

Sermon Series: Mind Revolution – Change Your Life

March 1, 2026

Opening Monologue

“Mind Revolution – Change Your Life!”

We are in week 6, so if you missed any of the previous weeks, head over to this YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch> and catch up on the ones you missed. Each sermon builds off the last in many ways.

Last week’s topic was strongholds, and this week I’m going to give you “Divine Power” (2 Corinthians 10:4) to overcome and break them. As a quick refresher: A stronghold is a stubborn way of thinking—like excuses, proud ideas, fake beliefs, wrong attitudes, pride, fear, doubt, lies, or any mindset that fights against what God says is true. It traps people and stops them from fully obeying and following Jesus.

Wow... think about that! Strongholds trap our minds. Put another way, they keep us in bondage and throw us into confusion over and over again. Friends, we must fight back against the demonic strongholds that take up space in our minds. 2 Corinthians 10:4 says: “For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” Yes! Our Lord has given us divine power tools.

The first step before we can throw the dynamite at our strongholds is humbling ourselves—just like David declared in the Psalms: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“Anxious thoughts” literally mean thoughts that divide the mind. These anxious thoughts in us will most definitely turn into strongholds—unless we take our thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ.

This Sunday we are going to dive into this difficult subject, and I will be offering you biblical power tools to overcome the strongholds and challenges you face. Join us to be encouraged and equipped by God’s Word.

In Christ,

Rev. Brad Standfest

To Listen to this week's Sermon: "Week 6 Mind Revolution- Change Your Life" Go to the Sermon tab here in our APP or use the links to our website or YouTube Channel where you can also listen to our Sermons:

Web: <https://www.almontvineyardchurch.org/media>

You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/@almontvineyardchurch>

Key Sermon Text

Psalm 139:23-24

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm%20139%3A23-24&version=NIV>

1 Thessalonians 5:16-

18 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Thessalonians%205%3A16-18&version=NIV>

Ephesians 6:18

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians%206%3A18&version=NIV>

Jeremiah 23:29

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah%2023%3A29&version=NIV>

Romans 8:11

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208%3A11&version=NIV>

Philippians 4:13

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%204%3A13&version=NIV>

Galatians 2:20

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Galatians%202%3A20%20&version=NIV>

Ezra 8:21-23

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezra%208%3A21-23%20&version=NIV>

Divine Power to Overcome

Strongholds are ruts in the brain—deep grooves created by life that we've come to believe as truths.

Have you ever run into a deep rut in your life?

I don't think there's anything positive about a rut—unless for some odd reason you like being stuck. And that's exactly what ruts do to us: they keep us stuck. Isn't it something that we can stay stuck in a rut for quite a while? To be completely honest, it could be years—or worse, a lifetime. We can get trapped in lifetime ruts, which can terrorize our lives and mind.

I'll never forget a time in our early Christian marriage when money was tight, and we needed a place to live. We moved way off the beaten path, down a dirt road no one in the early '90s wanted to drive on. But the rent was cheap—like, really cheap: the whole house was just \$325 a month. One of the big downsides to living way back in never-never land was that 2½-mile dirt road. No matter where we came in from the main road, it was 2½ miles of dirt.

In the spring, I was driving a Ford Escort—some of you probably don't even know what an Escort is (LOL), but it's a small Ford car that sits really low to the ground. And I got stuck in those mud ruts at least three times. You name it: tow trucks, begging friends to pull us out—what a pain in the neck! To get around those ruts, I had to do two things.

First, I had to get out of the car, assess the situation, and then actually do something about it. Hear that? We must do something about the spiritual ruts—the strongholds—that take up space in our mind.

Second, I had to outsmart the ruts. I literally had to steer strategically down the road, almost like playing a Mario Kart game, dodging and weaving to stay out of them—especially in the spring when the mud was worst. I had to think ahead and move around those grooves on purpose.

In the same way, we must steer our minds toward Christ. We must allow Him to break our strongholds. But as rough as this may sound, we can't just sit in the corner and cry about it. We have to do something. We have to step forward and say, "Enough is enough. I'm not going to live my life like this anymore. I'm going to change and be transformed."

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 says:

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Friends, catch that word and really understand it: We have been given divine power to literally demolish strongholds. Jesus Christ has given us the power to overcome the strongholds in our minds—those ruts that cause us pain, depression, anxiety, fear, worry, doubt, and so on. We must use this power and fight the battle because Jesus Christ has already won the victory!

