

**THE BUILDING UP &
THE TEARING DOWN OF**

STRONGHOLDS

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THE BUILDING UP AND TEARING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS

SCRIPTURE: II Cor. 10:3-5

The truth is that, although of course we lead normal human lives, the battle we are fighting is on the spiritual level.

The very weapons we use are not those of human warfare but powerful in God's warfare for the destruction of the enemy's strongholds.

Our battle is to bring down every deceptive fantasy and every imposing defense that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We even fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ (PHILLIPS).

WHAT DOES THE VERSE ABOVE TELL US?

1. We lead normal human lives.
2. We ARE fighting a battle.
3. It (the battle, the warfare) is not on the human level; it is on the spiritual level.
4. We do not use human-warfare weapons.
5. The weapons we use are from God - designed by God - expressly for this purpose.
6. Our weapons are powerful and are to be used for the destruction of the enemy's strongholds.
7. Our battle tactics are as follows:
 - (1) bring down every deceptive fantasy.
 - (2) bring down every imposing defense.
 - (3) capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ.
8. The purpose of the battle (the enemy's ultimate intention/goal) is to keep **the true knowledge of God** from becoming experientially ours and to keep Christ from controlling our thought-life.
9. We are to walk under the authority of Christ.

STRONGHOLD: Patterns in your life that have become so deeply entrenched that you perform them habitually, not even recognizing that you are exhibiting "unChrist-like" behavior, or that you have a CHOICE to resist.

SOME EXAMPLES OF STRONGHOLDS AND POSSIBLE MANIFESTATIONS:

- (1) **AMBITION TO BE SOMEONE** (Pride) Driven to excel; 70/80 hour work week; nag at your husband about more money, more prestige, different friends. Insist on the very best address - clothes - belonging to the most elite clubs.
- (2) **COMPLACENCY** Minimal attempt to generate creative ideas for positive change. "It's too much trouble to try." "Why make waves?" "What's wrong with our marriage? We get along a lot better than most of the couples we know."
- (3) **DEPRESSION** Look "woe-begone"; never get out; brood; sit and stare; inactivity; watch hours of television to escape the reality around you; hyperactive; sleeplessness.
- (4) **ENVY** Mild depression over someone else's success; being resentful of others for their success/looks/home/clothes. You try to tear down their achievements - look for chinks in their armor, and when you find one, you rejoice - at least you FEEL relieved!
- (5) **GOSSIPING** (Slander) At your very best when you're hearing about someone else's failures. Delight in sharing your latest tid-bits with your husband or your best friend.
- (6) **HOSTILITY** Critical of everyone; find something wrong with every church service; angry remarks at traffic lights; elbowing at the grocery counter . . . a short fuse; irritable; impatient.
- (7) **INDULGENCE** Finding contentment only in having something new to occupy your time - never content for long; not considering others and their needs. This can be instilled by parents, but can also be self-indulgence patterns brought about by deprivation.
- (8) **INFERIORITY** Always putting yourself down; constantly confessing your inability; constantly finding things you do wrong; blaming yourself for anything/everything that goes wrong.
- (9) **INHIBITION** An inability to outwardly express inward emotions or to be transparent because of fear of a negative evaluation from others, inner self-condemnation, or because your emotions have been "bottled-up" for so long (just as an arm will atrophy in a cast).

