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WALKING IN SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

Breaking free from strongholds in our lives.

In our current series of lessons, **Becoming Followers of Christ**, we have looked into knowing God on a personal level, making a lasting decision to follow Christ, and how to correctly interpret the Bible. We've now been in the spiritual warfare aspect of the series and will end this portion with a very practical teaching on how we can break strongholds in our lives. Our enemy, the devil, carefully creates these strongholds over time with slight adjustments to our thought life and behavior.

First, our fight is NOT against people as Paul's states in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5...

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (human origin and strength) but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,...

We are at war against an invisible, powerful enemy of our souls and must, therefore, put on our spiritual armor (previous lesson) and overpower the strongman before his influence becomes a part of our life! Luke 11:21-22 *When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.*

A STRONGHOLD is an entrenched pattern of thought, an ideology, value or behavior that is contrary to revealed, Biblical truth, emanating from the human, carnal nature, and *exploited* by satanic forces. Although there is not "a magic formula," an aggressive, Biblical approach can demolish *every* stronghold we may have. **Here are important steps...**

1. **Agree with God's Word and own the spiritual stronghold in your life.** This is repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10). Without this key action, no victory is possible.
 - 1 John 1:9 *If we confess (agree with God about) our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*
2. **Your enemy is not flesh and blood but spiritual and exploits our weaknesses to bring us into bondage.** However, the enemy's authority and stronghold is broken when we fully agree and own that sin. Only then can we begin to have *authority* against the enemy!

- Ephesians 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*
3. **Believe that Jesus has *already* won the battle against the enemy and over the stronghold of sin.** When David saw Goliath tormenting the army of God he ran to the battle and proclaimed victory through God's power before it actually happened! (1 Samuel 17:45-48)
 - Exchange (cancel out) the devil's accusations with appropriate Bible scriptures as Jesus did when He was tempted in the wilderness in Matthew 4:1-11.
 - Romans 12:21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.* Use God's Rhema Word (good; personal revelation) against the devil's words and deeds (evil)!
 - John 16:33 *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*
 4. **Make your heart and your words agree with what God says in His Word.** Even when you cannot yet see it with your natural eyes, choose to walk in obedience and live as though God's promise is true. Faith is not denying reality; it is aligning yourself with God's reality until it becomes your experience.
 - In Hebrews 11 we read that many heroes of faith saw miracles, but others did not receive the things promised during their lifetime. Yet all were commended for their faith.
 5. **Believe that God's promises of victory are actually yours.**
 - 2 Peter 1:3-4 *His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*
 - Also Ephesians 1:3-14
 6. **Through prayer and receiving God's Word, allow the Holy Spirit transform your thinking and your actions** as you spend quality time in His Presence.
 - Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, I urge you, ... to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*
 7. **Begin to help others in their freedom from strongholds** as Jesus told the man delivered from the grip of the demonic in Mark 5:1-20.
 - Mark 5:18-120 *As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you,..."*

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to me about this subject?

What area(s) are you needing to intentionally walk in?