We have divine power given to us from heaven. Who wouldn't use such a power tool if you had it in your toolbox?

Divine power literally means power, might, ability, strength—supernatural, miraculous power. It's the same Greek word (*dunamis*) that gives us our English word "dynamite." Hmm... if the Lord handed you a stick of dynamite to blow up your strongholds, wouldn't you light that fuse and blow them away?

Those deep mental ruts we've worn in over time aren't permanent. With God's divine power, we can assess them, steer away, and demolish them for good. Let's lean into that power today!
(1, Rev. Standfest)

Humbling Ourselves: The Path to True Freedom and Victory

Humbling ourselves—this seems like a foreign, even weak, concept in much of American culture today. Pride and arrogance fill the air. Everyone seems ready to fight, often hiding behind social media groups, keyboards, or online mobs, ganging up on anyone who dares to express a differing view. There's so much anger and aggression that honest dialogue has become nearly impossible. Disagreement quickly turns into "You're wrong, I'm right," followed by screaming someone down in person or pummeling them online.

Does any of this bring true resolution? Do we see this kind of rage and hostility in the Gospel of Jesus Christ or in the epistles? Absolutely not. The aggression and anger we witness only build strongholds in our minds—fortresses of bitterness, hatred, and negativity that occupy precious space in our hearts and thoughts. Make no mistake: this is not healthy, and it is not the way of the Good News.

Scripture calls us to a different path. In Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV), Paul urges us:
"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Jesus, the eternal God, chose humility over power and pride. He emptied Himself, served, and submitted even to the cross. If we want to tear down the strongholds in our lives—those mental fortresses of lies, sin, and resistance to God's truth—we must first humble ourselves before the Lord. Only then can our hearts and minds stand in right standing with Him.

King David provides another powerful example. He was a man after God's own heart, yet he stumbled gravely—committing adultery and even murder. He carried deep strongholds of sin and guilt. But David didn't rely on his own strength to fix them. Instead, he humbled himself and prayed in Psalm 139:23-24:

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

This humble prayer of surrender opened the door for God to search, reveal, and heal. Once David's heart and mind were realigned with the Lord, he could rise again as the true king—leading Israel into battle, achieving victory, and defeating enemies.

The same principle applies to us. We cannot effectively wage spiritual warfare or pull down strongholds (as described in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, where our weapons have divine power to demolish arguments and take thoughts captive to Christ) if our own hearts are not right. Anger, pride, and bitterness only strengthen the enemy's grip. Trying to solve our strongholds in our own power? Good luck with that—it won't work.

Before we can truly "blow things up" with the divine power God provides—destroying darkness and advancing His kingdom—we must step back, humble ourselves before Him, and let Him search and purify us. Humility isn't weakness; it's the key to strength, freedom, and real victory.

If this resonates with you, take a moment today to pray David's prayer. Let God humble and heal you from the inside out. That's where true change—and true power—begins.
(1, Rev. Standfest)

Commentary, Spiritual Applications, and Theological Reflections

2 Corinthians 10:4-6

Does Paul minister according to the flesh?

For though we walk in the flesh: Paul will admit that he walks according to the flesh in the sense that we all do. He is a flesh and blood human being, and he struggles with the same things the Corinthian Christians struggled with. However, Paul wants to make it clear that he does not war according to the flesh.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal: When Paul fought, his weapons were not material but spiritual, suited for spiritual war.

The carnal weapons Paul refuses were not material weapons such as swords and spears. The carnal weapons he renounced were the manipulative and deceitful ways his opponents used. Paul would not defend his apostolic credentials with carnal weapons others used.

In Ephesians 6, Paul lists the spiritual weapons he used: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. To rely on these weapons took faith in God instead of carnal methods. But truly, these weapons are mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.

The Corinthian Christians tended to rely on and admire carnal weapons for the Christian battle:

- Instead of the belt of truth, they fought with manipulation
- Instead of the breastplate of righteousness, they fought with the image of success
- Instead of the shoes of the gospel, they fought with smooth words
- Instead of the shield of faith, they fought with the perception of power
- Instead of the helmet of salvation, they fought with lording over authority
- Instead of the sword of the Spirit, they fought with human schemes and programs

Jesus relied on spiritual weapons when He fought for our salvation. Philippians 2:6–8 describes this: who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. This kind of victory through humble obedience offended the Corinthian Christians because it seemed so “weak.” The carnal, human way is to overpower, dominate, manipulate, and out-manuever. The spiritual, Jesus way is to humble yourself, die to yourself, and let God show His resurrection power through you.

