

# Set Free - Pt 3

## Understanding Strongholds and Oppression

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April 26, 2026

### I. Review - Healing the Heart

A. We have been talking about fallow ground of the heart and mentioned that in the fallow ground there are rocks and roots. I think of the rocks as broken places of the heart and the roots as strongholds.

B. There are over 1000 verses in the bible that talk about the heart. Almost all of them refer to the seat of your mind, will, and emotions, not the organ in your chest.

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;*

—Isaiah 61:1

### II. Understanding Strongholds

*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,*

—2 Corinthians 10:3

A. Paul explained that spiritual warfare was principally about displacing arguments and thoughts in people's minds that are in opposition to the knowledge of God, i.e. exalted against who God is.

B. A life of relationship with Jesus is a life of spiritual warfare. As believers we need to settle this and realize that fiery trials are part of the package of serving Jesus.

C. Spiritual warfare sometimes comes through circumstances, overt difficulties, and challenges ( 1Thes 2:18, Rev 2:10, Rev 12:17) but most often spiritual warfare comes through our thought life that ultimately impacts our emotions and mindsets. Spiritual warfare shows up most often in our internal dialogue.

D. Paul described how our weapons are mighty in God to pull down “strongholds” and cast down arguments.

- The enemy tries to gain access and control in a person’s mind through deceptions, chiefly against who God is.
  - Thoughts about God
  - Thoughts about yourself
  - Thoughts about life.
- One of the definitions of “stronghold” is a place where a particular cause or belief is strongly defended or upheld.
- When an individual agrees with the enemy’s lies, they give the enemy access in their mind through a place of belief.
- Strongholds are formed when a person accepts, agrees, and acts upon the thoughts the enemy places in their mind.
- Strongholds in the minds of many people in a region can create a culture that sways a community, city, or nation.
- Strongholds must be dismantled and displaced by truth and the right revelation of the knowledge of God.

### **III. Understanding Oppression**

*THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL*

*TO THE POOR; HE HAS SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET AT LIBERTY THOSE WHO ARE **OPPRESSED**. (opening of prison to those who are bound)*

—Luke 4:18

*how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*

—Act 10:38

A. The word translated “oppressed” in Luke 4:18 can also be translated bruised. A different word is translated “oppressed” in Acts 10:38, it literally means “to hold power over”. So someone who is oppressed is being bruised by the enemy because he holds power over them.

B. Spiritual oppression is demonic affliction that affects a person’s mind, emotions, or body, and is meant to torment them and hinder their freedom.

*Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. 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. 12 But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, ‘Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.’ 13 And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God...16 So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?*

—Luke 13:10-13, 16

*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

—1 John 3:8

## IV. Causes of Spiritual Oppression

A. **Strongholds** – Believing what is not true about God, yourself, your life

B. **Personal Sin** – Unrepented of sin patterns invite demonic oppression

C. **Wounding or Trauma** – Someone who suffers wounding or trauma becomes more vulnerable to demonic oppression

D. **Spiritual attack** – Not rooted in sin or strongholds. Not all oppression is your fault, but it is your responsibility to confront it.

E. It's What I believe (lies), What I allow (sin), What I've been through (wounding), What I'm facing (attack)