

Getting Victory in our Lives -II Corinthians 10:1

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[0 : 00] And I want to talk to you about how to have victory, how to have victory in your life. And straight out of one passage of Scripture, we're going to go to a bunch of places. All together, we'll be in several different parts of the Bible, but it's a big deal that we would have victory.

That we could know that sin doesn't have to defeat us. And, you know, you do not have to be held captive. You do not have to be held captive by sensuality.

You do not have to be held captive by any kind of perversion or porn. You do not have to be held captive by money. You do not have to be held captive by politics. You have something else.

And so I may take a break in the middle and go back and do some of the other things. But in the meantime, we're going to read some Bibles. So open your Bibles to 2 Corinthians 10, verse 1.

And since the responsive reading went so well this morning, we're going to do it again. I'll read a verse. You read a verse. And we'll get down to verse 6. And I will stop you there.

[0 : 59] Because I won't read verse 7. You'll know to stop. So let's start. I'm going to read verse 1. 2 Corinthians 10, 1. Now I, Paul, myself, beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence and base among you, but being absent and bold towards you.

But I teach you that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence. Wherewith I think to be bold against some, which they know us as we walk forward into the flesh.

I'm just going to tell you, because it's another part of this lesson, that Paul was really being a kind of a smiley in those verses. See, they've been talking bad about him. They've been saying your bodily presence is weak, and you're really tough when you're not close.

But when you're close, you don't do so good. And he writes back and says, I'm going to talk to you all as meekly and gently as I can. I know I'm a nobody base, but I'm going to be bold while I'm still away.

And I know you think I'm just a regular guy walking in the flesh, but that ain't true. Verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

[2 : 11] For the weapons of our warfare are not harming, but the mighty through God is pulling down our strongholds. That's a great verse.

Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God Let's read that last verse. That was a little weak, so I don't know if those words were confusing to you or what.

So read that again. You ready? And Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God That sounds like man church. That's a lot better. All right.

If you got notes there, and I don't have my blank sheet so I know where the answers go. So maybe I can remember. Maybe I can remember. I filled it all out so I know exactly where they went.

[3 : 10] And I forgot to bring it. But get ready and follow along with me if you would. How can we define strongholds? Look in your Bible if you would at verse 4. I hope you have a paper Bible with you.

Look in verse 4 and underline strongholds. Strongholds. That's what he's talking about. And so we want to know what's a stronghold. We want to define what is a stronghold. Write this down there in the blank.

Follow along. A stronghold would be any place that darkness, sin, lies, and the devil rule. Okay. So in the blank it should be darkness and devil.

Darkness and devil. So we're using military terms. And it's a military term that would be quite different than what we would do today. You know, you can't really build a fort to stand against a bomber or a drone maybe.

But in those days, if you built a castle and you put it at the right place, it becomes a very strong thing. So the devil creeps in and he builds strongholds.

[4 : 17] And in this, we're going to talk about pulling down these strongholds. These aren't good strongholds. We're going to pull down these strongholds. And so a stronghold would be any place in my life where darkness or sin or lies or the devil rule.

What you might not realize is that goes on a whole lot among Christian people. A stronghold is a place where God's truth is not shining.

It's a place where God's truth is not shining, whether it be from ignorance or from rebellion. With many Christians, with many Christians, the truth's not shining, but it's just because they don't want it to.

They're just saying, I don't care what God's got to say. God talking doesn't make anything to me. I'll do what I want to do. And in others, it might be ignorance.

A stronghold is a house made of thoughts. A house made of thoughts outside of God's truth. It's a house of thoughts made outside of God's truth.

[5 : 26] And we'll get into it tonight, how we're going to pull those down. But you need to know what it is. You know why we're getting beat by sin? Because we got the wrong thoughts in our head.

We're allowing ourself to be beaten. I'm trying to make sure if you're getting everything. Letter B, right? That's where I am. A stronghold is a place that would hold us from becoming Christ-like in that area of our lives.

You know what? Jesus wants me to turn out to be like him. He has ordained and everything worked together in my life. Because he has predestined me to be conformed to the image of his son. Romans 8, 28, 29.

So the devil moves in and says, let me help you with your thinking. You don't need to think what God says. I got other thoughts for you. And that keeps me from being what God wants me to be.

Something we keep thinking and doing that will not let us have victory. Something we keep doing or thinking that will not let us have victory. I'll say a lot of this over and over to you.

[6 : 32] But so many Christians will say to me, I just can't help it. Well, that's just simply not biblically. That's a stronghold. See, that's a stronghold. See, you wouldn't think that if a devil hadn't taught you a lie.

You wouldn't think that if you hadn't accepted the devil's lie. That's a stronghold. They won't let us have victory. It's a hard place. It's a hard place.

