

Break the Strongholds of your Mind

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What Sin is in your life do you have trouble overcoming? Many Christians have trouble overcoming certain things in their life. Even though one is converted, the consequences of their formal sinful life live on and a struggle continues within the Christian. But can a Christian overcome?

The Apostle Paul acknowledged sin and struggles with sin in his own life when he said, "*For that which I do, I know not. For what I desire, that I do not do; but what I hate, that I do.*"

"If then I do that which I do not desire, I consent to the law that *it is good.*"

"But now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing. For to will is present with me, but *how to perform that which is good I do not find.*"

"*For I do not do the good that I desire; but the evil which I do not will, that I do.*"

"But if I do what I do not desire, *it is* no more I working it out, but sin dwelling in me.

"I find then a law: when I will to do the right, evil is present with me.

"*For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man;*"

"*but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin being in my members.*"

"O wretched man *that I am!* Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then *with the mind I myself serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*" (Modern King James Version, Rom 7:15-25). The two natures that the Christian deals with inside of him or her is a struggle every day. It is a life of overcoming your carnal sinful desires verses your converted mind that obeys and serves God.

Jesus said, "the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. " (Matthew 26:41). That fleshly human nature, our old habits creep back up and cannot resist falling into temptation. Is there a reason for this? Is there a way to overcome?

The Clean out your Mind

Christians when they are converted, the Holy Spirit dwells in them, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:" (Rom 8:16). But before this, there are steps taken that brings a Christian to this point.

Notice the steps one makes *after* one is called by God, "Break up your fallow ground...Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart..." (Jer 4:3, 4; see also Hosea 10:12). God likened a person's heart as "fallow ground." This means, "...this is ground that lies untilled, not ploughed, nor sown, on which nothing grows but the produce of nature, as weeds, thorns, briars, &c. is common to men and beasts, and is trodden upon, *and, so is hard and unsusceptible of seed;* which, if it accidentally falls upon it, makes no impression on it, and is not received by it;... *and so are hardened and obdurate, as hard as a stone, yea, harder than the nether millstone; and who, though they may occasionally be under the word, it makes no impression on them; it has no place in them...*" (Gills Commentary, emphasis added). The ground of man's mind is hard-hard heartedness that the seed, which is the word of God cannot penetrate because man is so set in his ways *he will not let it penetrate.*

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But God says to break it up! To plow and cultivate your mind, and to cleanse it of all the refuse that you have learned throughout your life so it is prepared to receive the word of God-*you* must break it up, *you* have to be willing!

During this conversion stage one begins to prove things to him or herself, and learns that everything that he or she was taught in their life was in error. Cleaning out the errors of religion, and faith. Errors of evolution and Darwinism. Errors in his or her lifestyle choices. This is part of the "repentance!" stage. God says, "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; *Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations...* Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions;* so iniquity shall not be your ruin." (Ezekiel 14:6; 18:30).

In Acts 8:22 it says, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness..."

Again, Acts 26:20, "...repent and *turn to God*, and do *works* meet for repentance." Repentance is basically to stop going your way and start going God's way which is his law-cleaning up one's life and that all begins in the mind. Without the mind there are no actions. "For as he *thinketh* in his heart [Biblical language for the mind], so *is* he" (Prov 23:7).

Paul also adds, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made *sorry*, but that ye *sorrowed to repentance*: for ye were made *sorry after a godly manner*, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. "For *godly sorrow worketh repentance* to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Corinth 7:9-10). Repentance is also done by "godly sorrow" of being sorry for all of the things that one has done in one's life (see Job 42:6); when one comes to the realization that they were wrong, after all the investigation one has done, and to make that change to keep the law of God (see Psalm 19:7).

Once this is done, the fallow ground is soft and ready to absorb the seed, which is "the word of God" (Luke 8:11). In the repentant stage one uses the word of God to prove if there is a God. To prove to oneself if the word of God is true. The word of God is used as a tool for repentance, the *plow* if you will, to break up the fallow ground; *but* the word of God is *not* in the person as of yet. The ground must be prepared *first* to receive it-that's repentance. Then comes baptism and then the receiving the Holy Spirit.