“Apart from a mighty awakening and revival in the church, we are fighting a losing battle because we are resisting on carnal levels.” (Redpath)

Our spiritual weapons are scorned by the world but feared by demonic powers. When we fight with true spiritual weapons, then no principality or power can stand against us. “As the spittle that comes out of a man’s mouth slayeth serpents, so doth that which proceedeth out of the mouths of God’s faithful ministers quell and kill evil imaginations, carnal reasonings, which are the legion of domestic devils, that hold near intelligence with the old serpent.” (John Trapp)

Pulling down strongholds: Strongholds in this context are wrong thoughts and perceptions, contradicting the true knowledge of God and the nature of God. These strongholds are expressed in arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

This reliance on carnal methods and the habit of carnal thinking is a true stronghold. It stubbornly sets down deep roots in the heart and mind, and it colors all of our actions and thinking. It is hard to let go of the thinking that values the things and ways of this world, but God’s power really can break down these strongholds.

In Paul’s native land of Cilicia, some fifty years before he was born, Roman armies destroyed many rocky fortresses to defeat the pirates who had taken refuge in those strongholds. Perhaps Paul saw the ruins and thought of the battle needed to conquer those fortresses.

Redpath writes of a practical way to battle with spiritual weapons and break down a stronghold: “When the thought comes and the person is reported to have said what he has said, and the unkindness has been passed over to us, and the criticism has been made, whereas carnality would say, ‘Counterattack!’ spirituality recognizes that nothing that any person could ever say about any one is really one hundredth part as bad as the truth if he only knew it. Therefore, we have no reason to counterattack, but one good reason to submit and to forget.”

Praise God, strongholds can be pulled down! Clarke recounts with wonder one stronghold pulled down in history: “In like manner the doctrines of the reformation, mighty through God, pulled down—demolished and brought into captivity, the whole papal system; and instead of obedience to the pope, the pretended vicar of God upon the earth, obedience to Christ, as the sole almighty Head of the Church, was established, particularly in Great Britain, where it continues to prevail. Hallelujah! The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!” (Adam Clarke)

Arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God: Carnal and worldly ways of thinking and doing are arguments against the mind and methods of God. They want to debate God, saying they have a better way. They exalt themselves against the knowledge of God. They think of themselves as smarter, more sophisticated, more effective, more powerful than God’s ways. Carnal, worldly minds think they know more than God does!

We must remind ourselves that Paul speaks to carnal, worldly thinking among Christians. He isn’t talking about the world here but the Corinthian Christians. They were the ones with the strongholds in their minds and hearts. They made the arguments against God’s mind and methods. They held on to every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. We miss it entirely if we think the love of manipulation, the image of success, smooth words, the perception of power, lording over authority, and human schemes and programs are just problems among unbelievers. Paul dealt with this heart and mind in the church.

“For nothing is more opposed to the spiritual wisdom of God than the wisdom of the flesh, and nothing more opposed to His grace than man’s natural ability.” (Calvin)

Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ: To battle against this carnal way of thinking and doing, our thoughts must be brought captive and made obedient to Jesus.

When we start to think in this carnal way, we must stop our thoughts, take dominion over them in Jesus, and not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

(Romans 12:2)

Paul’s first application is towards the carnal, worldly thinking of the Corinthian Christians that made them despise Paul and his “weakness,” doubting his apostolic credentials. But Paul’s principle has a much broader application. We are not helpless victims or recipients of our thoughts. We can choose to stop our thoughts and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Thoughts of lust, thoughts of anger, thoughts of fear, thoughts of greed, bitter thoughts, evil thoughts—they are part of every thought that may be and must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Someone might object: “I don’t want my thoughts to be captive to anyone. I don’t want my thoughts to be captive to Jesus. I want my thoughts to be free.” This is wrong on at least two points. First, you belong to someone, and ultimately we either serve Jesus or Satan. Second, if you are a Christian, you are a purchased possession of Jesus Christ. You belong to Him. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 puts it this way: Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

Strongholds List

Tearing Down Strongholds: Combating the Enemy with God’s Truth

Strongholds are those persistent mental, emotional, and spiritual fortresses—built from lies, sin, and negative patterns—that the enemy uses to keep us bound. They show up as recurring cycles of Fear & Worry, Pride, Bitterness & Anger, Doubt & Unbelief, Lust & Impurity, Envy & Jealousy, and Condemnation & Shame.