An entrenchment or a fortress built to hold ground in battle. So the devil moves in and encroaches on what God's doing in my life. And he works at building this embattlement, this fortress.

So he's taking some ground. And, you know, when he gets here, he owns this ground. And now I've just surrendered that much of my life to the devil. And as soon as I kind of give up fighting there, he'll just move the stronghold.

He just keeps moving the stronghold. So it is an entrenchment. It is a stronghold. It's a fortress. And he's holding ground.

[7 : 34] You move in. You ever play Risk? Risk, you know, when you play Risk and you conquer that other guy, you've got to get a lot of your stuff in there or he'll come back and take it over. So what the devil does, once you give him a little ground, he kind of takes it over.

It is a fixed set of ideas. A mindset or thoughts that do not agree with Scripture. A stronghold is a place where Satan's thoughts seem to be more believable.

Than God's Word. I'll give you one. Too many of you probably already surrendered. You don't believe in a creation. The second you stop believing in a creation, he moved in, set up a fortress, taught you evolution.

It taught you you descended from an animal. It's not hard to get from being an animal to do anything you want to do. Not hard to make. So all he needs to do is get rid of that.

The Bible says in Ephesians 4, 27, neither give place to the devil. Don't give the guy an inch. Don't let him set up a household in your life. Satan has set up a place of battle where his weapons are held.

[9 : 13] That's what a stronghold is. It's where you put the weapons. It's where you put the weapons. You got to keep a way to get communications and a way to get weapons and a way to get supplies.

So you need these strongholds. In Ephesians 6, 11, the Bible says, Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The wiles of the devil, that's like his tricks, his deception, his tools, his wickedness.

And so what happens is we get beaten because we've allowed the devil to move in. And he's a tricky guy. He's a tricky guy. He's a deceptive guy. And we let him set that up.

And then he gets close enough to throw fiery darts. That's Ephesians 6, 16. He says, Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

So he's close enough. Now he's shooting or throwing darts at you. And we just let him keep moving in. We just keep letting him move in. You know, when Hitler took over Europe, when Hitler took over Europe, he just moved a little ways and set up a stronghold.

[10 : 25] And basically, a lot of the European powers went to Hitler. And they said, if that's as far as you'll go, we'll let you have it. You can go ahead and keep that stronghold if that's where you'll stop.

And he said, oh, you don't have to worry. I'd never take any more. And then he'd take more. And they go, no, wait a minute. You said you weren't going to take more. And he said, well, this is the last time. And the next thing you know, he got to one place where they wouldn't let him build a stronghold.

And that was Great Britain. And they would rather die in the streets than let him take over. And that's where you and I got to get there. Some strongholds been built in our lives to let filth in and let sin in.

And it's running. So it should be in your notes. There's some questions I wish that we could answer. Have you given consent intentionally or passively to sinful lies of Satan in your heart?

The devil really just has to have permission. And you're giving him permission.

[11 : 25] For him to build a stronghold, when he starts trying to build it, a smart guy goes and fights him right there before he gets it built, whoops him and says, build your stronghold on your side. You ain't coming on my side.

But we just passively say, well, it's not that big a deal. Some very famous preachers in America have said creation and the first 11 chapters of Genesis aren't that big a deal.

That means they have passively said, we don't care about God's truth. And the second you question 11 chapters, who's to say about the next 11 chapters?

Who's to say about the next 11 chapters? And so have you given consent? I wish you'd circle that in the notes. Are you letting the devil build strongholds in your life?

Have you given permission for Satan to work in your mind against what scriptures say? Have you given Satan permission to work in your mind? You and I, we, for example, can we be honest?

[12 : 27] When we turn on the internet and go look at a site we're not supposed to look at, when we turn and go to that site, here's what we're saying. I know I shouldn't be here, but I don't mind.

Go ahead and take entrance. Go ahead and do it if you want. Move on in. Take up residence. Set up a castle in my head. Go ahead. And once we say, I don't look at really nasty porn.

I just look at little porn. He's like, that's all I want you to do. But as soon as he gets used to little porn, he says, hey, I got bigger porn. Hey, I'm not covetous.

I just want more. And the devil says, I'm glad. You should never want too much. Just a little more.

Can I build a fortress there? And the next thing you know, he's going to take you right down to where money owns you. Because all he wants is Jesus not to own you. That's why he's building the stronghold.

[13 : 23] In our lives. And what I want to remember is, do you realize he's a liar? And a father of lies. The Bible says in John 8, 44, you are of your father the devil.

And the lust or desires of your father, that's what you'll do. He was a murderer from the beginning. He abode not in the truth. Because there's no truth in him.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own. For he's a liar. And the father of it. Now, I don't want to hang there. I've got a lot more I want to show you.