Peter said, "...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38). Repentance first, then baptism, and then by "laying on" of hands the Holy Spirit is given (see Acts 8:17; 19:6). This is when the seed, the word of God dwells *inside* of the Christian. In the repentant stage, a person takes action, and does what God says, preparing the ground of their mind to *receive* the word of God. The word of God is *not* dwelling in them as of yet, it has not taken root, this begins at the receiving of the Holy Spirit *after* the ground is prepared.

Why is it that Stephen said to the people, "Ye stiffnecked and *uncircumcised* in *heart* and ears, ye do always *resist the Holy Ghost*: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye." (Acts 7:51). Their hearts were hard, that the word of God could not penetrate *because they did not want it to penetrate*.

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Begotten by the Holy Spirit

Christians are begotten by God, *not* yet born. When one receives the spirit, the Spirit carries with it, the word of God, the seed. James wrote, "Of his own will *begat he us* with the *word of truth*, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:18). We are "begotten" by the "word of truth." This is done at the receiving of the Holy Spirit.

Peter adds, "Being born ["begotten" Grk. "anagennaō" Strong's #313] again, not of corruptible seed [by man's words], but of incorruptible, *by the word of God*, [through the Holy Spirit] which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter 1:23)

The Holy Spirit dwells inside of the Christian and when this happens the word of God is planted in our hearts, or our minds, "...because the love of God [1 John 5:3 God's commandments] is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*." (Romans 5:5). God's law is written on our hearts, the word of God-the seed (see also 2 Corinth 3:3).

The Apostle John wrote, "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that *doeth righteousness* is born ["begotten" Grk. *gennaō* see Strong's #1080] of him." (1 John 2:29). Righteousness is keeping the law of God (Psalm 119:172), which is the word of God (see Num 15:31). The law of God is evidence that a Christian has the Holy Spirit. Paul said, "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is *not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed can be." (Rom 8:7). There is a missing component that allows man to obey God, and that is the Holy Spirit that writes his law on our hearts. Paul says, "That the *righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, *but after the Spirit*." "For they that are after the flesh do mind the *things* of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the *things* [God's Law] of the Spirit." (Rom 8:4-5)

This begettal stage happens *after* baptism. When a baptized member of the church of God lays hands on the repentant person, then, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with *our spirit*, that we are the children of God:" (Rom 8:16), and we belong to Jesus (see Rom 8:9). The seed, the word of God is planted in the Christians mind "our spirit" and we become begotten children of God.

Then a Christian must "...grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18). This spiritual growth is crucial to the Christian to produce the "fruits of righteousness" (Phil 1:11; see also 2 Corinth 9:10). That "they might be *called trees of righteousness*, the *planting* of the LORD, that he might be glorified." (Isa 61:3). In our full glory being "Born again" at the resurrection we become the "trees of Righteousness" where all nations can eat from and be healed (v.4). At this time Christians, "... shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God:" (Isa 61:6; see Rev 5:10).

Consequences of Sin Live On

The sinner has been called out of this world and has been saved from his sins by Jesus Christ and his blood cleanses us from all of our sins-but the consequences of sin live on! We partook of this worlds sins, and therefore its effects are still present within us. Just like every plowed ground in a farm; *has every piece of refuse been removed?* Are there not lingering pieces of weeds and

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sticks still present when the seed is planted? Old habits begin to creep back in; *but* this time God is dwelling *within* you by the Holy Spirit (see 1 John 3:24; 4:13). John wrote, "If *we* say that *we* have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8). John was including himself, *present* tense. We still live in the flesh, and our carnal human natures are still present with us, but now the Holy Spirit is dwelling in our carnal minds working in us to create a new man, holy and acceptable to God.

But old habits come back because we are still in the flesh, and as noted the Apostle Paul says there is a battle going on inside of the Christian of the carnal nature and the "divine nature" that is in us (see 2 Peter 1:4). *But*, we have this, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9). There is a difference between a worldly sinner who thinks nothing is wrong with what he or she does, and an overcoming sinner, who recognizes his or her actions, knows it is a sin, and repents of it and asks for forgiveness, "Therefore to him that *knoweth* to do good, and *doeth it not*, to him it is sin." (James 4:17).