This list doesn’t cover every possible stronghold, but these seven categories capture much of what many of us battle. The key point is this: we must combat them with the truth of God’s Word. If we allow these things to make a permanent deposit in our minds, the strongholds will continue to cycle over and over in our lives. None of us wants that. We want freedom—because Jesus Christ came to set us free. As He declared in John 8:36: “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

The good news is that we don’t fight in our own strength. We have divine power through God’s Word to demolish these strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Below are the categories, paired with powerful Scriptures to take authority over them. Where you see yourself struggling, claim these truths, speak them aloud, meditate on them, and pray them into your life. Start your freedom process today!

1. Fear & Worry

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

For the Lord hasn't given us a spirit of fear but of power, love and sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)
God's presence and His Spirit replace fear with strength, love, and a sound mind.

2. Pride

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." (James 4:6)

Pride builds walls; humility invites God's grace and favor.

3. Bitterness & Anger

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (Ephesians 4:31)

These poisons harm us and others—God's command is clear: release them to make room for peace and forgiveness.

4. Doubt & Unbelief

For we live by faith, not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

Faith anchors us when circumstances look impossible—God is with us, guiding and protecting.

5. Lust & Impurity

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality. (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

God's desire is our holiness—He equips us to live purely and honor Him with our bodies.

6. Envy & Jealousy

Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh. (Romans 13:13-14)

Instead of envying others, we clothe ourselves in Christ—His character displaces jealousy.

7. Condemnation & Shame

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

In Christ, shame and condemnation lose their power— we are forgiven, accepted, and loved.

We have to fight... Amen!

We don't have to live defeated. Take this list, identify where strongholds have taken root in your life, and begin declaring the authority of Scripture over them. Speak God's truth daily, pray for His help, and trust Him to tear down what the enemy has built. Freedom is yours in Christ—claim it, live it, and walk in victory!

If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. Let's fight with divine power tools: humility, prayer, and the unchanging Word of God.

(1, Rev. Standfest)

Commentary on Psalm 139:23-24: Humbling Ourselves Before the Lord for Ultimate Victory

Psalm 139:23-24 captures one of the most profound and courageous prayers in Scripture:

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

This closing plea from David shifts the psalm from awe at God’s omniscience and omnipresence to humble surrender. After marveling at how thoroughly God knows him—every thought, action, and path—David doesn’t defend himself or hide. Instead, he invites divine scrutiny. This act of humility is essential for breaking free from the strongholds that sin and negativity build in our minds. You can’t alleviate strongholds—those persistent cycles of fear, pride, bitterness, doubt, lust, envy, condemnation, or shame—while letting them take root unchecked. True freedom and victory come only when we humble ourselves before the Lord, allowing Him to expose and uproot what hinders us.

Insights from David Guzik (Enduring Word Commentary)

David Guzik highlights these verses as “a humble prayer to a great God.” After reflecting on God’s all-knowing and ever-present nature throughout the psalm, David responds with vulnerability: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Guzik notes that this prayer acknowledges human limitations—we often deceive ourselves about our motives or hidden sins. By inviting God to “try” him (like testing metal for impurities), David seeks revelation of any “wicked way” (hurtful, grievous paths) that could lead him astray. The goal isn’t mere exposure but transformation: God leads him into “the way everlasting”—the path of eternal life, holiness, and alignment with God’s purposes. This humility opens the door to correction and guidance, turning self-awareness into victory over inner strongholds. Guzik emphasizes that such a prayer reflects trust in God’s loving character; He searches not to condemn but to restore and direct.

Insights from the Life Application Bible Commentary

The Life Application Study Bible (often drawing from broader evangelical insights) applies these verses practically, urging believers to pray them regularly as a tool for self-examination and growth. It stresses that God’s perfect knowledge peels back layers of self-deception, revealing anxious thoughts rooted in distrust or unconfessed sin. David models humility by asking God to “point out anything in me that offends you” (NLT rendering), recognizing that unchecked offenses build barriers between us and God. The commentary connects this to victory: humbling ourselves invites God’s grace to expose and remove what grieves Him, freeing us from cycles of negativity that dominate our minds. Rather than relying on our flawed self-perception, we surrender to the One who knows us best. This leads to the “path of everlasting life”—a life of freedom, peace, and spiritual strength. The application encourages believers to respond to revealed sin with repentance, trusting God to lead us forward.

