



TOPPLING STRONGHOLDS

Week 10 | August 5, 2024

We like to call them “*pet sins*”, “*weak spots*”, or “*daily struggles*”. We all have them, those areas of consistent sin, failure, and shortcoming in our life. Call them what you will, but the truth is that these are **STRONGHOLDS of evil** that have been allowed to rule the various pieces of our souls.

These places where we have *believed* lies, *rejected* the truth, and made *agreements* with the Enemy are killing us slowly like spiritual cancer. Remember the good news though: we serve a God who is our **HEALER** (“*Jehovah-Rapha*”) and who wants to set us **FREE** (“*The Whole Truth*”). Three steps to knocking down these strongholds of sin in ourselves and those we care about are as follows:

1. **IDENTIFY** (*Psalm 139: 23-24; Matthew 16:23*)

- a. **NOTE:** You cannot **destroy** what you cannot **describe**. Too often the sins in our lives become formidable strongholds simply due to the fact that we are ignorant of their *presence*, *frequency*, or the depth of their *influence*. Pray for God to give us “eyes to see” everything from **His perspective** so that we can effectively and accurately demolish those things that lead to death. (*Proverbs 20:12; Philippians 1:9*)
 - i. **For Ex.** “Lord God, thank You for revealing **the truth** to simpletons like us each and every day. I ask that You *remove the scales* from our eyes so that we can see the areas that sin has been allowed to flourish. Filter out all *confusion*, *distraction*, and *deception* of the enemy, and instead give us **absolute clarity** on the things in our life that are not from You.”
 1. **REMEMBER:** Without **confession**, there can be no **healing**. *Seeing and describing* sin the way God does is the first step in the path to victory! (*James 5:16; 1 John 1:9*)

2. **OVERTHROW** (*Haggai 2:22*)

- a. **NOTE:** Historically, to overthrow a government meant to **remove** its leadership from positions of *authority*, *influence*, and *control* and replace them with a new regime. The same must be done with our strongholds of sin. Pray for God’s **complete destruction** over everything *in*, *among*, and *around* our lives that attempts to pull us away from Him. Ask Him instead to **firmly establish** HIS kingdom in its rightful place *in our hearts*. (*Exodus 15:7; Daniel 2:44*)
 - i. **For Ex.** “Father God, thank You for Your **absolute authority**. You truly are the *King of kings* and *Lord of lords*. I ask that you bless us today with the gift of true REPENTANCE so that we might **renounce** every *foul*, *wicked*, and *evil* thing that we have allowed to take Your place in our lives. Please *isolate*, *circumcise*, *kill*, and *completely destroy* anything seeking to keep us from **closeness with You**, and instead *strengthen* everything that seeks to **encourage our relationship**.”
 1. **REMEMBER:** Confession without **repentance** is mere *lip service*. To receive true victory, turn FROM your sin and TO your Father! (*Isa. 29:13*)

3. **UPROOT** (Jeremiah 12:17)

- a. **NOTE:** When fighting to *topple strongholds* in life, don't just knock down the walls, dig up **their foundation**. Any kingdom whose walls were left only *partially destroyed* could eventually rebuild. However, one whose fortifications were **completely incinerated**, from the ground up, cannot easily return to power. And so, we must seek out *the root cause* of these strongholds and instead of fixating on the symptoms, attack **the disease**. Find the *foundation stones* that the sin is built upon and tear them up from the dirt, throw them in the garbage, and light them on fire! (Deut. 12:2-3; Deut. 7:5)
 - i. **For Ex.** "Holy Spirit, I thank You for leading me into ALL truth. Please show us the **deeper** sins that underlie those on the surface. Reveal to us *the root cause* of our shortcomings so that we might turn to You for complete victory. Open our eyes so that we can see any *pride, fear, or unforgiveness* in our lives that has led to these strongholds of sin in other areas. Give us the courage and humility it takes to *go deeper* with You, so that You might **heal us** from the inside out."
 1. **REMEMBER:** Left untreated, a **toehold of sin** can quickly and suddenly rally into a *fortress of depravity*. Deal with the roots the same way you dealt with the branches: through CONFESSION and REPENTANCE.

Questions for Reflection:

- Where are your **blind spots**?
 - Ignorance is no excuse. Actively seek *God's perspective* on your life, He will show you what you are missing.
- Where are you living in **slavery**?
 - **Repudiate** every Enemy force that seeks to exercise unlawful control over you by breaking *any agreements* and rejecting *every lie* that has been told. Hold tightly to the **truth**, it really will set you free.
- Where have you allowed a **toehold** to remain?
 - What seems *small* and *insignificant* now quickly becomes large and deadly if unaddressed. Like all major illnesses, sin is much easier to defeat **early on**.