builds upon this Hebraic, *faith-in-action* understanding. Reflect on these two passages, for example:

"So, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed when I was with you, it is even more important that you obey now when I am away from you: KEEP WORKING OUT your deliverance with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12).

"For if you possess these [character] qualities in INCREASING MEASURE, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:8).

Now that you're free from demonic influence, you'll understand the IMPERATIVE commands of the Bible more clearly: Go. Do. Serve. Love. Obey.

If you want to remain victorious and fruitful in the freedom Jesus gives you, you'll need to incorporate a whole new way of understanding your trust walk. And, you'll need to retool your soul to be totally controlled by the Holy Spirit.

### **God's Goals and Purposes**

Never lose sight that acquiring the character of Jesus is the goal of your life on earth. That way you can complete the PURPOSES our Father has prepared for you as your life's quest.

As you pursue these two life objectives, you're ensuring your confidence and welcome at the Judgment Throne:

"In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like [Jesus]" (1 John 4:17).

The Holy Spirit will cooperate with your determination to remain free and grow in the character of Jesus. Be sure you go back over each point that we'll be sharing in these segments in Chapter 5 as often as you need to until they become part of your spiritual walk.

We trust that Paul's words will continue to apply to you:

"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 3:18).

### **How To Hold Onto Your Freedom: Step 1. Continue Renouncing Satanic Thoughts (Page 66)**

Your first step to holding on to your freedom in Jesus is to CONTINUE to

renounce Satanic thoughts as soon as they crop up. This calls for your personal diligence and alertness each and every day!

No one else can take your thoughts captive and bring them into obedience for you. YOU'RE responsible to renounce thoughts that are unlike those that Jesus would have.

As we mentioned earlier, even though the strongholds are no longer in your soul, demonic spirits are still able to whisper drive-by temptations to you. That's one way you get thoughts that are contrary to those of Jesus!

If you're willing to listen, the demons will hang around and try to gain entry into your soul. They'll try to arouse your emotions over those **thoughts**.

Then they'll use those **emotions** to propel you into sinful **action**.

If you tolerate those thoughts, emotions and actions, the demonic spirits will build **strongholds** in you all over again.

Do you remember our key verse from Chapter 2?

"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, AND we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

You need to purpose RIGHT NOW to establish a new, lifelong mental discipline: Take EVERY THOUGHT captive and make it obedient to Christ.

Only then can you be sure that the voice you hear in your mind is that of the Holy Spirit, and not some demonic entity trying to arouse your old sin nature again.

It's YOUR personal responsibility to keep walking in freedom to confirm that you DON'T want to return to the way you were. Keeping your thought life obedient to Jesus will help you grow into His likeness.

The apostle Paul confronted the same insidious demonic trickery that you'll face — TRYING to walk righteously but TEMPTED to cling to old sinful ways and attitudes as well.

Paul warned the believers in Corinth that there's NO COMPROMISE in their covenant with Jesus:

"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons" (1 Corinthians 10:21).

Let's rephrase Paul's words as they apply to your own soul:

"You can't entertain thoughts of Jesus, and thoughts influenced by demons at the same time; the Lord and demons can't occupy your soul together. You'll become like whomever you allow to influence your thoughts."

You can see how necessary it is for you to resist demonic thoughts and bring them into obedience to Jesus! This is YOUR personal, spiritual discipline.

Don't let the cycle of thoughts, emotions, actions, habits, and strongholds begin again in your soul.

When you're being tempted or harassed by demonic voices, RENOUNCE those thoughts in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Tell the spirits, "In the Name of Jesus I rebuke you! I refuse to listen!"

Then cry out to Jesus for help! Ask HIM to direct your mind toward thoughts that are noble, good, and praiseworthy—the thoughts HE would think

Do you remember the cartoon we shared earlier about demonic efforts to destroy friendships? Relationships can easily be estranged if you don't take your thoughts captive.

### **How To Hold Onto Your Freedom: Step 2. Study God's Word For Application (Page 67)**

The second step to maintaining your freedom is to study God's Word FOR APPLICATION. We discussed this in the previous segment as the foundational method of the earliest followers of Jesus. Let's look more closely at this.

