



FREEDOM

**LIVING OUT THE LIFE AND
MINISTRY OF JESUS**



FREEDOM

It is my desire that through this study each of us will be equipped to live the life that Jesus intends for us to live.

A special thanks goes to New Hope Church who started this work. I have adapted this manual from an original work that they started. Permission has been granted by New Hope to further the work. Kudos to you, New Hope, for a wonderful and insightful gathering of scripture and principles that shows to each of us the path to personal freedom.

This material is intended to be explored inside of a small group. Although there are 6 sections, it would be worthwhile to soak in certain areas until the concept and truth is grasped and applied to your life. It is also good to make this material experiential. That means, as you and your group are walking through this, expect the Holy Spirit to prompt you to stop and for ministry to occur. Whether giving or receiving ministry, let's be thankful for the opportunity to grow in the freedom that comes from knowing and loving Jesus. Pray before you begin each section. Ask the Lord to bring freedom to you and those that are on this wonderful journey with you.

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SECTION 1

**OUR MISSION AS THE
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST**

A. A Fresh Look at the Church's Mission

1. The mission of the church: To continue the Ministry of Jesus Christ

Luke 4:18-19

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, 19 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

Matthew 11:4-6

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: 5 the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

POW! - Paradigm Shift #1

The ministry of Jesus is intended for us today. But it seems to not be working in our culture. Is it just that our world is getting more wicked, or is there another reason?

Let's look at the "or" found in Paradigm Shift #1.

- Jesus established His ministry with specific parameters.
- Unless we, the Church, embrace His specific parameters for ministry, we will fail in carrying on His ministry.
- His ministry must be accomplished His way. That is the only way the Kingdom of God works.
- FREEDOM is "Christ's ministry Christ's way."
- FREEDOM is truly, "less of my power and more of Christ's power."

2. Jesus left His disciples to carry out His ministry, His Way.

John 20:21

As the Father has sent me, I also send you.

John 17:18-20

As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. 20 I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word."

John 14:12

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

We must stop telling ourselves that the work Jesus did is not for us to do today. If it is not for us to do today, then we are in big trouble, because only Jesus' way can help this world. And, if we aren't doing work the way Jesus did it... then whose work are we doing?

3. Ultimately we are talking about a reformation.

- Not of strategy or style, these are the advances of a broken religion that is ineffective, but a reformation of theology and faith.
- Of being transformed by the truth according to the Scriptures.
- Of recovering the original design for which God created and saved.
- Of recovering our destiny imparted to us by Jesus Himself, right from the Father's heart.

John 17:18-24

As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

B. Recovering Our Destiny is the Foundation to Reformation

1. Evidence of a discarded destiny: slavery and bondage

2. Created and saved for a purpose: God's glory

Proverbs 16:4

The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil.

Isaiah 43:7

Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have Created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made.

2 Thessalonians 2:14

It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.



There once was a man named Doug. He wanted to do something with his life. Walking the streets one day he saw the condition of the town he was in and decided that he would do something about it. He first began to clean up the streets as there was litter everywhere. After just one day he would find more litter back on the streets. He started to watch and saw that people carelessly threw garbage everywhere even after he would tell them to stop, that he wanted the streets to be clean. It seemed as though people weren't listening. As he continued to watch over time, he saw that litter was the least of the problems that were occurring in his town. He saw drug dealers, people stealing from others; he even witnessed a robbery in broad daylight. "What can I do?" he thought. "I will become a lawman and enforce the laws of the land." Doug thought that becoming a lawman would make a difference. So, Doug became... Deputy Doug.

Agreeing with God Regarding our Identity in Jesus.

I am accepted...

- I am God's Child (John 1:12)
- I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
- I have been justified (Romans 5:1)
- I am united with The Lord, I am one spirit with Him (1 Corinthians 6:17)
- I have been bought with a price: I belong to God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- I am a saint (Ephesians 1:1)
- I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18)
- I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins (Colossians 1:14)
- I am complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10)
- I am chosen of God, holy and dearly loved, and therefore jealously protected (Colossians 3:12)

I am significant...

- I am the salt and light of the earth (Matthew 5:13-14)
- I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15:1, 5)
- I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)
- I am a personal witness of Christ's (Acts 1:8)
- I am God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16)
- I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Corinthians 5:18)
- I am God's co-worker (2 Corinthians 6:1)
- I am seated with Christ in the Heavenly Realm (Ephesians 3:12)
- I am God's workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
- I can approach God with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12)
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13)
- I am living in Christ's authority which gives me power over the enemy (Luke 10:17-20)

Agreeing with God Regarding our Identity in Jesus.

I am secure...

I am free forever from condemnation (Romans 8:1-2)

I am assured that all things work together for good (Romans 8:28)

I am free from any condemning charges against me (Romans 8:33-34)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (Romans 8:35)

I have been established, anointed and sealed by God (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

I am hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3)

I am confident that the good work that God has begun in me will be perfected (Philippians 1:6)

I am a citizen of Heaven (Philippians 3:20)

I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)

I can find grace and mercy in time of need (Hebrews 4:16)

Freedom Prayer Participant:

Which of these do you struggle with the most?

3. Uniquely designed (original design)

a) Special design to fulfill God's purpose in your life time.

Psalm 139:13-14

For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.14 I will give thanks to You for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well.

Wonderful... for what, why wonder? - because of the symmetry of fit.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

What workmanship? - To carry on the work of Christ- We have got to get our eyes off of what we need for ourselves and onto our destiny in Christ! It's like having our eyes on the golden arches as we are driving to a Thanksgiving day feast.

b) Satan's opposition to God's purpose (So why doesn't my destiny come easily?)

Isaiah 14:12-14

How you have fallen from heaven, a star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! 13 But you said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north.14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

“You must understand: the evil one hates God, hates anything that reminds him of the glory of God... wherever it exists. Unable to overthrow the Mighty One, he turned his sights on those who bore his image.”

John Eldredge, Epic, pg. 54

c) Satan's opposition to God's design in your life.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

Even though Christ-followers may understand their new purpose, their new identity in Jesus and what their spiritual gifts are, many are not experiencing the freedom Jesus came to offer. Real life doesn't measure up.

So what happened?

The enemy has successfully worked to thwart the fulfillment of our destiny, both individually and corporately.

Any movement toward freedom and life, any movement toward GOD or others, will be opposed.

John Eldredge, Waking the Dead. pg. 154

d) Satan's opposition to YOU!