But you and I need to realize that whatever he's telling us, he's just lying. If his mouth's moving, he's lying. If it sounds good, he's still lying.

If he's even talking Bible talk, he's still lying. In the Bible, we find him getting men killed talking Bible talk. One young prophet was told, you go up one way and you do what I tell you to do.

[14 : 29] And you come back another way. And don't you spend the night with anybody. Don't you eat with anybody. And the young prophets talked to this prophet and tried to talk him into it. He said, oh no. I can never do that. So an old prophet went out.

And the old prophet knew how to talk. And smooth talked to the young preacher. And before the meal was over, he said, you know, he just told me you are going to die. Nice of you.

Thank you very much. Go with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 5. We need to recognize the strongholds. And I want us to recognize them. Why do these strongholds exist?

Where did they come from? Read verse 5 with me. Casting down. And by the way, I'm not doing anything you can't do on your own. I mean, you know what I've done here?

I've just looked up these words. I'm real smart. I know how to use a dictionary. Okay? Read out loud with me. Y'all ready? Let's read this first. Sit right there. Read out loud. Ready?

[15 : 28] Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

How do these strongholds exist? So let me just give you some things before we start going into every word. Not dealing correctly with some things that happened in your past.

Okay. I'm going to really offend you. But here it comes. They say that every homosexual becomes homosexual because somebody sexually abused them when they were a kid. And they have a domineering mother.

That's the two things that homosexuals have said that are Christians. They got right and got out of it and quit. But what happened to you in the past is not the real issue.

And that should be in your notes there. Not dealing correctly with our past. And listen to this. The real issue is how have we dealt with what happened to us.

[16 : 28] It's not what happened to me. It's not what... I'm going to give you plenty of verses. That's why I put it on paper for you to take home. But it's not what happened to you. It's how you dealt with it.

Satan loves just giving you anything as an excuse. Well, I got abused and I can't help it. I don't know why I feel this way. By the way, I've repeated this.

That's like a third time I've said it today. But you got to stop it with the feelings junk. I just don't feel like going to church. Who cares? You don't go because you feel like it.

You go because you're supposed to. I don't want to read my Bible. I don't feel like it. I don't have anything to do with it. Just do what you're supposed to do. I feel like killing you, but I better not. Responding wrongly gives Satan a stronghold.

Responding wrongly to what happened to you in the past. Obeying God always... That's not in your notes. But obeying God always gives you freedom. Obeying God gives freedom.

[17 : 29] Disobeying God makes a slave out of you. We should be ready for letter B, I think. You may have given Satan a stronghold because you listened to the world more than you listened to the Word of God.

Listen to the world. We're born-again believers. We come to church, and at this church, we open the Bible, and we go verse by verse. We look up words. We study it, and we spend time in the Bible.

But then during the week, we make our decisions based on what Wall Street Journal says or based on what Psychology Today says. I had somebody this week ask a question about, should you spank your children?

Because, you know, you're not supposed to anymore. I said, Bible says you are. That's that stronghold you got. Because I knew I was going to teach you. That's the stronghold you built. You built the stronghold that said don't spank your kid.

Because God said spank your kid. And so if God said spank your kid, you don't. You just let a stronghold win. Amen. Amen. Ooh. Shouldn't have said that, huh?

[18 : 30] Your self-love opens doors for Satan to set up a stronghold. I don't think that's in your notes there. Your desire to be accepted by the world will help you set up strongholds.

You know, you get strongholds because you don't like looking weird. Hey, can you go to the lake with me Sunday? No, I got to go to church. I can come later. What are you going to go to church for? You go every week?

Yeah, I go every week. It ain't no big deal if you miss once. Who do you think is talking like that? You really think Jesus is over and said, I don't care if you worship me today. It ain't that big a deal. Just buzz off.

I doubt Jesus talking that way. It ain't that big a deal to look at a woman. As long as you don't have sex with her. I heard a preacher say one time, a preacher from a pulpit, say just because you're on a diet don't mean you can't look at a man you.

So boys, you can look. Just don't touch. I was sitting there going, I don't believe that's biblical. I think Jesus said something different. Let her see.

[19 : 33] Your lack of faith and loving to fear will give Satan a stronghold. Your lack of faith and loving to fear. Okay, I'll just go ahead and make you mad.

Ready? You're too worried about politics right now. You're just too worried about it. You're getting all torn out of the frame. You know who does that to you? The fearful one.

Now, I don't mean you got to like what's going on. I didn't say that. But you ain't got to be afraid. Hey, hey, did you ever think about Daniel? Daniel, when he gets taken as a slave over to Nebuchadnezzar's place, then Nebuchadnezzar said, I'm going to kill every one of y'all.