- (10) **JEALOUSY** Calling your friends to find out who went over to whose house Sunday night after church; constantly evaluating the looks/clothing/possessions of others; comparing your husband's achievements with his best friend's - or your children's achievements.
- (11) **MATERIAL ACHIEVEMENTS** (Covetousness) Drive around every Sunday afternoon and look at houses. Talk constantly about new furniture - redecorating - comparing "yours" with "theirs." Materialism is not unique to the wealthy. It is not necessarily a move from a 5 bedroom, 2½ baths to an 8 bedroom, 5 baths . . . it can be from a 2 bedroom, 1 bath, to a 4 bedroom, 2 baths. It consumes your thinking - drives you.
- (12) **NEW CLOTHING** (Vanity) Over-extending your credit at the department store every month. Feeling "good" only when you have on something new.
- (13) **OVER-EATING** (Gluttony) "I have every right to SOME pleasure, don't I?" "It seems that the only time I am really happy is when I am eating."
- (14) **PERFECTIONISTIC** Demanding perfect performance out of others, whether YOU perform perfectly or not. Being unable to relax; driven to keep all details perfect that concern you, and wanting to tell others how they can keep theirs "perfect" too.
- (15) **PERFORMANCE-BASED ACCEPTANCE/SELF-ACCEPTANCE** Feeling that others are constantly evaluating your performance and that you must perform perfectly for them - and for yourself. Maximum fulfillment when you have been praised for something that you did.
- (16) **REBELLION** Refusing to submit to authority. ("I'm sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside!")
- (17) **SELF-DEPRECIATION** A low self-image. Evaluating yourself with only those that you "feel" perform better/look better. Being unable to accept praise or to consider yourself capable in any area.
- (18) **SELF-PITY** Sick a lot - whine - whimper - complain. "I'm different. No one knows how I feel. No one really CARES how I feel. No one understands." (Can happen especially if your husband isn't meeting your needs.)
- (19) **SUPER SENSITIVE** Especially where your husband is concerned. Your "spirit is wounded" when he says something evaluative to you.
- (20) **WORRY** "I'm just a worrier! My mom was that way. There's always something to keep me upset and anxious!"

THE STRONGHOLDS ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE:

- I. • imaginations (KJV)
 - arguments (RSV)
 - speculations (NAS)
 - deceptive fantasy (PHILLIPS)
- II. • every high thing that exalteth itself against
 - the knowledge of God (KJV)
 - every proud obstacle (RSV & NAS)
 - every imposing defense (PHILLIPS)
- III. • every thought (KJV, RSV, NAS, & PHILLIPS)

A COVENANT:

1. Is there an area that seems to be so strong that I have begun to believe that I am never going to have victory?
2. Is there an area that I thought I had given to the Lord - yielded to Him - and yet my behavior continues in the same pattern with seemingly NO release?
3. Are there those times when I have deliberately allowed Satanic forces to gain footholds and have not reclaimed that ground from them?
4. Are there those sins (thought/behavior) which I am refusing to yield for fear of my loss of 'self-rights,' 'self-survival,' 'self-esteem,' or my 'independence' or 'pride'?

“Dear Lord, I desire - I want - indeed, I yearn and long for You to speak to me today, revealing to me the strongholds in MY life which keep me from allowing Your Son to be seen in me by those most precious to me.”

Date _____

Time _____

Name _____

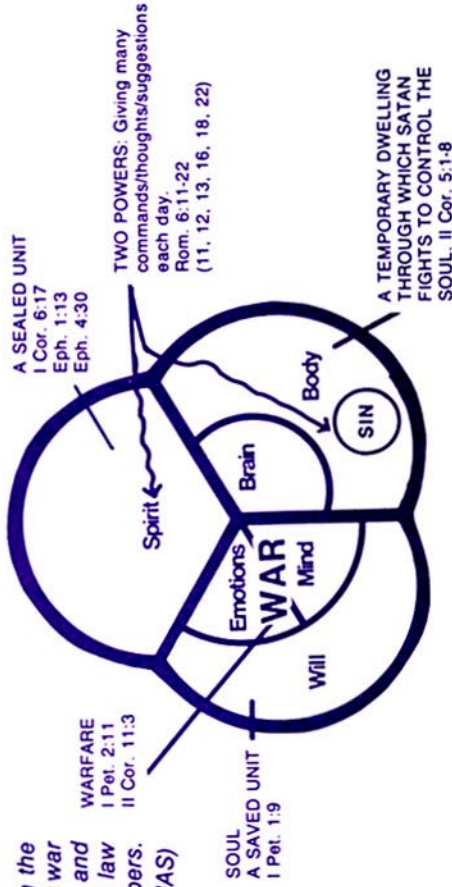
Rom. 7:21-23

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good.

For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.
(NAS)

THE WAR — Not for our destiny — for daily victory

Not for possession — for control



A DEFINITION OF SIN:

ANYTHING THAT KEEPS ME FROM OPERATING UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD (GAL. 5:22).

