

**FEARS, TEARS & JEERS:**  
Staying positive  
in a negative world, Lesson 5

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**GOOD MORNING!**

- Thanks for CHOOSING to join us today.
- We've been studying FEARS, TEARS & JEERS: Staying Positive in a Negative World. We started with the fear of eternal insecurity, then we dealt with the fear of death, the fear of failure, and the fear of choosing.
- Today's topic is...

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Fear of our Strongholds.**



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Have you noticed?

- People are complicated?
- They are complex?
- They are an intricate collection of memories, emotions, and desires that weave together to form their personality and behavior?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The best Biblical reference for the context today is...

- *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds...”* 2 Corinthians 10:4

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## We all have strongholds.

- Militarily, a stronghold is a fortress or castle.
- Personality-wise, it is a grip.
- A tendency.
- An inclination to think or behave in a particular way.
- A trend or a drift.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- A tug.
- A pull.
- A vigorous, forceful strain.
- A weakness.
- A chronic defect.




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- A shortcoming.
- A compulsion.
- An irresistible impulse to act irrationally.
- A dysfunction.
- An addiction.
- An inclination for our “beast within” to raise his or her ugly head.




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**In general terms, a stronghold isn't necessarily “bad.”**

- It can mean a particular fondness or special liking. For example, I have a stronghold for chocolate chip ice cream!




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**But spiritually, a stronghold tends to be distinctly *negative*.**

- Sometimes it's an area of your life that you truly should not indulge in at all... but you desire to go there anyway.
- Sometimes it's an imbalance... an extreme... an area of your life where you cannot be "moderate."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Why do we fear our strongholds?**

- Because we know they have taken us, do take us, and will take us places we shouldn't go...
- ...emotionally, mentally, physically, financially, and spiritually.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- We fear the humiliating consequences if and when we "go there."
- We fear exposure as the imperfect, pitiful, dysfunctional people we are.
- We fear the shame, the guilt, the rejection by God and by others.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What are some common human strongholds?

- **Fame:** always seeking attention, recognition, being liked.
- **Fortune:** always seeking more money, possessions.
- **Security:** always seeking to protect, insulate from risk.
- **Sex:** always desiring sexual stimulation and gratification.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- **Comfort:** always wanting to be comfortable, unwilling to change or be stretched.
- **Work:** always wanting to work.
- **Recreation:** always wanting to play.
- **Chemicals:** always going for the alcohol, prescription drugs, tobacco, illegal drugs, glue— even coffee—for a fix.
- Always **shopping and spending money.**
- Or the opposite: always **saving money, being a miser.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Bottom line: we ALL have them.

- Welcome to the human race. There will “never” be a time *in this life* that you will be completely free of the tug of strongholds. Only Jesus was free of strongholds.
- Some are more obvious than others.
- Some are more shameful than others.
- Some are more harmful than others.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**The self-righteous Pharisee says  
“I don’t have strongholds.”**

- Liar! That’s why Jesus rebuked the Pharisees so harshly.
- The smell of their stinky hypocrisy was just as bad as *and actually worse than* the stink of sinful tax collectors and prostitutes.
- A highly trained and experienced Christian counselor once told me that the people he gets most concerned about are the people who say they have “no shadow.”

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- *So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. --John 8:7*
- *Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. --Matthew 7:5*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” --1 John 1:8-10*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**The Libertine says,  
"I'm free to go there."**

- The Libertine says, "We're all sinners, so don't judge me. I am free to indulge in my weaknesses and do anything and everything I want. I don't need to change or restrain myself. God loves me just the way I am. Don't be a Pharisee. Mind your own business. Leave me alone."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- *"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."* -John 5:14
- *"She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."* -John 8:11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- *"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."*  
1 Corinthians 6:12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• *“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”* --2 Peter 2:22

• *“As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.”* --Proverbs 26:11

---

---

---

---


---

---

---

---

**So, how can you overcome fear of your strongholds?**



• By getting a Divine Front End Wheel Alignment!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• Admit your strongholds to God and ask Him to cleanse you! *“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.”* --Psalm 19:12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• Remember that one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit is self-control. Trust in God's power to preserve you if you let Him. ***He is fully capable of blasting your strongholds like the walls of Jericho.***

• ***"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy...***  
--Jude 1:24

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• Take your lumps! ***"For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."*** --1 Peter 2:20

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• Deliberately exercise your freewill to choose to obey the Lord: ***"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."*** --Romans 12:21

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**How can we help *each other*?**

- Speak up...in love!
- ***“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”*** --Matthew 18:15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- ***Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*** --Galatians 6:1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- Be transparent! ***“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*** --James 5:16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• ***“Bear ye one another's burdens,  
and so fulfil the law of Christ.”*** --Galatians 6:2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

• Don't air your dirty laundry in the world!  
***“Now therefore there is utterly a fault among  
you, because ye go to law one with another.  
Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye  
not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?”***  
--I Corinthians 6:7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**It may get worse  
before it gets better!**

• In the history of fortresses, threats result in builders making them taller, thicker, and stronger. The fir may fly before victory comes, but it'll still be worth it!



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---