In order to become more like Jesus in your character and fruitfulness, you need to apply the Bible to ALL areas of your life. The earliest followers of Jesus didn't just STUDY the Bible; they learned its truth so they could LIVE IT. They understood that their life journey was the path that Jesus, Who was "the Way", had taught and modeled for them.

This is why, in the Book of Acts, the earliest followers of Jesus were known as "the Way". (Acts 24:14.) This use of the term "the way" has a very distinct Hebraic understanding on your way of life known as *halakhah*.

The root word, *halak*, means "to walk." So *halakhahs* refer to how you WALK OUT YOUR LIFE in a way that coincides with God's Word.

**(Explore:** Christian Halakhahs, Ch. 3. "Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem")

When you and your family develop *halakhahs*, you're prayerfully searching the Scriptures for answers to daily life situations and questions. You discuss together what you believe the Holy Spirit is showing you. And, your **applications** of the Bible are your testimony to God. In your relationship with Him, you're choosing to live in a way that glorifies Him.

Your obedient trust in CARRYING OUT what our Lord reveals to you through prayer and His Word reflects your yearning to please Him.

The major purpose of establishing *halakhahs* is to bind you to God through love. Your obedience is a HEART issue!

You evidence your love for God by **obediently applying His Word:**

"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

Remember, as you and your family confront daily decisions, you can establish your own *halakhahs*. Prayerfully search God's Word to find HIS specific guidance on your situation. — and then APPLY IT.

As we shared before: DISCUSSION AMONG TWO OR THREE brings with it the unique presence of Jesus. Spur each other on to fulfill His purposes in your lives.

### **How To Hold Onto Your Freedom: Step 3. Put On Your Spiritual Armor (Page 67)**

The third step AFTER you've demolished the strongholds is to Put On Your Spiritual Armor. The best way to do this is to make Jesus FIRST each day when you wake up.

Each morning, you need to get up early enough to spend time with Him to prepare yourself for that day. We know of families that everyone, including the little children, get up before Dad goes to work so they can spend time with the Lord together.

Each new day, our Lord pours forth the blessing of His mercy and power to you:

“Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22,23).

Over our years of ministry, we have seen one key testimony that displays the true followers of Jesus: They rise early to spend time with the Lord. If Jesus is to be first in your life, you need to make Him first in your day.

Remember, Satan has declared WAR against all the followers of Jesus. How do you expect to fight your hateful adversary each day if you don’t prepare each morning to be equipped in spiritual armor?

Spend time with our Lord, and prepare yourself AND your family for the demonic onslaughts that will come during the day. You’re stepping out of your home into a war for your soul! Your children need to see YOU certain of your need for Jesus at the start of each day. By following your example, they’ll not only learn the reality of the unseen realm, they’ll grow to depend upon the power of Jesus to overcome their enemy. (Ephesians 6:10-18)

CHOOSE to clothe yourself with the spiritual armor that God has given His people through His Spirit: the **belt of truth**, which is your trust in the Lord Jesus, Who declared Himself to be the Truth.

A Roman soldier’s belt held weapons and shielded his vital organs. Truth is YOUR lifesaver!

The **breastplate of righteousness** is your assurance that the blood of Christ enables you to stand righteous before our Father. The breastplate covers your heart’s decisions throughout the day.

Have your feet fitted with **readiness** from the gospel of peace. That way you’re prepared for our Lord’s service because He’s setting you apart to fulfill His purposes. And wherever you go, His presence and power will be in you, ready for action.

Next is the **shield of faith**, which is God’s power to extinguish the enemy’s darts aimed at any weak areas in your life. A shield does you no good if you aren’t gripping it tightly, prepared for battle!

The **helmet of salvation** focuses your mind on eternity with God, and guards you against any further enemy intrusion into your soul.

You wield the **sword of the Spirit** as you immerse yourself in God’s Word and put it into action.

And finally, **pray in the Spirit**, so you can be alert and available at all times for communion and intimacy with our Lord.

Each morning, make sure you and your family have their spiritual armor on. Don’t let anyone leave home without it!

Testimonies of answered prayer are part of training your children up to trust our Lord. Make prayer time with your family a joyful time of hopeful anticipation that our Lord will show Himself strong in their lives.

Our Father inclines His heart and ear toward those who are walking steadfastly in His ways!

This command from God's servant Moses is a potent reminder to follow through in your *parenting responsibilities*.