WEBSTER'S DEFINITION OF STRONGHOLD:

A FORTIFIED STRONG PLACE

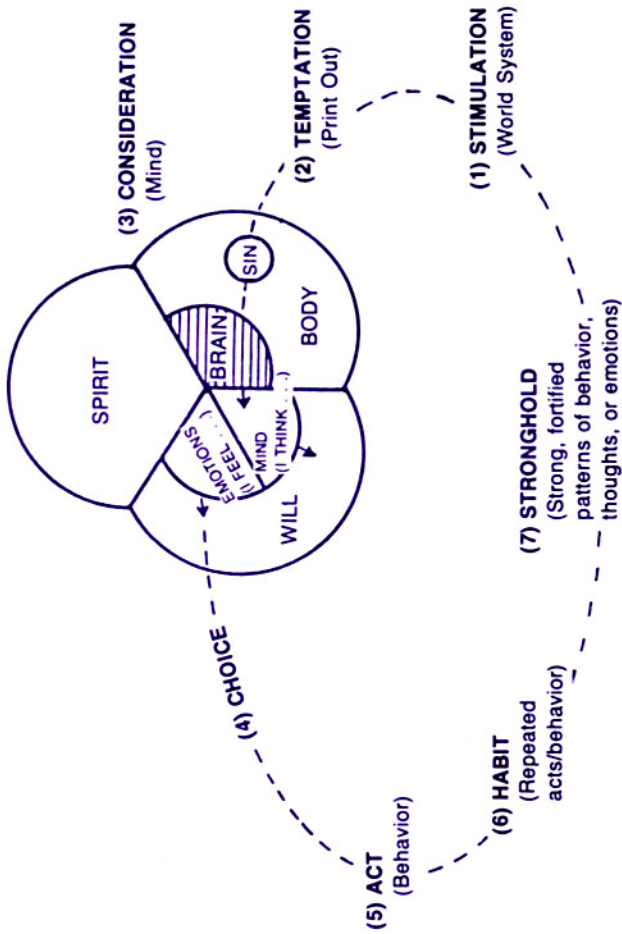
THE DEFINITION WE WILL BE USING:

Destructive patterns in your life that have become so DEEPLY ENTRENCHED that you perform them HABITUALLY, not even recognizing that you are exhibiting "UNCHRIST-LIKE" behavior or that you have a CHOICE IN RESISTING THEM.

STEPS TO ESTABLISHED STRONGHOLDS:

1. STIMULATION
2. TEMPTATION
3. CONSIDERATION
4. CHOICE
5. ACT
6. HABIT
7. STRONGHOLD

STEPS TO STRONGHOLDS



PATTERN: A process that has been programmed through repetition or intensity.

REPETITION
MANIPULATION
INDULGENCE
INFERIORITY
HOSTILITY

INTENSITY
FEAR
ANXIETY
APPREHENSION
HATE
SELF-IMAGE

HOW DOES SATAN SPEAK TO ME?

I CHRONICLES 21:1

According to our capabilities, our influence, and our responsibilities.

JOHN 13:2

According to our circumstances — impatient to bring about change **OUR WAY!**

ACTS 5:3

According to our needs, primarily for love and acceptance.

MARY'S PATTERNS

"I cannot perform to please."

INADEQUATE

"I cannot measure up to Jane."

WORTHLESS-INFERIOR

"I am unloved."

LONELINESS

REJECTION — SELF-HATE

"I am unlovely."

UNDESIRABLE

NO HOPE

SELF-DESTRUCTION

STIMULATION:

BRIEF:

1. A Situation
2. A Place
3. A Picture
4. A Conversation
5. An Inanimate Object

PREVAILING:

1. Marriage
2. Working Conditions
3. Physical Conditions

TEMPTATION:

PATTERNS:

Established over the years

NEEDS:

Lack of getting them met

Hebrews 2:18

For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15

For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning.

CONSIDERATION:

THOUGHTS (STOP!) ACTS (CHOICE)
ACTS HABITS
HABITS DISPOSITION (Temporary Behavior)
DISPOSITION .. CHARACTER (Prevailing Behavior)

RECOGNIZE: (1) YOUR ADVERSARY: WHO HE IS
*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood,
but against*

*the rulers, the powers, the world forces of this
darkness, the spiritual forces of wickedness in
the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12, NAS).*

(2) YOUR ADVERSARY: HOW HE WORKS

(3) YOUR ADVERSARY: HIS INTENT

1. This is a condemning thought
2. This thought attacks my character
3. This thought accuses me
4. This thought confuses me
5. This thought is designed to destroy
6. This thought is not true

REFUSE: You CHOOSE which power YOU are going to obey:

Let not sin therefore reign . . . (Rom. 6:12)

DO NOT EVEN ACCEPT THAT THOUGHT AS YOUR THOUGHT! "NO!"