With this now, habits begin to become broken, and a new man and new nature begins to form to produce the "fruits of righteousness." Paul said, "That ye put off concerning the *former conversation the old man*, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; *"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*
"And that ye put on the *new man*, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another." (Eph 4:22-25). Paul says to "put off" the former man. Old habits can be broken, by putting off, or as Jesus said, "And if thy right hand offend thee, *cut it off*, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell." (Matthew 5:30). Jesus is speaking metaphorical and not literal of course-He says to "cut it off." Should we continued to feed your old habits? If you continually feed the fire, the fire will grow and burn brightly until it consumes you and lead you to sin.

James writes, "But every man is tempted, *when he is drawn away of his own lust*, and *enticed*. "Then when lust hath conceived, it *bringeth forth sin*: and sin, when it is finished, *bringeth forth death*." (James 1:14-15). Stop feeding the fire! If you starve it, it will eventually go out, and the old man eventually will die. Paul says, giving the analogy of Baptism, of *crucifying* the old man putting him to death, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom 6:6). This old man, must remain dead, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves *to be dead indeed unto sin*, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (v.11). We must not let sin "revive" in our bodies and become slaves to it; we are "free" in Christ, free from sin (see Rom 6:13-22; Rom 7:9).

Renewing your Mind

It is interesting that the Apostle Paul said, "*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*" Today scientist speak of a "brain reboot" when it comes to overcoming certain things like pornography. Like wiping clean the hard drive of your computer, we now know the brain is "plastic" and flexible, and able to reorganize itself. Research has shown that the brain is able to remodel its connections and grow larger, according to the specific areas that are most frequently utilized.

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Commenting on brain plasticity, Shepherd noted: "The inability to generate new neurons might imply that the adult nervous system is a static, 'hard-wired' machine. This is far from the truth. Although new neurons cannot be generated, each neuron retains the ability to form new processes and new synaptic connections" (Shepherd, Gordon M. (1994) *Neurobiology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), third edition). Interestingly, since Shepherd's textbook was published, additional research has even documented the ability of neurons to be generated within certain areas of the brain. The changes observed by researchers indicate that if the brain were represented by a home electrical system, then many of the wires within the walls would be pulled out, rewired to different connections in different rooms, new outlets would appear, and some would even carry different voltages. Due to the colossal connectivity that takes place within the brain, any "rewiring" is, by its very nature, going to have an effect on several areas.

Gary Wilson wrote a book called "Your Brain on Porn," and speaks of a "brain reboot." To literally reboot your brain, so it can be rewired back to a clean slate, so one can function correctly once again. Yet the Bible spoke thousands of years ago to, "*be renewed in the spirit of your mind*;" The old ways are gone and the new and right way for your mind to function is implemented by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit with God's ways in us, his law, the right way to live life, rewired back to its original state.

The Battle for your Mind

There is a spiritual battle going on right now in this world. Satan the Devil is the enemy of the followers of Christ, and "...your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" (1 Peter 5:8). But Satan the devil does not just attack you with persecution and war. He primarily attacks God's people *through the mind* (see 2 Corinth 11:3).

Notice what the Apostle Paul said after he spoke of putting off the old man and putting on the new man, he said, "Neither *give place* to the devil." (Eph 4:27). Clarke's Commentary on this verse says, "Your adversary will strive *to influence your mind*, and irritate your spirit; watch and pray that *he may not get any place in you*, or ascendancy over you." (emphasis added). Giving a place for the Devil in your mind and allowing him to infiltrate your mind and setting up *strongholds* can allow for further damage to occur. But God has given us the weapons to battle against him.

The devil tries to influence the Christian, to *devour* the Christian and bring him or her back into *his* society and world, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against *the wiles of the devil*.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*." (Eph 6:10-12).

The Apostle Paul uses language like getting ready for war, but this is spiritual war. The "wiles" of the devil are his battle plans to conquer the Christian.

The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary calls the "wiles" of the Devil, "literally, '*schemes sought out*' for deceiving" (emphasis theirs).

