

Breaking Free From Strongholds

For the Win, Week Five

When you rehearse and believe a lie on repeat, you're in what the Bible calls a "stronghold," and God gives you the power to break free.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NIV

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, **they have divine power to demolish strongholds.** 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.

Here the apostle brings into view the weapons of the Christian. He implies that they are clearly opposite to the weapons of the world. These unworldly weapons are, as we have already seen, truth, love, righteousness, and faith-prayer. And it is important to see, as we have suggested before, that these weapons find expression in the gospel of Jesus Christ. After all, that is what the apostle is talking about. The gospel is the proclamation of truth, the demonstration of love and righteousness, and the operation of faith-prayer. You have not declared the gospel if these four elements are not present, and you cannot have them present in any human situation without having proclaimed and demonstrated the gospel. They are interchangeable, identical things.

That is why, when the Apostle Paul came to Corinth (that great city in which the church to which this letter is addressed was located), he found in it men and women who were in the grip of serious social problems -- sexual perversion, sexual license, racial divisions, family feuds, political tyranny, etc. -- all the problems that we know today were present in Corinth. What did he say about his approach? Here he comes to this Greek city, with its love of philosophy, and its love of human wisdom, and he throws down a gauntlet clearly and unmistakably. He says, "For I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified," (1 Corinthians 2:2). That is what you need, that is the message that can help you.

1. Bondage starts with a lie.

Sometimes, it's something you've done or believed. On repeat.

Sometimes it comes from your own flesh.

Sometimes, it's demonic in origin – it's suggested by the enemy.
Sometimes, it's a lie from your surrounding culture.

Sometimes, it's something totally beyond your control and not your fault at all, but Satan utilizes that moment to grab a little foothold, to plant a seed of self-doubt, to start building a stronghold in your life.

2. The lie becomes a foundation for a stronghold of lies.

You're not responsible for things done *to you* by others. Ever.

But you're responsible for

- what you believe about God, yourself, and others
- hardening your heart toward God
- hurting others

3. Freedom starts when we repent.

2 Corinthians 7:10 NLT

For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

And how do you repent? The pattern is shown when Jesus speaks, through John, to the churches in Revelation...

Revelation 2:5 CEV

(1) Think about where you have fallen from, and then (2) turn back and (3) do as you did at first.

See those three steps to repentance?

1. Acknowledge and confess your sins and missteps.
2. Turn back to God from sin.
3. Live out the commitment to holiness you've just made.

4. Freedom flourishes under grace.

One of the big problems is that we don't see God as a God of grace. But Jesus came to fully and perfectly represent the Godhead. Whatever you see in Jesus is the truth about God. And he came "full of grace and truth" and has blessed us "out of the fullness of his grace."

John 1:14, 16 TEV

The Word became a human being and, **full of grace and truth**, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son... Out of the **fullness of his grace he has blessed us** all, giving us one blessing after another.

When you start to understand who God really is and you see him as **the author of the truth that sets you free** as well as **the giver of the grace that allows you to thrive** then you'll start to flourish under in freedom!

5. Freedom continues as we live by more truth.

John 8:31-32 NLT –

You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Every lie that the enemy plants can be combatted with the resource of God's Word. It's our "sword of the spirit," remember?

And it all starts with the biggest truth of all... the truth about your redemption by the blood of Jesus Christ!

Romans 8:1-2 Message

With the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah, that fateful dilemma is resolved. Those who enter into Christ's being-here-for-us no longer have to live under a continuous, low-lying black cloud. A new power is in operation. The Spirit of life in Christ, like a strong wind, has magnificently cleared the air, freeing you from a fated lifetime of brutal tyranny at the hands of sin and death.

If you've never placed your faith and trust in Jesus, today is the day!

If you've been living in bondage, it's time to confess, repent, and walk in truth!