

Pulling Down Strongholds

These are thoughts, studies, notes and scriptures that I have assembled through the years. There may be some repetition since this is not yet organized into an outline to teach on.

Matthew 15:13 – Every plant which my heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up.

One way to root up a plant or tree is to speak to it. It will wither from the roots up. This is one of the weapons God has provided to pull down strongholds that remain in our lives, to root up the things planted in our lives that hinder and hurt us.

Mark 11:20, 23 - In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. Then Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered. Jesus answered them, Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, be taken up and thrown into the sea, and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 - For the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ.

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Psalm 89:40 – You have broken through all his walls; you have laid his strongholds in ruins.

Proverbs 21:22 - One wise person went up against a city of warriors and brought down the stronghold in which they trusted.

Jeremiah 48:18, 41 - For the destroyer of Moab has come up against you; he has destroyed your strongholds... the towns shall be taken and the strongholds seized.

Ezekiel 19:7 - And he ravaged their strongholds, and laid waste their towns...

Deuteronomy 2:36 – From Aroer which is on the edge of the Arnon Valley and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was no city too high and strong for us; the Lord our God delivered all to us. **NO STRONGHOLD IS TOO GREAT FOR GOD’S MIGHTY WEAPONS TO TAKE DOWN!**

Hosea 8:14 - Israel has forgotten his Maker, and built palaces; and Judah has multiplied fortified cities; but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his strongholds.

Amos 3:11 - An adversary shall surround the land, and strip you of your defense; and your strongholds shall be plundered.

Isaiah 45:1-3 - ...I have appointed you to... subdue nations before him and to strip the kings of their robes, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut. I will go before you and make the rough places smooth, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel who call you by your name.

Matthew 15:13 – Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.

A stronghold is a thought that is thought over and over again until it takes hold deep in your life and penetrates even your unconscious mind and becomes an inner image that controls your life. It can be either positive or negative.

These thoughts are planted like seeds, and the more you think them, the more they grow. This is why we are to meditate on the Word day and night. This will build strongholds of God's thoughts that will cause you success and prosperity in all you do.

By the time a thought becomes a stronghold, you are usually not even aware that you are thinking it. But every stronghold can be traced back to a thought or thought habit. One way it can be changed is the same way that it was planted, by what you habitually think., So if you habitually think the opposite of the stronghold, if you think what the Word says about that area of our life, it will tear down the old stronghold and build a new one.

John 15:1-5 – I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. Every branch in me that bears not fruit, He takes it away, and every branch that bears fruit, He cleanses it, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you

Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can you except you abide in me. I am the vine and you are the branches; he that abides in me and I in Him, the same bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

The part of my life that is unfruitful, He takes it away. The parts of my life that bear fruit, He cleanses – by the Words of speaks.

Tearing Down Strongholds:

A stronghold is a thought or thought pattern which is thought over and over again until it gets a strong hold in your life and penetrates even to your unconscious mind and becomes an inner image that controls your life – sometimes even against your will. (Romans 7 – Paul spoke of this of the sin which dwelt in him and caused him not to do what he wanted to do but what he did not agree with and did not want to do). Thank God that God has dealt with this in Christ!

Thoughts are planted like seeds into your life, and the more you think them, the more they grow and take hold in your life.

This is why we are instructed to meditate on God's Word (His thoughts) day and night. This will build positive strongholds of truth (God's thoughts) – even of God Himself within your heart and mind – that will cause you success and prosperity in all you do.

By the time a thought pattern becomes a stronghold, you are usually not even aware that you are thinking it. But every stronghold can be traced back to a thought or thought pattern which was planted like a seed and nurtured and watered by continuing to think it over and over.

Strongholds are torn down in the same manner they were built – by planting a thought like a seed, this time a thought of truth, and thinking it continually (meditating on it day and night) until it replaces the inner images in your heart of defeat, failure, negativity, fear, insecurity, etc., with the truth of God's Word of who you really are, of how things really are. When you continue in the Word, then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.

So in every area of life, replace your thoughts with God's thoughts. Bring every thought into obedience to His Word. You are transformed by the renewing of your mind. As you

change the way you see yourself, you change the way you are.

James 1:21-24 – The Word implanted is able to save (save, heal, make whole) your soul (your mind, your will, your emotions).

Steps to this:

1. Put aside what remains of the old man.
2. Implant the Word about who you are in the new man.
3. Then act as though what you see is truth. If you don't act on it, then you will revert back to acting like the old man again and forget who you really are.

Colossians 3:1-10

V. 9-10 - ...you laid aside the old self with its evil practice and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.