And Daniel's like, hey, don't be hasty here. I can get you an answer. That's what he says to them. And then Belshazzar, and they finally bring him in. And now with old Darius and Daniel's, Daniel's like, they just keep changing kings.

But Daniel's like, my king ain't changed yet. I can deal with this. I can deal with this. I can deal with another one. There's a whole political lesson in that.

[20 : 44] There really is. There really is. But we won't get into it. I think I'm at letter D.

Refusing to forgive. Now, you might write somewhere in the margin of that paper right there, the forgiven forgive. I know somebody did you wrong when you were three.

And I know while your mother was pregnant, she got scared. And that ruined you for the rest of your life while you was in her womb. Some psychologists told you that is a stronghold.

Honestly, you need to forgive. We forgive because we've been forgiven.

We don't walk around with bitterness. We don't hold grudges. We're not waiting 50 years to get revenge. The forgiven forgive. Read the book of Philemon.

[21 : 47] Boy, Paul really works through that with them. Letter E. We're clearly told what strongholds are. So here we go in the Bible now. I just try to give you a couple of ideas.

I try to give you a couple of ideas. See, these strongholds. I can't forgive my mother for what she did.

I can't forgive my Sunday school teacher for what he did. I can't forgive my high school teacher for what he did. I can't forgive those kids that laughed at me and mocked me my entire childhood.

I can't forgive. And I can't forgive. And I can't forgive. That will set you up for failure. Here's another one that we've gone over. But here, feelings. Worrying about what you feel.

Like, I just feel like that's wrong. Who cares what you feel like? You know, feelings, you won't find in the Bible where if you feel like worship and do it. And you won't find in the Bible if you feel like obey and obey.

[22 : 47] That's not in the Bible. You might hear this. Girl up your loins. Tighten your belt. And go do it. You might hear that. We worship money.

Stronghold. We worship work. Stronghold. We worship sex. Stronghold. But look, if you would, at 2 Corinthians chapter 5. Strongholds are imaginations.

That's what the Bible said. Look at verse 10, chapter 10, verse 5. Casting down imaginations. Now, he said, I want y'all to get rid of the strongholds. Isn't that what he said in verse 4? Brother Brett, could you throw in verse 4 back up again?

Let's look at verse 4. He said, the weapons of our warfare, we'll get to that later, are not carnal, but they're mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Semicolon.

Next verse now. Look at this. And then he says, what I mean is, that's what he's doing here. He said, what I mean is, if you didn't catch it, here it comes. Casting down imaginations.

[23 : 50] Imaginations. Now, I think you're going to find the things you need to write there. Imaginations is nothing more than thoughts, ideas, and arguments. Thoughts, ideas, and arguments.

Go look it up. Look it up in the dictionary. It is reasoning, thinking, reflecting. It is the concept of what is seen.

You know, you see it, but it might not be real, but you see it in your head. It's a concept. You've thought it up. Imaginations are images in the mind. They're warped philosophies.

Warped philosophies. Imaginations. I'll write out Webster's for you in case you want to check. They're a scheme or an unsolid opinion.

Unsolid opinion. Now, let's just talk real quickly what he means by that. Somehow, I've allowed the devil to build in my head, in my mind, and this is real spiritual warfare.

[24 : 58] Real spiritual warfare isn't the microphone not working or the lights going off. That could possibly at some time be spiritual warfare. It's possible. Most of the time, that's really not spiritual warfare.

Spiritual warfare is what's going on right in here. It's what's happening in my head. And so he said, I want you all to throw them strongholds down. I want you to cast down imaginations. And in the verse, he even explains it.

We'll just go a tad further and we'll go back to it. But he says, you know what I mean, don't you? I mean, every high lofty thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. You need to underline that in your Bible.

Anything that would attack what God says is an imagination. It's not real. You might think you say it, but you don't.

It might make sense to you. And you might have reasoned it out and said, I believe it took six billion years. And God's like, you're a dingbat, buddy. I told you what the truth is.

[25 : 57] You're just imagining that. You're just imagining that. And it comes along. You know, I just feel like God wants me to be a woman. And God's like, you're just imagining that, buddy.

I made you one or the other. You're just imagining that. Well, I think God wants me to do something to harm somebody. You just imagine that. What's the word of God say?

You need to underline the knowledge of God. That doesn't just mean knowing about God. It means knowing what God says. You see, I know what God says because I got a copy of it in my hand.

And I'm afraid sometimes without meaning to, we lose the fact that when we say the word of God, we mean those literal words. We mean that this is what God said.

That's why we call it word. The words that God said. The words of God. It's not like, well, we just got this book we put together. We like to call it the word of God. No, it's the words of God.

[26 : 59] Words of God. Strongholds are high things. And high things refers, by the way, you can look this up too. An arrogant posture.