Well intended believers somewhere along the way have discarded the devil's agenda and have made their focus solely upon God and themselves. This is like knowing you have a king cobra in your yard and going about your day, doing yard work hoping the snake has moved on or that the snake isn't mean or hungry.

POW! - We must recover what the enemy has stolen.

C. Understanding the Christian's Power and Authority

1. Carrying out Jesus' ministry requires Jesus' authority and power.

We are familiar with power and its importance.



Think About Deputy Doug. Deputized, He is given authority by the mayor of the town to clean up the streets. As-a-matter-of-fact that is Deputy Doug's job description now! He wears the uniform and carries a badge, he has authority. He also has power, handcuffs, a taser and a pistol. He is trained to use the power at his disposal to clean up the streets of his jurisdiction.

Acts 1:8

...but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

Luke 24:49

And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

2. The distinction between authority and power.

Luke 4:36

All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!"

Luke 9:1 (NIV)

...He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases.

3. Defining the difference

a) Authority - right to rule

Authority is based upon the position one has, which gives that person the right to rule within the limits of and the scope of a designated authority.

The Scripture is very clear, we have been extended Christ's authority, to carry out and extend His business of advancing His kingdom.

b) Power - ability to rule

God extends His power into one's life to exercise His authority.

It is possible to have the power to do something but not the authority.

It is also possible to have the authority to do something but not have the power.

POW! - Here in lies the problem we face in the church, we struggle with our understanding of power and authority.

We need both power and authority.

D. Understanding Our Position and Authority as Believers

1. Christ's authority is ultimate authority!

Ephesians 1:20-22 (speaking of God's power)

...which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church...

- Jesus is not seated in heaven in a far corner of the universe: He is very present in the realm of the invisible.
- Jesus is the ultimate authority over all the spirit beings in the invisible realm including Satan. Satan is merely a being created by God.
- Nothing has greater power and authority than Jesus. God has placed all things under the feet of Jesus.

2. Jesus gives His authority to us.

a) The twelve disciples received Jesus' authority.

Luke 9:1

And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases.

Did the power and authority of Jesus stop with the 12 disciples?

b) The seventy disciples received Jesus' authority.

Luke 10:1, 17-20

Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to com...17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to using your name." 18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

c) All of us have received Jesus' authority.

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Ephesians 2:1-6

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.³ Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ,⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

- Verses 1-3 tells us that we used to be under the dominion of hell, Satan and his minions.
- Jesus, the great Savior, came and delivered us from the dominion of Satan and transferred us into His kingdom.
- Jesus not only delivered us from Satan's domain, but He swept us up and seated us with Him in the heavenlies.
- Satan is under Jesus' feet, so where is Satan in relation to us?
- Jesus rules over all the heavenlies, seated in the place of ultimate authority, and we reign with Him.
- We share in Jesus' own authority in the heavenlies.
- This is a present reality, not one that will be realized only in the future.

POW! - Colossians 2:9-10 (NIV)

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Praise God our power and authority is not derived from what we know, what we carry, what we have done or will do. Power and authority are about the cross of Jesus Christ. Resurrection power!

3. The disarming of Satan by the cross

Colossians 2:13-15

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴ having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

The following diagram represents the hierarchy of authority in the world and the shift in authority when a person becomes a Christian. Note that the believer relocates in the authority ladder just under Jesus Christ.

HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY



Jesus has deputized us.

We must use our weapons, exercise our authority, and do battle in the heavenlies.

It is “Christ in us” not “Christ-and-Us”

We have the authority of Christ, and the enemy cannot stand up against us in a direct confrontation of authority.

The primary weapon Satan uses is deceit (lies).

POW! - Paradigm Shift #2

As believers, regular overt engagement against Satan should be considered normal. It is time for the church of Jesus Christ to rise up and assume its position.

Freedom Prayer Participant:

As you look into your life, who would you say has the authority?

SECTION 2

**OUR WORLD HAS
TWO REALMS**

A. The Two Realms

1. Job's world collapses

Job 1:13-19

Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was still speaking, another also came and said, "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

Job 2:7-10

Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!" But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Note the nature of Job's misfortunes:

- His herds and servants were attacked by neighboring tribes and nations and hit by lightning; Job lost his ability to produce income.
- His children were killed by a weather disaster, and his marriage was destroyed.
- He lost his health.

2. A look behind the scenes of Job's disasters

Job 1:6-12

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." Then Satan answered the Lord, "Does Job fear God for nothing? "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. "But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face." Then the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him." So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

NOTE: Satan is aware of the activity of individuals on earth, but his access to people's lives is severely restricted by God. On his own, Satan has no authority to act in individual lives. In fact, there are very few ways that Satan can gain access to an individual's life: 1) he must be given specific permission by God; and 2) as is most often the case, access is granted as a result of sin or the effects of sin.

Luke 4:6

And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish."

Job 2:1-7

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause." Satan answered the Lord and said, "Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. "However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face." So the Lord said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life." Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

POW! - Is it possible that behind some of the things happening in your life, something like this is going on?

3. The two realms

a) "The Heavens" (invisible realm of the spirit)

This realm includes all that is spiritual, invisible, or not seen in the natural (God, Holy Spirit, angelic beings, demonic beings, curses, and blessings.)

b) "The Natural" (visible realm of the material)