RECKON: *RECKON YOURSELF DEAD TO SIN BUT ALIVE TO GOD (Rom. 6:11)*

- (1) This is NOT my true desire — what I really want
- (2) This is NOT consistent behavior with who I really am
- (3) THEREFORE, I WILL NOT follow the stimulation of sin's thoughts or accusations!

REST: REST IN HIS WISDOM directing you.

(I have discernment.)

REST IN HIS POWER within you. Because of this I can WILL it to be so.

REST IN HIS LOVE enfolding you. (I AM loved, secure, accepted . . .)

REST in the fact (truth) that I am IN Christ and He is IN me!

Thank Him for His complete acceptance and love, for seating me in Heaven with Him, for this moment of victory!

. . . for the battle is not yours but God's

(II Chron. 20:15b).

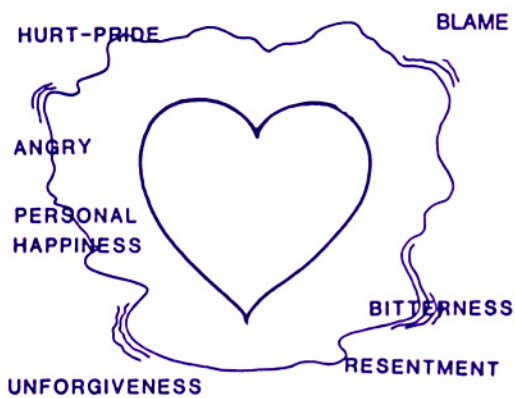
REST IN THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD



MIND: I Cor. 2:16
Phil. 2:5
Heb. 8:10b

HEART: Jer. 31:33
Ezek. 36:26
Rom. 6:17
Rom. 7:22
Heb. 10:16b

*A permanent change in outward expression (behavior) which comes from and represents the redeemed, perfect "inner man" — **the NEW YOU!***



GRAPH:

TRUTH	LIES (Jn. 8:44)
I KNOW...	SATAN SAYS TO ME...
(1) Christ dwells in me.	(1) I cannot go on.
(2) Christ is my Life.	(2) I am going to be destroyed.
(3) I am loved/accepted/ a new creation.	(3) I am so alone.
(4) I have given my problem to the Lord.	(4) I am such a loser!
(5) Christ, dwelling in me, can meet whatever lies ahead victoriously.	(5) I'll never be able to do this!
(6) "I can do ALL things through Christ who..."	(6) There is no hope!
(7) My only hope is to allow Him to meet each event...	
(8) This time on earth is a very short...	
(9) I am IN Christ — resting — secure, loved, accepted, empowered!	

Isaiah 26:3

You will guard him and keep him in perfect and constant peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he commits himself to You, leans on You, and hopes confidently in You (Amplified Bible).

COMMITTS SALVATION

LEANS EVERY DAY WALK

HOPES TOMORROW

OUR TOTAL LIFE

DESTRUCTION-OF-STRONGHOLDS PERMIT:

Lord,

When I began this study, I entered into an agreement with You, asking You to reveal the strongholds in my life that were keeping You from being in control of my life, especially in my own home with those dearest to me.

Well, You did that, Lord. I don't especially like what I have seen, but I want to thank You for letting me see that I don't have to live with that performance in my life. I've really been naive about Satan talking to me and controlling me.

I want to ask You to demolish that stronghold. It doesn't matter how many sacks of concrete I've piled up on it through the years - You can tear it down, I know that. (Visualize Him, with a bulldozer, a wrecking ball - see this stronghold fall - look at the dust and debris! Now watch as He pushes all of the rubbish off a cliff into the sea.)

Thank You, dear Lord. Now, I realize that I must continually choose - that I must be very alert - that I must be very firm. That sounds impossible to me! How I thank You that I have also seen that You are my life and that You will perform through me during this difficult time - all of the time.

Because of Your Life within me, I have the power to **CHOOSE**. Because of Your Wisdom, I have the knowledge to **DISCERN**. Because I am a new creature **IN** Christ Jesus, I have the **DESIRE**.

Signed _____ Date_____

NOTES:

LIFETIME
GUARANTEE
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