A towering fortress. An arrogant posture. A towering fortress. Everything, every high thing, every high thing.

They built a tower of Babel. A high thing. Try to reach unto God. Well, one guy, Nebuchadnezzar, builds a whole golden statue of himself.

And this morning in my Sunday school class, old Darius gets in trouble because his counselors come to him and say, wouldn't you like to be worshipped as God all month long? And nobody gets to pray to any other guy but you. If he had a brain, he knows who Nebuchadnezzar was.

You don't think the Twitter world was eat up with that back then? Or did they block that? So they knew that story. They knew about the other guy. They know. Hey, when Darius walks in, I mean, he's got Daniel working with him.

[28 : 07] He's got all them other boys working with him. He's working with the last guy. You don't think they said, look, can we brief you, old, new king? The last guy got kicked out of here because he was worshipping cups and bowls.

You better be real careful. The God who puts you in here is a God who don't like it when you worship other stuff. Because he thinks that's an imagination. That's a high thing you've lifted up.

These fortresses. This arrogant posturing stands against the truth of God. This arrogance lifts itself up to stand against God and what he says.

Against the knowledge of God. Now, here's what we know. We know there's two genders. We ain't got to question that.

And he made them male and female. That's what he said he made them. So anything else is just your imagination, honey. Come on. And he made a man to go with a woman.

[29 : 12] Anything else is your imagination. And he made children to get their backsides spanked. And you may not like it, but that's your imagination. You may say, no. Now, today we know better. How do you know better than God?

How do you know better than God? Get mad. But the reason strongholds are being built is because we're saying, I know God said this, but. That's how you build a stronghold. The word but is the start of your new stronghold.

How can we pull down these strongholds? Go to verse 3 with me. 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

We do not fight with human ability. With human abilities. It goes in your blanks there. We don't use human abilities.

You cannot take a course. By the way, this will make you mad at me, but psychologists can't help you. You know what the real problem is? I'm not saying that psychologists don't have some place to play.

[30 : 15] I'm not saying that. I'm not saying medicine doesn't have a place. But you're so quick to go get what some psychologist or some fruitcake reader is going to say to you and tell you when you got the word of God and you're ignoring it.

You don't need to ignore it. And if your kid wakes up one day and says, I just want to be the opposite sex of what I am, you don't need to go get anybody to help you with it. Just read the Bible. Read the Bible to them and teach them.

And help them. Chapter 10, verse 4. We have mighty spiritual weapons. We have mighty spiritual weapons. It says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, not physical, not earthly, not bodily, not fleshy, not what we can do, but they are mighty through God.

You need to stop there and just meditate. You don't have to be smart to know this. When you say mighty through God, you know what you're saying? That God wins battles without human help.

Oh, Hezekiah goes in and he says, God, do you know they burned everybody else's gods, but you are the real God. Don't let them burn us. And God says, I'll whoop them and you won't even have to get out of bow and arrow.

[31 : 27] Go read it. That's mighty through God. I can imagine Hezekiah said, I don't know, y'all get it ready, but God said we didn't have to, but maybe we ought to be ready. I don't know if he did or not. I hope not. But the next morning, 185,000 soldiers were dead.

If you believe the Bible, which I do, 185,000 guys died. Because God said, hey, I'm not talking about how good you can shoot a, I know you can hit a hair's breadth with your left hand.

You can use a sling and hit a hair's breadth at certain distances. I know you're good, but you ain't as good as me. Watch this. All through the Bible, God's always doing that.

He killed more of the hell stones. You know this, God can and will win. Mighty through God. Verse 5.

With these mighty, powerful weapons of God, we cast down imaginations, wrong thoughts, and everything that would take us away from God. We have a way to throw away every bad and wrong thought.

[32 : 29] We bring every thought into obedience of the word of God. We bring every thought into the obedience of the word of God.

I had a young man in my office sometime in the last 45 years. I've been doing this. And he told me he was certain that God had him born with same-sex attraction.

And he said, I need help. That's why I can give you help. He said, what's that mean? I said, he didn't. And I read him the Bible. And I said, now you've got a choice here.

Bring your thoughts into captivity. And say, God owns them. God makes a decision. And what's right is what God says. Or you say something else. Now the next move is your move.

Read the verse. Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. There's a curse word in that verse.

[33 : 30] Obedience. We hate that word. Don't we? Because God didn't say here, if you feel like it, I hope you'll feel like it now that I said that. I don't know what he said. He said, you just obey.

That's what he said. You just obey. By the way, we're going to be so into this that in verse 6, we want to punish. We want to revenge all disobedience.

We want to punish all disobedience. I don't know if that's in your notes. I'm not ready. I don't know where I am in this note. So y'all yell if I left something out. Number five, their believers are overcomers.