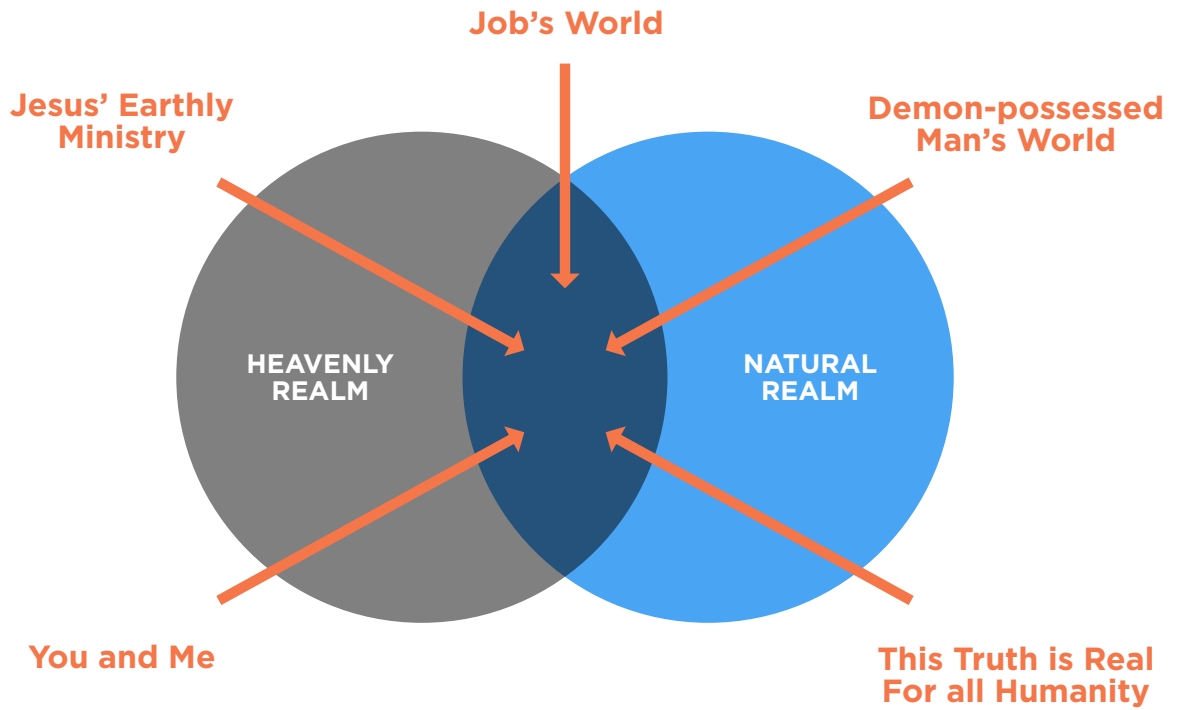
This includes all that can be perceived by the natural senses in the physical world by our five senses; smell, taste, touch, hearing, and seeing.

4. Both realms are completely real and occur at the same place and time.

- The realm of the heavens is not visible to the physical eye.
- The events in one directly affect events in the other.



Deputy Doug, in the midst of a routine conversation finds out that there is a major crime syndicate that has set up shop in his jurisdiction. He wants them gone, he wants the citizens of his neighborhoods to live in peace, but the crime lords want to put people into bondage and fear. Deputy Doug begins to think of how to deal with this huge problem. To him this seems bigger than making sure people don't litter on the streets. He realizes there is an enemy to everything he stands for, and that enemy is well equipped, smart and big!



Freedom Prayer Participant:

Can you describe in a few words how the 2 realms are at play in your life?

B. The Inter-Relationship of the Two Realms

1. What transpires in the heavenlies affects the natural realm!

Luke 8:26-31

Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. 27 And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, fell down before Him, and with a loud voice said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me!" 29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had often seized him, and he was kept under guard, bound with chains and shackles; and he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness. 30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.

Activity in the natural realm is a result of what has and is taking place in the heavenlies.

We must begin to ask questions like these:

- Is my bad mood "just happening"?
- Is my strained marriage "just happening"?
- Is the disintegrating relationship between parent and child "just happening"?
- Is the tension and division in a church "just happening"?
- Is oppressed corporate worship due merely to not feeling it today?
- Why does a selfish and stingy spirit (or one of division, or rebellion, or fill in the blank) persist in the church from generation to generation?
- Is a persistent lack of joy and zeal due merely to personality?
- Is the disintegration of a society "just happening"?
- Are communities in disrepair and oppressed by crime, drugs, murder, suicide, and hopelessness merely because of socio-economic issues?
- Are civil tensions and wars (Middle East) "just happening"?
- Are bigotry, prejudice, and ethnic cleansings "just happening"?

I wonder what kind of life this demon possessed man had before his life controlling struggles began?

Luke 8:39

"Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.

Go back "home." I wonder how much he lost. This man certainly tasted both realms.

We must learn to live in both realms.

We live in the midst of spiritual war and we have a major role to play in it.

2. This world is a war zone!

We live in the middle of a cosmic battle that originates in the heavenly realm but has far reaching effects in our physical realm.

BATTLE ZONE! Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

BATTLE ZONE! 1 Peter 5:8-9

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

BATTLE ZONE! John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

BATTLE ZONE! 1 John 3:8

The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil

POW! - Paradigm Shift #3

In every situation we must always look to see what is going on in the 'other realm' ('behind the scenes'). No longer assume that what is obvious is all that is going on.

“Enemy-Occupied Territory—that is what this world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed; you might say landed in disguise, and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.”

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

We cannot afford to be ignorant of this battle.



What if Deputy Doug simply turned a blind eye to the crime syndicate because he was afraid. What if he just continued to help old ladies across the street and picked up litter. What if he never did anything to stop the crime syndicate? Would his neighborhoods be safe? Could people rely upon Deputy Doug in times of trouble, the times when they needed him the most? As He thought about it, it bothered Deputy Doug.

C. Biblically and Boldly Facing Satan's Kingdom in the Heavenly Realm

1. The demonic in relationship to Jesus' earthly ministry.

Luke 4:40-41

While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.

Luke 6:17-19

Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place; and there was a large crowd of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power was coming from Him and healing them all.

Luke 7:20-21

When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, 'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?'" "At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind.

Luke 9:1-2

And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.

Luke 10:17-21

The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven." At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight."

Luke 11:19-22

And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

One of the validating signs that the Kingdom of God is in our midst is that strongholds are being broken in Jesus' name and demons are being driven out.

POW! - Why was Jesus constantly confronting demons and most believers seldom do?

How are we to engage with the enemy today?

How does the devil come against us today as the children of God who have the Spirit of God residing in us?

2. The demonic in relationship to ministering salvation

a) Understanding Salvation as the first and foremost remedy to demonization.

Luke 19:10 (NIV)

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

"Save" (Greek word "SOZO") - conveys the full picture of salvation. Various forms of the Greek word "sozo" communicate the full picture of salvation as deliverance, restoration, protection, preservation, healing, and making whole. They help us understand what Jesus had in mind when He came to minister salvation.

- **Spiritual Conversion (from sin's penalty and judgment)**

Romans 10:9

...if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus as Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (SOZO).

- **Demonic Deliverance**

Luke 8:36b

...those who had seen it reported to them how the man who was demon possessed had been made well (SOZO).

- **Healing**

Mark 10:52

And Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well (SOZO).' Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road.

Jesus came to seek and save what (not only who) was lost. This also means areas of our lives.