V. 5 - Consider the members of your earthly body as dead.

V. 2 – Set your mind on the things above not the things of the earth.

Ephesians 4:17-18 – Walk no longer as you used to walk... darkened in your understanding, alienated from the life of God because of ignorance.

V. 22-24 - ...in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self... and put on the new self which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 – As we are with Him beholding His glory, seeing Him like He is, we become like Him and are transformed into the same image from glory to glory.

Norman Vincent Peale

Your life or mine is not determined by outward circumstance but by the thoughts that habitually engage the mind. You create your own world by your thoughts.

Beneath all your outward thoughts is one basic primary thought. All other thoughts and feelings and emotions are colored by this.

For example, some people allow fear to become their primary thought. Fear usually begins as a thin trickle of worry across your mind. Repeated over many days, it becomes a habitual thought until it cuts a deep channel across the consciousness. Every thought a man to whom this has happened thinks – about his family, about his business, about his health, about the world – is colored by the basic and primary thought of fear and comes up tinted with anxiety and insecurity. No matter how he resists the persistent thought of fear, he cannot escape it. He is what he thinks about all day long; he is a man of fear.

To counteract this condition – substitute a different and stronger basic thought. The only primary thought that can successfully oppose fear is faith or positive thought. Only faith is stronger than fear.

But what is the technique for developing faith? It is to affirm the positive thought. Faith, too, begins as a thin trickle across the mind. Repeated, it becomes habitual. It cuts deeply into the consciousness until finally you have two basic channels of thought – one of fear and one of faith. But fear can never defeat faith.

As you deepen the channel of the faith thought, the channel of fear thought finally dries up. The faith thought overflows and becomes the deep, flowing primary thought of the mind. Then every thought whether about business, about your family, about the world is touched by the

thought of faith and comes up bright, resplendent, optimistic and positive.

As a result of your new and positive caste of thought, you will learn to believe in yourself, in your country and in the future of mankind. You will now have a deep, positive conviction that life is good. Shadows which once frightened you and obstacles which once defeated you flee away and are overcome.

Physically you may be the same person, but mentally you are living in a different world. Actually, you are a different person because you are thinking differently. You are what you think all day long. But your thoughts now give you power and are leading you to happiness and success.

Strongholds

Numbers 33:52-53 – Then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you and destroy all their figured stones and all their molten images and completely demolish all their high places, and you shall take possession of the land and dwell in it, for to you I have given the land to possess it.

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 mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds), casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Luke 11:21-22 – When the strong man fully armed guards his own palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he takes from him his whole armor wherein he trusted, and divides his spoils.

Numbers 33:55 – But if you will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those you let remain of them shall be as pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall vex you in the land in which you dwell.

Deuteronomy 2:36 – No city is too high and strong for us; the Lord our God delivered all to us.

Casting Down Strongholds – John Osteen

Regardless of how I feel about it or what I think concerning it, I know by the Word that this book contains the spiritual answer to dealing with strongholds in the mind. So in applying what I see, I will find the way out of the mind battles I have been having.

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 pulling down of strongholds (the destruction of fortresses), casting down imaginations (destroying speculations) and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

It is not will power that brings these thoughts captive. It is not good intentions or diligence. It is not weapons of the flesh in any way. It is only God's powerful divine weapons that can destroy a stronghold. (Lord, what are these? Are they the ones mentioned in Ephesians 6? How about John 8:31-32?)

Warring after the flesh cannot get me out of a mind battle. Reasoning and logic cannot defeat a through stronghold. But God's weapons which are not fleshly can. They pull down any stronghold, destroy any fortress of the enemy in my mind, cast down the imaginations, and destroy the speculations. These weapons are also powerful enough to bring every thought captive (implies winning over it in a war) to the obedience of Christ.

Ephesians 6:10-18 - Weapons: Be strong in the Lord and in His strength to fight spiritual enemies. Take up the sword of the Spirit (the revealed Word of God), praying always in the Spirit at all times. These are offensive weapons. The rest, truth, righteousness, peace, faith and salvation, are defensive.

V 10 – All successful spiritual warfare is done in His strength.

V 11-13 – Since it is spiritual battle, only spiritual weapons will work effective.

God's armor *is* effective. It enables me to stand firm against all the schemes of the devil and to resist even when things are at their worst.

V. 18 – Praying at all times in the Spirit. This speaks of battle in prayer. (Romans 8:26-27; Psalm 44:6-8; Psalm 18:32-42; Psalm 144:-1-2; 1 Chronicles 12:8; Isaiah 13:3; 30:30-32).