"Only be careful, and watch yourselves DILIGENTLY as long as you live, so that you won't forget what you saw with your own eyes, so that these things won't vanish from your hearts. Rather, make them known to your children and grandchildren ... so that they will learn to HOLD ME IN AWE as long as they live on earth, and so that they will teach THEIR children" (Deuteronomy 4:9,10).

We've talked with parents who get all their children up to pray and prepare themselves before anyone leaves the house. Their testimonies of God's faithfulness have made their efforts all the more joyful!

#### **How To Hold Onto Your Freedom: Step 4. Ask Others To Help You Meet Your Seven Needs (Page 68)**

The 4th step of walking out your freedom in Jesus: Ask Others To Help You Meet Your Seven Needs. This calls for your humility. Ask for help from your spouse, your family, or other believers with whom you have a close relationship.

In Chapter 4 we mentioned the ruts of sinful behavior that strongholds have dug in your life. Some of these can be pretty deep! Now's the time for others to help you fill in those ruts with RIGHTEOUS RESPONSES AND DECISIONS. Let them know which of the seven needs seem to be the most pressing. After the strongholds were gone in me I really needed help with dignity, security, and intimate love and companionship. Sue

and our home fellowship helped me tremendously!

One of Mike's symptoms under the influence of the stronghold of rejection was "Seeks Acceptance." People thought he was a nice guy because of the things he DID for them.

But all my kind acts were my way of trying to forestall being rejected by people. With Sue's help, and that of our home fellowship, I was able to stop acting from a wrong motive. Our family in Jesus came alongside me with love that was willing to confront. My dignity grew, and I was finally able to show kindness to others because it was the loving thing to do, not because I feared rejection.

God will use the people who are close to you to help you discern the means HE'S provided for you to meet your seven needs. Otherwise, you may seek a carnal way to meet these needs, and provide a foothold for strongholds to return.

We encourage you to study the HEBRAIC RELATIONAL PRIORITIES we discussed in the beginning of this workbook.

**(Explore:** Restoring the Early Church, Chapters 8-12)

Chapters 8 through 12 of our book, *Restoring the Early Church*, provide you with a clear understanding of these priorities.

Prayerfully discuss these chapters with others close to you in the faith so you can better understand HOW our earliest forefathers in the faith had THEIR seven needs met.

We encourage you to pay particular attention to the people in your own home. Be diligent in seeing that everyone's needs are being met as our Lord intended. Remember, your HOME is the best and first place for you to experience relational intimacy.

Then, your EXTENDED SPIRITUAL FAMILY in your home fellowship can support your family's deepening of spiritual growth in your home. Hebraic-based home gatherings are your extended spiritual family. They're the people with whom you have 24 hour, 7 day-a-week commitment to each other — not just people with whom you have a scheduled meeting each week. Extended family in Jesus runs far deeper than that. These are the people you wouldn't hesitate to turn to in your darkest hour.

Your extended spiritual family do the "one-anothering" that the Newer Testament calls for: loving one another, serving one another, correcting one another — just as the earliest followers of Jesus did. (1 Peter 4:8-11)

Your extended spiritual family help you to live in righteousness. They're willing to confront you so you don't drift back into sin and strongholds.

As long as your seven needs are met God's way, you'll be safeguarded from letting the strongholds redevelop. Keep pursuing God's ways until your needs are met. If you don't, you'll only remain vulnerable to spiritual attack.

### **How To Hold Onto Your Freedom: Step 5. Review the Stronghold List Periodically (Page 68)**

Any time you aren't experiencing intimacy in your relationship with our Lord, we encourage you to review the Strongholds list.

Or, if you're facing habitual struggles in some area of your life that you can't gain victory over, revisit the list of strongholds and the accompanying symptoms. Check if any habitual patterns of unrighteous attitudes or actions are returning.

This recommendation to REVIEW THE STRONGHOLD LIST has been one of the hardest disciplines for people to do. Often they fear revisiting the stronghold sheet because of what they think they might find. Their fear only confirms that strongholds have been rebuilt.

But our Lord isn't exposing these strongholds to condemn you. He's seeking you out so that you'll confess your sins, renounce the strongholds, and *restore fellowship with Him*. (See 2 Corinthians 10:4-6; 1 John 1:9.)

And only through ongoing fellowship with our Father, in union with Jesus, can you ever bring Him glory, and serve His purposes for your life.