POW! - Once a person gets saved, Jesus' ministry in that person's life has just begun!

b) Understanding sanctification

- Positionally, our salvation is a finished work; practically, it is an ongoing work, referred to in scripture as sanctification.
- Salvation includes deliverance from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and indwelling presence of manifested sin in our lives.
- The fullness of Jesus Christ is deposited in us at salvation. We live our lives with His person, His character, and His image being released in our lives in increasing measures of righteousness, holiness, love, etc.
- Salvation also frees us in Jesus Christ, but the Christian life is the process of growing into that freedom.

Philippians 2:12

...workout your salvation with fear and trembling.

Remember: "Jesus in us" not "Jesus-and-us."

POW! - In summary, the Gospel work of deliverance/freedom/restoration involves both initial salvation and the sanctification process.

3. The demonic in relationship to Christians

a) Understanding our 3-fold nature.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

...may your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

b) The components described

- **Body:** Material world consciousness; five senses, physical health and appearance navigation system.
- **Soul:** Self-consciousness (inner person); mind, emotion, and will. The relational part of us connecting with others and God.
- **Spirit:** God consciousness.

4. Mankind's interface with the heavenlies

a) Spirit

The spirit of the unsaved, non-believer (lost) person is dead. There is no God consciousness or birth of eternal life. We know that the person is not physically dead or soulishly. What then is dead?

Ephesians 2:1

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.

The spirit of the believer (found) is alive and secured in Christ when he or she is born of the Holy Spirit at salvation. It is impenetrable to demonic influence or control.

Ephesians 4:30

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

b) Soul

However, the soul is vulnerable to demonic assault. Demonic influence and control can be gained in various areas of one's life.

The mind, emotions, and will can be penetrated, allowing the enemy to establish strongholds. (Matthew 8:28-34)

c) Body

The body is vulnerable to demonic affliction, resulting in sicknesses, and even crippled health and death. Sickness can result if the demonic source is not distinguished from natural physiological causes.

Luke 6:17-19

And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, 18 as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. 19 And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all.

Luke 11:14

And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute. So it was, when the demon had gone out, that the mute spoke; and the multitudes marveled.

Luke 13:11

And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

Matthew 12:22

Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.

Many times, physical health can be in some way associated with demonic assault and influence on a person's soul. Therefore, when deliverance from soul issues takes place, it is not uncommon for a physical healing also to take place.

D. Biblically and Boldly Facing Satan's Kingdom in the Heavenly Realm

Demonic influence and control focuses primarily on one's soul (mind, emotions, and will). This means that the mind and/or emotions are assaulted frequently. If access is gained, and if the will becomes subject to demonic influence, a person becomes mentally and/or emotionally crippled, restricted, bound, or imprisoned. The person may experience degrees of torment in areas where demonic activity has penetrated or has been established in their life. In this state, even believers are stripped of some of the things God has designed for His children to walk in and enjoy. Demonic influence and bondage may be expressed in behaviors and responses such as explosions of anger; distress and depression; besetting sins and lusts; critical and demeaning attitudes and actions that cripple others or themselves; cruelty; moodiness; etc.

Freedom Prayer Participant:

Are you aware of the strategy of the enemy in your life? Yes or No? Circle One.

How do you feel about the enemy actively attempting to steal, kill, and destroy your life?

SECTION 3

**STRONGHOLDS AND HOW
TO DEAL WITH THEM (Part 1)**

A. What Is A Stronghold?

1. Definition

Strongholds serve as military camps; fortified defenses (for territory); base of operations; home; headquarters.

2. Spiritual stronghold

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 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,

- They are thoughts, beliefs, philosophies, attitudes, and values that oppose God's truth.
- They are speculations" raised up" against the knowledge of God.
- Anything out of alignment with God's will can become material out of which strongholds can be made.

Mark 3:27

No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

But what makes them a stronghold? How does the enemy utilize them as encampments?



Deputy Doug went back to the mayor of the town and asked the mayor to do something about the crime problem. The mayor told deputy Doug that He has a badge which is his authority and he has a gun which is the power to carry out the law. Mayor Mark also told deputy Doug that there are many other deputies who are working the case too. He knew all about the crime syndicate and its days are numbered. He said to deputy Doug, "Go back to your street, you have everything you need to do your job. You have my full authority to carry out your job."

B. How is a Spiritual Stronghold Built?

1. It begins by giving Satan an opportunity, place, or foothold

"Topos" =The Greek word is translated opportunity, place, or foothold

Ephesians 4:26-27

Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity (Topos).

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NKJV)

Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. In your anger do not sin.

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV)

...do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

- Every degree to which we oppose God's truth, on every issue of life, gives Satan the opportunity to establish his stronghold (his base of operations) in our life.
- Strongholds are built by allowing the enemy to have a "place" or "opportunity" in our life through sin.



Unfinished Business

Examples:

Death of a loved one

Neglectful parent

Abusive childhood experiences

Shaming incidences

Abandonment

Mistakes I've made

My unfinished business:

Unresolved Emotions

Examples:

Guilt

Shame

Anger

Sadness

Fear and Anxiety

Hurt

Emotions I struggle with:

Obsessive Thinking

Examples:

I will never _____

I will always _____

There's something wrong with...

I will never forgive _____

I am too _____

I am a _____ person

I can feel safe if _____

*I have to have other's _____
to feel good about myself.*

Bad people should be punished

I have the right to _____

I am entitled to _____

Compulsive Behavior

Examples:

Food issues

Controlling or judging others

Perfectionist

Lust/sexual issues

Substance or relationship addictions

Dishonesty and denial

Behaviors I struggle with:

Recognize that the behavior is not the real person.

Behavior comes from the overflow of the heart.

Luke 6:45

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Identify and dismantle the stronghold that is behind the behavior by getting to its roots.



In his ongoing investigation, Deputy Doug found out that the crime syndicate was growing by leaps and bounds because of the people who were joining. He saw that those who were upstanding citizens would have nothing to do with the members of the crime syndicate. But those who were already in trouble with the law were easy targets for the crime syndicate. The crime syndicate offered “more” and when these poor unsuspecting law breakers said “yes”, they were instantly in way over their heads without any seeming way out!

2. Satan’s stronghold construction

THOUGHTS → ACTIONS → VALUES → LIFESTYLE → BONDAGE

- Satan’s stronghold construction begins with our thoughts. This is why Paul says that our transformation as believers begins with renewing our mind.

Romans 12:1-2

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.
2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

- It is by your thoughts that you take action; your actions soon become your values in life. These values begin to define you and have now become your lifestyle. So now your thoughts are out of alignment with God’s truth; your lifestyle is out of alignment with God’s truth. Then you find yourself in varying degrees of bondage as Satan builds his stronghold in your life through obtaining a place of jurisdiction that you gave to him. TAKE IT BACK!
- Even though believing followers of Jesus Christ belong to God, they can give Satan a place or jurisdiction in their lives.