I was going to spend a lot of time on that, but I knew I'd run out of time. The Bible says in Revelation 12, 11, and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death.

I have preached that a lot of times because to me, it's like there's a three-step process of being overcomers. They overcome him by the blood of the lamb.

[34 : 36] They realized who they were. They were justified, and they had victory, and they were sanctified, and the blood of Jesus did it. But one thing is that he did it. The next thing was they was willing to say he did it.

Look at the verse. They overcame him by the blood of the lamb, and by the word of their testimony, they were willing to say, yeah, he did. I belonged to Jesus. He changed me, and he made me new, and you could kill me, last part of the verse, but I won't back down.

That's how they overcame him, by the blood of the word, by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives. We're overcomers. We're not whipped. No Christian ought to ever think anything can beat them.

Those three Hebrew children, as we call them, those three Hebrew children said, our God's able to deliver us, but it don't matter if he don't, we still ain't gonna do what you say.

That's that verse right there. They said, he's our God. He saved us. We're not ashamed to tell you that. And by the way, you can kill us, but we ain't changing. Daniel, don't pray.

[35 : 41] Daniel said, look, you ought to pick up on this by now. We don't bend, and we don't bow. We obey God. Our most powerful weapon is the word of God.

Hebrews 4.12. Now, I just love this. I don't know where we are. I'm trying to find it. Letter B. There it is. I see it.

The word of God will expose the very thoughts and the intents of your heart. You know, the Bible, something weird about a Bible. First off, the Bible says it's quick.

Quick means the last part. It's a discerner of the thoughts. Now, how in the world does it do that? The only thing I can say is because it's the word of God. That's what it said in the beginning.

And God can know your thoughts, and God knows what you want to do. And by the way, you know that people that settle on these sins and build these strongholds, they hate the Bible. I don't know if you ever noticed that, but they build that thing of, I don't believe in creation.

[36 : 42] They don't want to accept the Bible. I believe in a lot of genders. They don't want to accept the Bible. I believe in same-sex marriage. They don't want to accept the Bible because it knows what they're really thinking. Knowing the truth will set you free.

John 8, 32. Now, you don't have a Bible open, most likely, but if you did, I wish you'd underline this part. Know the truth. See, it says, you shall know the truth.

The truth won't set you free if you don't know the truth. You've got to know the truth. Now, the truth is Jesus, and the truth is His Word.

So you know the truth, you understand what the Bible says, you do what it says, and it will free you. And John 17, 17 says, Thy Word is truth.

So I'm pretty sure it'll fit there. When you get to the Bible, you've got to have the right attitude if you want victory. And this is honestly, this is probably the central verse in stronghold building.

[37 : 51] 1 Thessalonians 2, 13. The Bible says, For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when you received the Word of God, which you heard of us, you did not hear it as though it was a man talking.

Read it. You received it not as a word of men, but as it is in truth. That's where you've got to hear that. Now listen to these next phrases.

You didn't hear it like Paul talking, you heard it like God talking. You heard it like God talking. And then he says, And it works effectually, effectually worketh in you that believe.

It's amazing what it'll do in a man's life as soon as he believes it and starts letting it work. Quote the Word of God when you hear a lie. Quote the Word of God when you hear a lie.

Now I'm going to read you the verse, but I want you to just pay attention to this. First off, you know this. When Jesus was in spiritual warfare, he quoted scripture. If that doesn't lend some credence to quoting scripture, I don't know what will.

[38 : 57] I mean, Jesus could have just looked at him and said, Look, bud, I'm truth. Get out of here. But the Bible says in Luke 4, 4, And Jesus answered him saying, It's written. Now what's it mean when it says it's written?

He said, You ever read the Old Testament? That's what he was saying. You ever read the Word of God? Verse 8, he said, And Jesus answered them, Get thee behind me. It's written. You got to go with what the Word says.

So let's be honest about some things. There's some lies you believe. You let the devil build these strongholds in you. You say, I've been rejected and I'm unacceptable.

Well, that's a lie. And when the devil comes at you and tells you that, you respond with, He made us accepted in the beloved. Ephesians 1, 6.

And I want you to notice something. I need you to mark this in your Bible so you don't forget it. Maybe one of the most important words in that verse is in. I in.

[39 : 56] He didn't make you acceptable. He made you acceptable in Jesus. You know what makes me acceptable? Because God loves Jesus. And God lets me get in Jesus.

When I get in Jesus, I get all Jesus has got. In the beloved, the Bible says. How about this one? I have failed. I'm a failure. Bible says in Proverbs 24, 16, A just man falls seven times and rises up again.

Psalms 37, 23 says, The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. He delights in his way. And though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down. The Lord upholds him.