Combined Thoughts: Humility as the Path to Tearing Down Strongholds and Achieving Victory
Both Guzik and Life Application sources converge on this: Psalm 139:23-24 is a model of humble

surrender that combats strongholds. Pride, self-justification, or denial only reinforce them—allowing sin and negative patterns to cycle endlessly in our thoughts and behaviors. But when we humble ourselves like David—inviting God to search, test, and reveal—we position ourselves for divine intervention. God doesn't expose to shame us but to heal and redirect. This process dismantles mental fortresses built from lies or unaddressed sin, replacing them with truth, peace, and obedience.

Ultimately, this humility leads to victory. As David experienced restoration after his own failures (e.g., adultery and murder), so can we. By aligning our hearts with God's through this prayer, we gain the clarity and power to walk in freedom. Jesus echoes this truth: "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). Humbling ourselves isn't weakness—it's the gateway to real strength, breaking strongholds and stepping into the everlasting way of life and triumph in Christ.

Pray this boldly today: "Search me, God... and lead me." Watch Him work victory in your life.

Resources: Rev. Brad Standfest, (1) Logos Bible Program: Factbook, Walter A. Elwell and Philip Wesley Comfort, Guzik, David. 2013. Romans. David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible, Barton, Bruce B., David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson. 1992. Romans. Life Application Bible Commentary, Barton, Bruce B., and Philip Wesley Comfort. 1995. The Complaining Cure- Author and Pastor Bill Wahl, Good and Angry- Dr. David Powlison, Stop Your Complaining- Author and Pastor Ronnie Martin. Walton, John H. 2001. Genesis. The Life Application Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, Matthew Henry Commentary, Warren W. Wiersbe Commentary, Barton, Bruce B., and Grant R. Osborne. 1999. 1 & 2 Corinthians. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House. Barton, Bruce B., David Veerman, and Neil S. Wilson. 1992. Romans. Life Application Bible Commentary. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers. David Guzik. 2013. 2 Corinthians. David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible. Santa Barbara, CA: David Guzik.

Sermon Notes:

Week 6: Mind Revolution – Change Your Life

Good morning and happy Sunday to everyone! It's so good to be in the house of the Lord with you all this morning.

Welcome to our AVC family joining us online—we're glad you're here with us.

We're in our sermon series titled Mind Revolution: Change Your Life. If you've missed any of the previous messages, you can catch up on the AVC Connections: YouTube, the app, Facebook, or our website.

[Let's pray.]

Last week, we talked about strongholds, and this week I want to go deeper into this subject so we can fight back as Christians and overcome them.

As a refresher, here's what a stronghold is (we shared a deeper scholarly definition last week): A stronghold is a stubborn way of thinking—like excuses, proud ideas, false beliefs, wrong attitudes,

pride, fear, doubt, lies, or any mindset that fights against what God says is true. It traps people and stops them from fully obeying and following Jesus.

Last week, I defined strongholds as ruts in the brain—deep grooves created by lies we have come to believe as truth.

Speaking of ruts... When Meg and I were in the beginning stages of raising a family, money was tight. We rented an old farmhouse that was literally 2.5 miles down a dirt road—Never Never Land; no one wanted it.

I was driving an old Escort back then. I remember getting literally stuck in those ruts three times. Two things

I had to do:

1. Get out of my car and do something about it—get unstuck.

2. Outsmart the ruts and literally steer down the road like playing Mario Kart.

In the same way, we must steer our minds toward Christ. We must allow Him to break our strongholds. Friends, we have to fight back against the demonic strongholds that take up space in our minds.

Today, I want to talk about how we fight back through the power of Christ to gain victory. Let's turn in our Bibles—buckle up, we have a lot of Scripture today.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5:

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

Look—we have been given divine power from heaven. (Guess what? I'm going to use it!)

Divine Power means power, might, ability, strength—supernatural, miraculous power. Dynamite power in English—from God or made powerful through God.

Now we're all ready to blow things up, right? You will...but before we're equipped to blow things up, we have to humble ourselves before the Lord.

Turn in your Bibles to Psalm 139:23-24:

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”

David had some strongholds— “anxious thoughts” literally mean thoughts that divide the mind. These divided thoughts are strongholds.