Through further investigation Deputy Doug came to understand that there is a systemic problem with most all of the law breakers who so easily find themselves scooped up by the crime syndicate. Many of them are hurting and alone whether they realize or not. Many of them came from rough situations; they were looking for hope and a life and never found it. So they kept doing what they were doing and living ever-so-close to a life of lawlessness. Easy targets for the crime syndicate. All the syndicate had to do was offer something, anything, even though the syndicate was lying, people would jump at it, Right into a trap. This bothered Deputy Doug even more... How insidious!

- Satan's strategy is to deceive individuals, couples, families, churches, communities, cultures, institutions, and organizations into believing and valuing what opposes God's truth or is out of alignment with His truth. He has been trying to get us to deny God's truth from the beginning!

Do you think the enemy is content with one stronghold in your life?

POW! - Thus we are dealing with a life-long process of warring against strongholds; Ongoing and constant.

The sanctification process involves:

- The identification and dismantling of existing strongholds in our lives.
- The prevention of topos (territories) being established in our lives by taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

3. Examples of strongholds found in scripture:

Unforgiveness

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

Anger

Ephesians 4:26-27

Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.

Negativity

2 Timothy 2:24-26

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

Self

Matthew 16:23

But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Lying

Acts 5:3

...Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?

Bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, arrogance

James 3:14-15

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

Covetousness, materialism

1 Timothy 6:9

But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Pride

1 Timothy 3:6-7

and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Deceit, false doctrine

1 Timothy 4:1-3

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

Sin

1 Chronicles 21:1

Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.

Betrayal

John 13:2, 27

During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him..... After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

Freedom Prayer Participant:

Are you aware of an ongoing stronghold that you have never been able to overcome?

Are you ready for victory in that area? Are you ready to talk about it?

SECTION 4

**STRONGHOLDS AND HOW
TO DEAL WITH THEM (Part 2)**

A. Keys to Destroying Strongholds

1. Prepare for battle

- It all begins with a battle for the mind.

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

- Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.
- Becomes a battle for the will.
- Both "air attack" (spiritual warfare prayer) and "ground assault" (walking in the truth) are required to destroy Satan's strongholds.
- This is not a "quick fix" ministry.

2. Recognize our enemies

a) The world - the world system in opposition to God

John 17:14 (NKJV)

I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

b) The flesh -our sinful nature

Romans 8:5-7

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.

Example: Hatred toward others who don't believe what I believe

c) Satan & the powers of darkness - the demonic realm

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NKJV)

finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Example: Demons behind the hatred and religious intolerance

These are three individual and separate fronts with which we contend.

However, they are tightly wound in to a single "cord." You cannot separate the battles we face with the world system, our sinful nature, and demonic powers. All three are like individual strands tightly wound together making a formidable rope of war against us.

Ephesians 2:1-3

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

3. Fight with powerful spiritual weapons

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 of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

We live in a world of flesh and blood, but our war is spiritual and must be fought with spiritual weapons.

4. Apply the "4-R's" and supporting scriptures

The 4-R's are an alliteration that designates actions that we must take in order to dismantle the strongholds in our lives.

POW! - REPENT of the sin.

The foundational action to our destroying strongholds in our life is "repentance." Repentance is not morbid introspection and ungodly sorrow. Contrary to popular opinion, repentance is a wonderful and privileged gift given to us by God. This can be seen in the following verses.

Acts 5:31 (NKJV)

...God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that He might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 11:18 (NKJV)

Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.

2 Timothy 2:25 (NIV)

Those who oppose Him He must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.

Romans 2:4

Do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Defining Repentance

The Greek word translated repentance in the above verses is the word metanoia. It literally means "a change of mind." True repentance is filled with radical implications, for it turns us from one thing, toward something different.

It is not enough merely to be sorrowful for sin; **one must change his or her values, belief system, and lifestyle**, in order to make specific changes to turn from the sin. It is important to note that repentance is an ongoing process.

The chart below demonstrates from Scripture what repentance looks like.

WHAT REPENTANCE LOOKS LIKE

Taken from Ephesians 4:25-32

Verse	Unrighteous Behavior to Abandon	Righteous Behavior to Embrace
25	Lying	Speak only truth
28	Stealing	Work as to be able to give
29	Unwholesome, Abusive talk	Words that build up and minister grace to others appropriate to the time
31-32	Bitterness, Rage, Anger, Harsh Words	Kindness, tenderhearted, forgiving each other as Christ has forgiven you

Call it what it is. It is your sin. It may be a heart attitude, like bitterness, rebellion, or pride. It could be a behavior, like alcohol abuse, immorality, lying, pride, passivity or stealing. It could even be a feeling, like rejection, inferiority, or shame. (Note: in the instance of abuse or wounding, the initial sin is not yours. That's not your fault. Your sin is your response to the abuse -anger, fear, unforgiveness, bitterness, shame, etc. Recognize this sin and confess it!)

Acts 3:19

Therefore repent and return, so that your sins maybe wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

Mark 1:14-15

Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

POW! - Repentance is turning from your sin.

To repent we:

1. Stop the sin and confess it.

1 Corinthians 15:34

Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. Turn from our sin.

2 Timothy 2:19

Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, The Lord knows those who are His, and, Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.

3. Walk in the opposite direction.

Ephesians 4:28

He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

Result of Repentance:

It transforms one's life, one's values, one's attitudes, and one's actions. True Biblical repentance includes our entire being; the mind, will, emotions, and body. This results in new thoughts and beliefs, new words and actions, and eventually new emotions.

POW! - RECEIVE God's forgiveness and cleansing.

Embrace God's complete forgiveness and cleansing of your sin. Ask Him to fill you anew with His Holy Spirit to strengthen you in your thoughts, behavior, and emotions.

Psalm 103:8-12

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His loving kindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

POW! - RESIST the enemy's hold on you because of this sin.

Take your rightful place of authority through the power of Jesus' death and resurrection and renounce any comfort or "payoff" received from this sin.

Matthew 4:10

Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'"

James 4:7

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

We must fearlessly face our enemy!



Deputy Doug, being bothered by the conditions that he is facing in his neighborhood, begins to confront the crime syndicate face to face. He knows that with authority given to him by Mayor Mark and power he has been given as well, he can make a difference where it counts. He begins arresting one thug after another, one at a time. How insidious!