Though you have been tormented, defeated and cast down, if you will heed the message of this book, God will give you light as to the way to victory in your present state and also help you win ever battle in the future.

Primary place of attack – the mind and thoughts

Learn to win the battle in the area of your thoughts, and you will rejoice in the victory God gives you over your enemy every day of your life.

Feed on the Word. Get God's thoughts into your mind. Fight off the lies of the devil with the Word of God. Pull out the sword of the Spirit every day and beat up the devil's lies. Don't entertain him at all in your thought life. Give him and his thoughts no place. There is no room for the devil's thoughts when you fill your mind with thoughts from the Lord. Don't accept the thoughts the enemy puts in

your mind as your own and act on them. When you accept them as your own thoughts, you begin to say them.

When you repeat out loud the lies Satan gives you in thoughts, you become fearful and live in torment.

When you accept God's thoughts and promises and repeat them out loud in faith, they bring peace to your heart.

REPLACE EVERY THOUGHT THE ENEMY GIVES YOU WITH ONE OF GOD'S THOUGHTS!

If you will take just the opposite of what the devil has told you, then you will know the truth.

Isaiah 54:17 – No weapon formed against you shall prosper and every tongue that shall rise against you in judgment, you shall condemn. Every tongue or thought that rises against you bring condemnation, fear, torment and defeat – you shall condemn. God has already defeated the enemy and given us the authority.

Don't play with negative thoughts. Don't deal lightly with them. Don't humor them. Don't allow them to linger. You pull them down and cast them out!

Watch what you read. Watch what you look at. Watch what you let into your mind. Do not let wrong thoughts linger in your mind.

Psalm 1:1-3 – Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law he does meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bring forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.

Meditate – think on, ponder over – day and night!

Do not allow negative, destructive, devilish thoughts to linger in your mind for you to use for meditation.

When one continual thought lingers and becomes a stronghold, it allows others similar to it to also dominate the thinking. This leads to action and all the misery that follows.

Begin to confess God's Word. Begin to act like God's thoughts are true.

YOU CREATE THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH YOU LIVE BY THE THOUGHTS YOU ENTERTAIN FOR CONSTANT MEDITATION.

You can change your state and atmosphere by changing your thoughts, basing the thoughts on the great unchanging promises of God. Base your thoughts on definite promises of God.

Think them! Talk them! Act on them!

Romans 12:2 – Your life is transformed as your mind is renewed.

Strongholds pulled down through prayer

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 – For though we walk (live) in the flesh, we are not carrying on our warfare according to the flesh and using mere human weapons. For the weapons of our warfare are not physical, but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds [Inasmuch as we] refute arguments and theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God; and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ.

Ephesians 6:10-18 – Be strong in the Lord. Put on God's whole armor so you can successfully stand up against all the strategies and deceits of the devil. For we are not

wrestling with flesh and blood but against the rulers, the powers, the world forces of this darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly sphere. Therefore put on God's whole armor that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day...pray at all times (on every occasion, in every season) in the Spirit, with all prayer and entreaty. With this in view, keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance...

Numbers 33:52-53 – Then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you and destroy all their figured stones and all their molten images and completely demolish all their [idolatrous] high places, and you shall take possession of the land and dwell in it, for to you I have given the land to possess it.

Hebrews 11:30 – By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they have been encircled for seven days.

Deuteronomy 2:36 – From Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon Valley, and from the city that is in the valley, as far as Gilead, there was no city too high and strong for us; the Lord our God delivered all to us.

Amos 1:7, 14 – So I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza which shall devour its strongholds...So I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah and it shall devour the strongholds of it, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind...

Psalm 141:6-7 – When their rulers are overthrown in stony places, [their followers] shall hear my words, that they are sweet (pleasant, mild, and just). The unburied bones [of slaughtered rulers] shall lie scattered at the mouth of Sheol, [as unregarded] as the lumps of soil behind the plowman when he breaks open the ground.

Zephaniah 3:6 - I [the Lord] have cut off nations; their battlements and corner towers are desolate and in ruins. I laid their streets waste so that none passes over them;

their cities are destroyed so that there is no man, there is no inhabitant.

1 John 3:8 - ...The reason the Son of God was made manifest (visible) was to undo (destroy, loosen, and dissolve) the works the devil [has done].

Matthew 15:6, 9, 13 - So for the sake of your tradition you have set aside the Word of God (depriving it of force and authority and making it of no effect). Uselessly do they worship Me, for they teach as doctrines the commands of men. Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be torn up by the roots.