I've taken a big list of biblical strongholds that can plague us and narrowed them down into seven categories.

Let's break them down:

Fear & Worry

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” — Isaiah 41:10

“For the Lord hasn’t given us a spirit of fear but of power, love and sound mind.” — 2 Timothy 1:7

Pride

“But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’” — James 4:

Bitterness & Anger

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.” — Ephesians 4:31

Doubt & Unbelief

“For we live by faith, not by sight.” — 2 Corinthians 5:7

“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” — Psalm 23:4

Lust & Impurity

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality.” — 1 Thessalonians 4:3

Envy & Jealousy

“Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.” — Romans 13:13-14

Condemnation & Shame

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” — Romans 8:1

We have to fight! Amen!

I want to conclude fighting strongholds by giving you five divine power tools you must use:

Divine Weapons to Break Strongholds

1. Prayer

“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” — Ephesians 6:18

2. God's Word

"Is not my word like fire," declares the Lord, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" — Jeremiah 23:29

Scripture memorization.

3. The Power of the Holy Spirit

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you." — Romans 8:11

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." — 1 Corinthians 12:7

4. The Power of Jesus Christ

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." — Philippians 4:13

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." — Galatians 2:20

5. Fasting & Prayer

"When we fasted and prayed to God about this... he answered our prayer" Ezra 8:21-23
— Ezra 8:21-23

Praise be to God, my friends—He has given us divine power!

Let's stand and close in prayer, committing to use these weapons to demolish every stronghold in Jesus' name. Amen.

Devotional Questions

1. Humility & Self-Examination (Psalm 139:23-24)

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

What "anxious thoughts" (divided mind) or hidden offenses might God reveal if you boldly pray this today? How can inviting His search humble you and open the door to demolishing a specific stronghold before using divine power?

2. Divine Power & Taking Thoughts Captive (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Identify one recurring thought or "argument" in your mind that exalts itself against God's truth (e.g., a lie you've believed as truth). How will you actively take it captive today using divine power instead of worldly coping?

3. Fear & Worry (Isaiah 41:10; 2 Timothy 1:7)

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” / “For the Lord hasn’t given us a spirit of fear but of power, of love and a sound mind.”

Where has fear or worry created a rut in your brain? How can declaring these truths daily, combined with continual prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18), replace timidity with God’s power, love, and sound mind?

4. Pride (James 4:6)

“But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’”

In what areas of life (relationships, achievements, opinions) does pride build a fortress against humility? How might humbling yourself before God—perhaps through fasting & prayer (Ezra 8:21-23)—invite His grace to demolish it?

5. Bitterness & Anger (Ephesians 4:31)

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

What unresolved bitterness or anger occupies space in your mind? Reflect on how meditating on God’s Word like a hammer (Jeremiah 23:29) and praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) can break this cycle and free you to forgive.

6. Doubt & Unbelief (2 Corinthians 5:7; Psalm 23:4)

“For we live by faith, not by sight.” / “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Where do doubt or unbelief cause you to live by sight rather than faith? How can relying on the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus (Romans 8:11) strengthen your trust and pull down these mental strongholds?

7. Lust & Impurity (1 Thessalonians 4:3)

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality.”

What patterns of lust or impurity persist as a rut? Challenge yourself: How will you clothe yourself with Christ (Romans 13:13-14) and use the power of Jesus in you (Philippians 4:13; Galatians 2:20) to pursue holiness today?

8. Envy & Jealousy (Romans 13:13-14)

“Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

How does envy or jealousy divide your mind and build resentment? Press forward by memorizing and declaring Scripture—how can focusing on Christ’s life in you displace these desires?

9. Condemnation & Shame (Romans 8:1)

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Where does shame or self-condemnation trap you in defeat? Reflect: How does knowing Christ lives in you (Galatians 2:20) and the Spirit's power (Romans 8:11) demolish this stronghold, freeing you to walk without guilt?

10. Overall Victory & Commitment (Combining the Divine Weapons)

Looking at the five tools—prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; Ephesians 6:18), God's Word (Jeremiah 23:29), Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11), power of Christ (Philippians 4:13; Galatians 2:20), and fasting & prayer (Ezra 8:21-23)—which one will you prioritize this week to fight a specific stronghold?

Commit to using it daily, trusting God's dynamite power to bring lasting freedom. How will you celebrate small victories as you steer your mind toward Christ?