“ Agreements lock the door from the inside. Renouncing the agreements unlocks the door to Him.

John Eldredge, Captivating. pg. 100

Followers of Jesus Christ in New Testament times were not afraid of directly addressing the demonic.

We need not fear demonic spirits that war against us. We have been given the power and authority to defeat them in Christ!

As Jesus did, so must we forcefully evict demonic beings in the specific strongholds, sins, and temptations that we confront.

POW! - REPLACE all lies with God's TRUTH!

Declare old attitudes, actions, and emotions dead and "paid for." Fill your "clean room" with TRUTH that is consistent with the heart and character of Jesus Christ, and God's Word. Walk out your repentance with action!

The subsequent condition of one's life will be substantially worse if righteous behavior does not replace the confessed sin. Jesus speaks to that in Matthew chapter twelve.

Matthew 12:43-45

Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation.

Ephesians 5:18

... be filled with the Spirit.

B. Summary

1. It's all about the heart.

James 4:6-10

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble." Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

“ You won't understand your life, you won't see clearly what has happened to you or how to live forward from here, unless you see it as battle. A war against your heart.

John Eldredge, Waking the Dead, pg. 18

a) A Heart of Humility

“ Humility ... is the substructure of transformation. It is the essence of all virtues.

Francis Frangipane, Humility Precedes Holiness (article)

b) A Heart of Submission

c) A Heart of Aggressive Resistance

The Command: Submit and Resist -Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil...

The Promise: He will flee ... and he will flee from you.

2. Transactional power of God in Jesus Christ

POW! - Real Power, Not Mere Words

1 Corinthians 4:20

For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.

Jesus Christ did the work of forgiveness on the cross. There is transaction that happens in the spiritual realm when we accept Jesus. And this power continues as we follow him in obedience. As we will learn later, this transaction has far reaching ramifications. As we look at the process of living in God's original design and freedom it is important to note the following:

- We cannot receive freedom from self-help or positive thinking.
- We cannot earn freedom or strive for it.
- Sheer human will cannot bring lasting change.
- We cannot wish away our bondage.
- We need spiritual transactions.

Freedom Prayer Participant:

What do each of these mean to you, in your own words?

1. Repent

2. Receive

3. Resist

4. Replace

SECTION 5

**HOW DOES THE DEVIL
GET ACCESS TO US? (Part 1)**

A. Disobedience and Sin

1. Pre-salvation sins

Strongholds often are established through sinful activity prior to salvation when we have no thought of the things of God.

2. Post-salvation sins

Because you are a Christian, that does not mean that the devil stays away from you- He is an invited guest!

Believers knowingly or unknowingly open themselves up to strongholds and satanic influence through disobedience- not following the leading of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:25), indulgence- food, entertainment, drugs, alcohol, any substance or activity, rebellion- as a child or an adult, and sin.

Dismantle any Stronghold by...

STEP 1: Repent -Confess the sin that gave Satan and his kingdom legal access to your life.

STEP 2: Receive -God's forgiveness regarding that particular sin which opened the door to satanic influence in your life.

STEP 3: Resist -Speaking out loud to the demonic realm, take authority over that sin in Jesus name, and command it to be broken at once.

Example: "In the authority of Jesus Christ through His shed blood and resurrection, I take authority over this sin of _____, and command it to be severed and broken now!"

STEP 4: Replace the sin with Biblical truth that will help you walk in the opposite direction in attitudes and behavior from this point forward.

B. Trauma, Wounds and Injustices

1. Abuse, rejection, abandonment, conditional love, etc.

These things can cause a wounding of the soul. They open the door for responses, attitudes, actions, and beliefs to be raised up within us that are contrary to the knowledge and truth of God. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

2. Exposure to sinful behavior

These are established innocently, as when a child is exposed to sinful, corrupt, and vile ways of life, which may include various degrees of immorality and occult activity.

- Young boys finding pictures on phones and computers
- Children being beaten
- Women and men being abused
- Victimization, stolen from, discrimination...

STEP 1:

Repent - These types of access points are not our fault, and in fact greatly grieve God's heart. Not only does our heavenly Father want to heal us from the pain these have caused, but He desires to set us free from the strongholds that have taken root in us a result of trauma, wounds and injustices to our souls. We begin by consciously forgiving any perpetrators. To forgive is to release that person from the debt they owe for the wrongs they perpetrated against you. It does not mean they are no longer responsible, but that you are releasing them to the Lord, who is both just and forgiving. We do our part in forgiving, and then leave the rest to Him.

To the extent we have harbored any unforgiveness in our heart toward the perpetrators, we need to confess that to God and receive His forgiveness. We then confess any sinful pattern of behavior we have developed in response to the trauma, wounds, or injustices (things like bitterness, unforgiveness, fear, etc.) which have enabled Satan to keep us in bondage.

STEP 2:

Receive God's forgiveness regarding any sinful responses you've had that have enabled Satan to gain access to your heart.

STEP 3:

Resist Renounce any lies you have believed as a result of these things (for example: "I am worthless", "God doesn't love me", etc.). Break off any vows you have made in response to these things (for example: "I'll never trust anyone again.") Speaking out loud to the demonic realm, take authority against any spirits that have had access through these things and command them to flee.

Example: "In the name and authority of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that I am worthless and sever the power of that lie. I also renounce the lie that God doesn't love me and sever the power of that lie. I break the vow I made to never trust anyone and sever the power of that vow. In the name of Jesus Christ and on the basis of His shed blood, I bind every evil spirit that has had access to my heart through these things and command you to flee now."

STEP 4:

Replace the sin with Biblical truth that will help you walk in the opposite direction in your attitudes and behavior from this point forward.

C. Generational Sins

1. Understanding generational sins

The scriptures clearly state that the tendency toward sins and the effects of sin can be passed on generationally.

1 Kings 15:3 (NIV)

(Abijam, Rehoboam's son, Solomon's grandson) He committed all the sins his father had done before him; ...

Genesis 25:29-32

Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom. 31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." 32 And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?"

Genesis 27:6-7

So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 7 'Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.'

Genesis 27:10

Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death."

Genesis 27:14

And he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved.

Genesis 27:19

Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me."

2. Breaking generational sins

Leviticus 26:14, 38, 40, 42 (NIV)

But if you will not listen to Me and carry out all these commands...You will perish among the nations; the land of your enemies will devour you. ... But if they will confess their sins and the sins of their fathers their treachery against Me and their hostility toward Me... I will remember My covenant with Jacob and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land.