You might fall, but God doesn't let go. You might mess up, but God doesn't quit on you. In Lamentations 3, 21, I wish you'd mark this. What bothers me is you won't, but you should.

You should. It's good. It's good. It's God's word. Look at this. I recall to my mind. I like that. I'm sorry. Look at this.

[41 : 01] This I recall to my mind, and that's why I can be hopeful. What's he recalling? Verse 22. Look at it. It's of the Lord's mercies, not the Democrats and the Republicans and the president and the Congress that we are not consumed because his compassions fail not.

One more verse. They are new every morning. Oh, God, you are faithful. Great is the faithfulness. I am weak.

And the temptation is so strong, I just give up. Stronghold. You should have a stronghold alert going. And I've heard that from some of you in this room, so just get mad at me.

I'm weak. I can't help it. 1 Corinthians 10, 13 says that nothing's happening to you that doesn't happen to everybody. So stop it with your whining.

I'm the only one that ever has thought about that. No, you're not. It says right there in the Bible, common to man. Underline that. Common. Common. But I'm going through something nobody ever going through.

[42 : 12] Not according to the word of God. If you think that, you've got a stronghold built. It's common. But God is faithful and he will not suffer, not allow you, he will not allow you to be tempted above that you're able.

So when you get tempted, you always can have a way of escape. You can always have victory. And that's a lie of the devil when you don't think you can win. I just can't help it.

I don't know why I'm genetically made this way. And you go to some stupid psychologist who says, you're right. It's your mama's fault. It's your double great-grandmama's fault.

You know, one day she was plowing corn and something happened and that had messed up the whole genetic line. No, it didn't. Word of God. Tear down the stronghold. Amen. He's make a way of escape so you can bear it.

2 Corinthians 12, verse 9. My grace is sufficient. My strength is made perfect of weakness. He said, man, I'm just happy that the power of God dwells on me.

[43 : 18] So here's some daily steps. I want to give you real quick. I know I'm running out of time. We get everything else done, but I really think this is good. Not because of me, but I'm just reading Bible.

Daily steps to victory. Ready? Keep stepping up. Keep stepping up. Quit stopping. Quit laying there in the ground like you've just been whipped. You fall and you get up.

You fall and you get up. You mess up, you get up. And you stop it with a king. Stop that. Philippians 3, 13. He said, forget those things which are behind.

You're like, I need to lay here and wallow in those things that are behind. But the word of God said, forget those things which are behind. And then he said, reach forth. Don't look back. In 1962, some kids made fun of me and hurt my feelings and I ain't got over it yet.

And Jesus would say, forget it. He doesn't go, I'm so sorry. He says, forget. And reach forth. Get a goal to do something for Jesus.

[44 : 27] Press toward the mark, verse 14, of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So here's the second one. Memorize and meditate on Scripture. I am personally of the opinion that that's one of the most important things you can possibly do.

How do you change the way you think? You meditate. If the Bible is the sword of the Spirit, let's put it in his hand to use in our heart.

He made a comment to the apostles. I didn't write this scripture down. You can look it up later. He made a comment to them. He said, he will bring to remembrance everything I told you. That's pretty neat.

I mean, they just had a reminder walking around with him. So they'd be walking down the road and somebody would say something and one of them would go, I'm remembering what he said. And he don't agree with it.

Huh? But you know what our problem is? We haven't let him talk yet. So he doesn't have a lot to say to us. Holy Spirit would like to talk to you, but you don't read enough Bible. You need to give the Holy Spirit a weapon to fight with.

[45 : 38] You know what his sword is, don't you? You ever read it? Sword of the Spirit. Word of God. Meditate means that you consider what it says and think on it until it becomes a part of you.

You meditate on it, you think on it until it becomes a part of you. I want the Bible to just get where it just is in me. I don't even mean to say it. It just slips out.

By the way, you're past, you're antepasados, forefathers. You know, you and I use a ton of junk that we have no idea that comes out of the Bible except those of us who say the Bible a lot because they got so much Bible in them.

They say, boy, that's the skin of his teeth and you'd be like, well, where'd that come from, Job? There's a ton of those in our, let's fill up on it so bad we can't help it. We'd just be saying something. The best way to say it is just what we got out in the Bible.

Amen. Meditate. If what you've been thinking doesn't line up with scriptures, cast it down. Remember that?

[46 : 39] You got the verse, casting down? Do I need to remind you of that verse? 2 Corinthians 10, verse 5, casting down imaginations.

So whatever you're thinking, you need to say, this is what I think. Now what's the word of God say? Amen. Oh, you don't line up with what the word of God says. Throw you away.

That's hard. You need to compare what you've been thinking with the Bible. I know I, tonight's been a rough night.

