

Spiritual Warfare part 6: “Demolishing Strongholds” November 8, 2015

The ULTIMATE GOAL of Spiritual Warfare: To set captives free from the enemy’s oppression.

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and **healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.**” (Acts 10:38 ESV)

“Jesus arrived from Nazareth, anointed by God with the Holy Spirit, ready for action. He went through the country helping people and **healing everyone who was beaten down by the Devil.** He was able to do all this because **God was with him.**” (MSG)

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV

CORE: We have “God-possible weapons” that can “demolish” every scheme the enemy uses to “harshly control, torment, & oppress” people. (*Paraphrase*)

1. What are “STRONGHOLDS?”

Lit.- a “mind-set” (*a mind that is set; like a castle on a hill; a position held strongly*); a position that is “held” by another force—more than a “human hold”—holding someone captive to it

Strongholds are established by “speculation” (*very calculated thoughts—not random; thru a process of twisted logic and reasoning, these views are believed strongly—yet they are theories w/o solid evidence; partial truths*)

- Often born with/reinforced by family of origin
- “Familiar spirits”—attached to family—deeply ingrained
- Abuse, disappointment in leaders, faulty teaching can reinforce
- Can include: racism, unbelief, poverty, entitlement, spiritual pride, unbelief, legalism

Summary: Strongholds are “*grids of speculation*” that keep people from hearing God.

- “Lofty things” are rooted in pride (Lit.- “high-minded”; the false notion that we are “above” being vulnerable, teachable, admitting need)
- “Thoughts” refer to “thought suggestions” that come at us from outside; linked to Satan’s “flaming missiles” (Eph. 6:16) being “fired into our minds” (NOTE: Not every thought is yours. *Your soul? HS? Enemy?*)

2. What does it mean to “DEMOLISH” them?

The word “demolish” has 2 exclusive uses in the NT:

- To completely “take down” a building; destroying it
- To remove a body from a cross in crucifixion

(The ONE “taken down” from the Cross—has the authority to “take down” every stronghold. By His “afflictions” we are “healed!”)

When the Jesus called Paul, He said, “Go! Open their eyes, and they will turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God” (Acts 26:16). After years of experience, Paul said, “If the Gospel is veiled...(the enemy) has blinded the minds of unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 4:3,4)

Root meaning of “VEIL” is to “make smoke” (*i.e., smoke screen, making it impossible to see the One we ultimately need!*)

Yet, Paul received this revelation: We have “God-possible weapons” that can “demolish” every scheme the enemy uses to “harshly control, torment, & oppress” people!

3. Our WEAPON is PRAYER—PREVAILING PRAYER.

Ephesians 1:18- “I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be **enlightened.**”

PRAYER is the ultimate PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD.

- Prayer flows from INSIDE our relationship with Him (*It’s NOT begging from the outside!*)
- Holy Spirit opens eyes—but we are workers together with Him—praying His will on the earth! (*“When you pray...Thy will be done!”*)
 - 1st glimpse of HS at work: “Brooding over” creation
 - Hovering—embracing—like a hen flapping its wings over the eggs—never leaving—calling forth life
 - In same way, HS “brooded” over Sarah’s lifeless womb
 - In same way, He “overshadowed, hovered, brooded” over people as Peter’s shadow fell upon them—healing them all
- In the same way, we are called to COOPERATE with Holy Spirit—declaring the Truth that sets free.

PRACTICALS:

1. When we pray, ask HS what thought, speculation, lofty thing, or stronghold is “veiling” them.
2. Then, join Him in praying—believing with Him for this stronghold to be demolished (*NOTE: Pray both “in the Spirit” and “with our understanding” 1 Cor. 14*)
3. 3 of the most prevalent “strongholds”:
 - a. PRIDE- unwilling to admit need for revelation, healing, deliverance
 - b. UNBELIEF- stubborn refusal to trust; “That’s impossible!”
 - c. COLD LOVE- cynical, calculating, withdrawing & withholding—has replaced love that is persistent, affectionate, vulnerable & visible; unwilling to relinquish revenge

Yet, these (and all strongholds) can be demolished!!!