Nehemiah 1:6; 9:1-2 (NIV)

Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you... On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers.

Daniel 9:8-11 (NIV)

O LORD, we and our kings, our princes and our fathers are covered with shame because we have sinned against You. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him; we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws He gave us through His servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed Your law and turned away, refusing to obey You. Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against You.

Walk through the biblical process of destroying strongholds, but also take upon yourself the responsibility and burden for the sin of past generations.

STEP 1:

Repent - Confess the generational sin that has given Satan and his kingdom legal access to your life. Repent of the ways this has manifested itself in your life. Take responsibility for the generations that have perpetuated these sins before you by repenting on their behalf. It is much more relevant and powerful if you recognize your part in the sin. Extend forgiveness to any perpetrator.

STEP 2:

Receive God's forgiveness regarding any role you played with regard to that particular sin which opened the door to satanic influence in your life.

STEP 3:

Resist -Speaking out loud to the demonic realm, take authority over that generational sin/pattern. Break the power of this by the authority you have in Christ, not only for your generation, but for future generations as well.

Example: "By the authority I have in Jesus Christ and the power of His shed blood for me, I breakoff this generational sin and pattern of. I sever its hold on me and my children and any future generations. I command every spirit that has energized this sin to be gone in Jesus' name now!"

STEP 4:

Replace this generational sin with Biblical truth that will help you walk in the opposite direction in behavior and attitude from this point forward.

D. Curses

1. Definition (Webster's Dictionary)

noun

A calling on God or the gods to send evil or injury down on some person or thing.
A blasphemous oath; Imprecation.
A thing cursed.
An evil or injury that seems to come in answer to a curse.

verb

To utter a wish of evil against; to imprecate evil upon, to call injury down on, to execrate or to afflict; to subject to evil; to blight with a curse; to bring evil or injury on.

Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary Of the English Language, ed. Jean L. McKechnie, (William Collins and World Publishing Company; 1977).

Primitive people believed that one could pronounce a curse on his enemy and that deity or superhuman beings could be listed to execute it. By this means all kinds of disaster, sickness, or hardship could be inflicted. Indeed, the validity of pronounced blessings and the antithesis of cursing in early Biblical history is amazing. Noah pronounced a curse on Canaan, and a blessing on Shem and Japheth (Gen. 9:25-27), and subsequent history confirmed his invocations. A curse was not considered a mere wish for misfortune on one's enemies, but a potent force capable of translating pronouncements into tangible results.

Merrill C. Tenney, ed., The Zondervon Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, (Grand Rapids; Zondervan; 1975).

2. Biblical examples of curses

Genesis 9:24-25

When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. So he said, "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers."

2 Samuel 3:28-29

Afterward when David heard it, he said, "I and my kingdom are innocent before the Lord forever of the blood of Abner the son of Ner. May it fall on the head of Joab and on all his father's house; and may there not fail from the house of Joab one who has a discharge, or who is a leper, or who takes hold of a distaff, or who falls by the sword, or who lacks bread."

Joshua 6:26

Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, "Cursed before the Lord is the man who rises up and builds this city Jericho; with the loss of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and with the loss of his youngest son he shall set up its gates."

1 Kings 16:34

In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Sequb, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.

Is it possible that many Christians are burdened by unbroken curses on their lives, and the lives of their families? Is it possible that there is much heartache, tension, adversity, sorrow, and ills upon Christians due to the work of curses on their lives?

“But doesn’t Jesus break those when I get saved?” “Doesn’t the Holy Spirit do away with them when He comes to live in me?”



Throughout his arresting of thugs and facing the crime syndicate head on, He sees that many of the law breakers who were being scooped up and drawn into the crime syndicate came from a history of law breaking. Not just their personal history, but the family history. It seemed as much as these young people didn’t want to repeat the past, they did. He also found that these young people had horrible things spoken to them and about them. It was as though the community had developed a reputation for these soon-to-be thugs and spoke that reputation before it even happened. These young people became the very words that were spoken to them. In effect, they were cursed and became those curses.

NOTE: This is not to suggest that curses are the cause for everything adverse, and that dealing with curses will be the end-all, cure-all, for everyone’s problems. It is simply necessary to shed our western-culture lens and how we see life and the scriptures to view the issue as objectively as possible.

4. The sources and access points of curses

a) Involvement with unclean or accursed objects

- Most predominantly recognized in idolatry or occult objects.

Paul said to eat the food offered to idols. (1 Corinthians 8) So, be very careful about becoming legalistic with this issue. Make sure that grace and understanding are used. Also, be mindful of a weaker person’s understanding.

b) Territorial curses

- Demonic religious places can be cursed.

c) Association with demonic rituals and activities

- Curses due to involvement with demonic games, music, movies, and rituals... Association with Ouija boards, séances, astral projection, psychic readings, demon worship, etc.

This is different than above; this is the rare case of curses placed upon items to trap you.

POW! - Luke 10:19

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

d) Attitudes and words

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

James 3:7-10

For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

- **Word curses can lead to intentional or unintentional agreements that allow the demonic to gain access.**
- **They can also be self-inflicted curses**

I am stupid...

I can never be like...

I will always be poor...

Singing lyrics to songs that are words of self-destruction.

- **Examples of sources of word curses:**

Authority figures in a person's life (parents, teachers, coaches, etc.)

Persons of significant influence.

Curses from others through jealousies, arguments, slanders, and etc.

Generational curses -both self-inflicted and received by others.

(Example... "We are just clumsy, A lot of blonds in this family.")

5. Release and freedom from curses

STEP 1:

Repent - Identify the curses that may be impacting you today, whether they are self-inflicted, passed down generationally or put upon you by someone you valued in your life. Confess personal sinful activity (if any) that you have been involved in, which opened the door to these curses. Confess anyway in which you have bought into word curses, perpetuated them and/or lived by them (this may involve lies you've believed or vows you've made about how to live your life. For example, someone who was told they will never amount to anything might vow to never try very hard again. Confess any sinful response you have had toward curses in your life (unforgiveness, self-hatred, anger, passivity, etc.). Choose to freely forgive those who may have inflicted you with word curses.

STEP 2:

Receive God's forgiveness and cleansing for any sinful response on your part.

STEP 3:

Resist -Speaking out loud to the demonic realm, take authority over the curse in Jesus name, and command it to be broken at once. (Why out loud? Because demons do not read minds.) Renounce the lies associated with it, and any ensuing vows you might have made as a result.