I don't, I really don't ever want it to be rough. But I'll just say this to you. You, if you listen to the TV and the newspaper and the radio, if Rush Limbaugh and Neil Bortz and I don't know who else does all that talk at Eric Erickson, they may be good people, but you got a Bible.

You got the word of almighty God. A famous preacher in this area said, don't say the Bible says, say Daniel said. I don't really like that because that seems to act like you think it was a man that said it.

[47 : 51] I just want to go ahead and tell you flat out. It is in the book of Daniel, but God told him to put it in there. It's the word of God. Compare what you've been thinking with the Bible. That requires work because you got to know what the Bible says.

You have to go home and look it up. It also probably requires, you might ought to make a note of this, that you have a conversation with a more mature Christian. You need a conversation with a more mature Christian.

You need to go to a more mature Christian and say, I'm trying to figure out if what I think is right, what's the Bible say about this? Don't ask him what he thinks because he might think too Republican-y or too democratically or too independently.

I want to hear what's God say. Just point me to what God says because I need to pull down some strongholds. You'd like to learn what the Bible says if you're going to compare it.

Start with what God thinks and not what you think. Start with what God thinks and not what you think. Recognize that your thoughts are lifting themselves against God.

[49 : 00] Do you understand that? Could I beg you to please hear me? When you think the Bible's archaic, you just lifted yourself against God and His Word.

Come on. You can get mad if you want to. Well, I just think that women having to submit to their husbands is not a good thing. I don't really care what you think. God said that. But I think in 2021, we can start changing that.

You've got one of them towers being built right now. One of them strongholds coming in your life. In prayer and meditation, consider if what you're thinking it is of what Jesus wants you to think.

Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. I just want to know what Jesus thinks. Number five, and I'll get through. I want to be through in three or four minutes.

I got three pages, but here you come. Having readiness to revenge all disobedience. See, once we get straight, and now listen to me.

[50 : 06] Listen, this is what I think that last verse means. I've pulled down those strongholds and I've gotten victory. But as I walk along, I got to be ready to punch, to take revenge because he's going to come back and try to set up another one.

And I got to be ready for it. Whoa! Don't even start. You ain't laying the first rock. I done been through this with you once. I done been through this with you once.

Get out of here. I don't accept that. That's not what the Word of God says. So you guard your heart and you guard your thoughts. Be looking to bring back wicked thoughts goes in point five.

You know what a wicked thought is? Not a godly thought. Guard your thoughts and heart. Guard. Proverbs 4.23 Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life.

Did you know that everything in your life revolves around what's in your heart? That's good. No, I didn't make that up. See, Jesus said in Luke 6.45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart.

[51 : 12] An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart. Of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks. That's what Luke 6.45 Mark 7.20 says that which comes out of the mouth that defiles for from within out of the heart of men come all that wicked stuff.

All these evil things come from within and defile the man. So set your heart to seek the things of God. The Bible says in Colossians 3.1 If you're saved if you've been risen with Christ then seek those things which are above.

He didn't say I hope you feel like it. He said no, you get up and do it. Seek it. And then he said and set your affection because you are dead. You're already dead.

Every believer in this room is dead. Dead to this world alive to God. Take your trouble to the Lord. Be careful for nothing but with prayer and thanksgiving.

Watch where you look but your eyes. I made a covenant with mine eyes. Why would I look on a woman? Psalm 103 101.3 says I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.

[52 : 23] I hate the work of them that turn aside. We hate that verse because we're like we're not supposed to hate. Yeah, you are. I don't mean to be rude here but if it says it that's it. We don't get to say well I just feel like that's a little harsh.

Stop it with the feeling junk. Just read the book. He said I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. I actually hate the work of them that man knows that turn aside I hate that work and it ain't gonna stick on me buddy.

Last one. Get out of the world's mold. Look at Romans 12.2. Romans 12.2 Be not conformed but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

You know what conformed means? That word conformed is actually just like the word for a jello mole. Do your mama or your wife or your kids ever make jello?

You know you can make angels and you can make stars and you can make anything you want. You know how? Because that stuff will conform to the mole. He said I don't want y'all to be conformed to the mole. I don't want you to do what everybody in your world does.

[53 : 29] Everybody uses this like it's about how you dress and how you talk. That's not what it's about. It's about how you think. Don't think like lost people. Right now.

What's gonna happen in the United States? I don't know. And if I was an American and not a Christian American I'd be like terrified right now.

But here's what I'm like. I don't know what's gonna happen but I'm sure somehow I'm getting through this. And I'm gonna win. I always win. Because I'm in Jesus and Jesus wins. Amen.

Tear down the strongholds. Tear down the strongholds. Father in heaven I love you and I thank you for the opportunity to serve you and to be here and I just pray that tonight your name will be glorified and magnified and I will give you great honor and glory and praise for all that you're doing.

In Jesus name. Amen.