Example: "By the authority I have in Jesus Christ and the power of His shed blood for me, I breakoff this curse that I will never amount to anything. I sever its hold on me completely. I renounce the lie that I have nothing to offer. I renounce the lie that everything I try will fail. I sever the vow I have made to never try very hard at anything so that I won't feel the pain of failure. I command every spirit that has energized these things to be gone in Jesus' name now!"

SECTION 6

**HOW DOES THE DEVIL
GET ACCESS TO US? (Part 2)**

A. Unhealthy Relationships (Soul-ties)

1. Definition

When we say unhealthy "soul-tie" or "soul-bond," we are speaking of a relationship that transgressed or departed from Biblical guidelines or parameters in one or more areas, resulting in an inappropriate relational bonding or "soul-tie." Such a relationship has an unhealthy, unbiblical influence on the person, family, church, government, or business.

- David and Bathsheba, rock stars, and Hollywood stars

POW! - There are legitimate and healthy "soul-ties" or "soul-bonds" that are part of God's design for life. Some examples of these are spouses to one another, parents and children to one another, church leaders to those within the local church, spiritual, friendships, etc.

2. Possible causes of unhealthy "soul-ties"

a) Soul-ties developed through sin

- Sexual sin: adultery, fornication, lust.
- Spiritual sins: occult, religious experience dominated relationship, oaths and covenants taken in religious orders, drugs, etc.
- Soul-ties developed through misplaced trust, fear, and source of approval
- Common sins (gossip, bitterness, etc.)
- Fear of man (need for man's approval over God's approval).

Example 1: When one is more dependent upon and/or fearful of a person and what they think than God and His appraisal.

Example 2: When one is manipulated by the opinion, resources, or pleasure of another to such a degree that the person is not edified and built up into Godliness.

b) Soul-ties caused by abuses and violations

- These abuses and violations can be spiritual, emotional, sexual, and/or physical.
- These all affect the soul (mind, emotions, and will) of an individual.

3. Consequences of soul-ties

Philippians 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- Soul-ties do not cultivate the edification of the person.
- Issues surface such as control, manipulation, self-interest.
- Such unhealthy relationships cultivate debilitating strongholds.
- Soul-ties cause confusion, anxiety, unrest, and/or oppression.
- These relationships degenerate, are not filled with peace, joy, and love.

4. Release and freedom from soul-ties

a) Identify the source and cause a/the soul-tie.

b) Dismantle any jurisdiction by applying the "4R's".

STEP 1:

Repent Identify the source and cause of the soul-tie or unhealthy bond. If the unhealthy bond is the result of a violation(s) against you, first work through forgiving the perpetrator, seeking to pray blessing over them. Repent of any personal sinful responses you have had as a result of the violation, such as anger, bitterness, resentment etc. If the unhealthy bond is the result of willingly engaging in sinful behavior with another person, confess and repent of that behavior.

STEP 2:

Receive God's forgiveness and cleansing for the unhealthy bond you have had, and for any sin you've committed, either in the relationship or in response to what was done to you.

STEP 3:

Resist Speaking out loud to the demonic realm, take authority over the unhealthy bond in Jesus name, and command it to be broken at once. Example: "Lord, I now, in the power and authority of Jesus-Christ through His shed blood and resurrection, sever completely the soul-tie/unhealthy relationship with _____... I break off all of its power over me and command every spirit that has energized this bond to be gone now in Jesus' name!"

STEP 4:

Replace the unhealthy bond or soul-tie with Biblical truth regarding an intimate and submissive relationship with Jesus Christ. If the soul-tie was a result of sinful behavior you willingly engaged in with another, you may need to go to them and apologize, letting them know you will no longer participate.

Definitions of Common Strongholds

Affection for the World (Lot's Wife)

A pattern of adherence to this world's standards and an affection for its values, which impacts our thoughts, actions and behavior.

Anger (Esau)

Internal harboring of ill feelings toward God, others, or life situations, which results in sinful actions and attitudes.

Control (Sarah)

A strong need and determination to manipulate and manage one's environment, life situations, people and circumstances, which results in frustration, fear, insecurity or anger when unable to do so.

Entitlements (Saul (Paul))

The belief, expectation and at times insistence that there are certain absolute rights that God and other people are obligated to grant you as a human being.

Fear (Moses)

A pattern of apprehension and anxiety concerning imminent threats (whether real or perceived) to one's sense of well-being.

Fear of Man (Abraham)

A pattern of adherence to this world's standards and an affection for its values, which impacts our thoughts, actions and behavior.

Passivity (Isaac)

A pattern of holding back, laying low, a hesitancy to take initiative or action either by a continual yielding or depending upon to others or blatant neglect of personal responsibility.

Pride/Arrogance (Nebuchadnezzar)

A pattern of seeing oneself as more important than he or she really is, which leads to self-absorption and self-exaltation.

Definitions of Common Strongholds

Religiosity/Legalism (Saul (Paul))

A pattern of robbing Christ of His glory by putting more emphasis on what we know or what we do instead of on His beauty and the wonder of having an intimate love relationship with Him.

Self-hatred (Judas Iscariot)

A pattern of feeling deep disdain for oneself based on a conviction that he or she is somehow flawed at a core level.

Shame (Woman at the Well)

A deep sense of embarrassment accompanied by intangible feelings of guilt concerning who you are, the things you have done, or abuses that may have been perpetrated against you.

Unbelief (Agrippa (Acts 26:28))

A pattern of depending upon one's own wisdom, strength and methods instead of trusting in the character and promises of God as revealed in His Word.

Unforgiveness (Unmerciful Servant)

An unwillingness (intentional or unintentional) to release others from debts you feel they owe due to the way they have treated you.

Freedom Prayer Participant:

Are you recognizing any other strongholds that the enemy is trying to establish in your life?

Are you ready to be free? _____

We are excited and ready to talk with you. We are praying for you and we anticipate victory!

FREEDOM

THE 4R WORKSHEET

REPENT (Turn Around) To turn from the enemy and to turn toward God

I admit that I have partnered with the enemy by: Unholy behavior, thinking, partnership with lies	I turn toward you God and agree that: Holy behavior, thinking, partnership with the truth

RECEIVE (From God) Healing, identity, and community with God

I agree with God that... What does God say about me, my identity, and who He is?

RESIST (The Enemy) The schemes, lies, and spiritual power of darkness

Satan, you have no power over me. I reject the lies, power, ties, and agreements that have said:

REPLACE (Make a New Path) A new way of thinking

Therefore I must...	Therefore I must not...