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Barnes's says of his schemes or methods, "The word rendered 'wiles' (μεθοδεΐα *methodeia*), means properly that which is traced out with 'method;' that which is 'methodized;' and then that which is well laid - art, skill, cunning. It occurs in the New Testament only in Eph 4:14, and in this place. It is appropriately rendered here as 'wiles,' meaning cunning devices, arts, attempts to delude and destroy us. The wiles 'of the devil' are the *various arts and stratagems* which he employs to drag souls down to perdition. We can more easily encounter open force than we can cunning; and we need the weapons of Christian armor to meet the attempts to draw us into a snare, as much as to meet open force. The idea here is, that Satan does not carry on an open warfare. He does not meet the Christian soldier face to face. *He advances covertly; makes his approaches in darkness; employs cunning rather than power*, and seeks rather to delude and betray than to vanquish by mere force. Hence, the necessity of being constantly armed to meet him whenever the attack is made. A man who has to contend with a visible enemy, may feel safe if he only prepares to meet him in the open field. But far different is the case if the enemy is invisible; if he steals upon us slyly and stealthily; if he practices war only by ambushes and by surprises. Such is the foe that we have to contend with - and almost all the Christian struggle is a warfare against stratagems and wiles. Satan does not openly appear. He approaches us not in repulsive forms, but comes to recommend some plausible doctrine, to lay before us some temptation that shall not immediately repel us. He presents the world in an alluring aspect; invites us to pleasures that seem to be harmless, and leads us in indulgence until we have gone so far that we cannot retreat." (emphasis added)

The Apostle Paul calls attention to his weapons, "the *fiery darts* of the wicked [one]." (Eph 6:16).

These fiery darts are, "It is probable that the apostle alludes to the darts called *falarica*, which were headed with lead, in or about which some combustible stuff was placed that took fire in the passage of the arrow through the air, and often burnt up the enemy's engines, ships, etc.; they were calculated also to stick in the shields and set them on fire." (Clarke's Commentary).

This source goes on to say, "The fiery darts of the wicked, του πονηρου, or devil, are *evil thoughts, and strong injections*, as they are termed, which in the *unregenerate inflame the passions, and excite the soul to acts of transgression*" (ibid).

Gill adds, "And they may be said to be 'fiery,' because they serve to *inflame the mind, and excite to sin, as lust, anger, revenge*, and the like; and were they not repelled..."

Robertson's Word Pictures says, "He is a crafty foe and knows the *weak spots* in the Christian's armour." These schemes, methods and weapons are *used through the mind* to find weakness in a person's armor. This is why we must "put on the **whole** armour of God" not just *part* of it. If you just use parts and not the whole, weakness is exposed and we give place for the devil. That "place" is from *within* your mind. In that "place" he will set up is a "stronghold" in your mind.

The Apostle Paul spoke of "Strongholds" (2 Corinth 10:4) in our minds. The Stronghold definition is, " Greek, '*Ochurōma* is old word, common in the Apocrypha, from ochuroō, to *fortify*, and that from ochuros (from echō, to hold fast). Nowhere else in N.T." (Robertson's Word Pictures, emphasis mine and theirs).

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***What are the Strongholds of your mind?
What obstacles continue to lay in your
mind that opposes the will of God?
Once recognized, the weapons God has
given the Christian can conquer it and
destroy it.***

This source also says it "Carries on the military metaphor" (ibid). A stronghold is a military fortified structure which is able to resist enemy forces. An army invading enemy territory needs to take down the strongholds to hold the land. If strongholds remain, they will become a *continual threat* to the army and citizens in the land.

The devil by his weapons of lies and deceptions can take root to set up a stronghold in your mind and be a *continual threat* to your spiritual growth. Watching pornography gives "a place" for the devil, allowing him to set up that stronghold in your mind, and he will defend it by the *fiery darts* of temptation. Tempting someone *continually* until it becomes a constant habit, and the stronghold grows stronger; sinful thinking and wrong desires can *dominate* a person's mind hence the stronghold.

With this stronghold in place and Satan's dominating influence in this stronghold, Satan will be able to create great temptations and cravings (schemes and darts) *within* this person that will seem near impossible to resist to bait this person to sin more. And it will be Satan's hope and goal in this stronghold that this person will escalate themselves in this sin. Increase their involvement and increase the intensity of the sins they commit.

The following are two definitions of strongholds as viewed by Bible Scholars:

"An entrenched pattern of thought, an ideology, value or behavior that is contrary to the word and will of God."

"A mind-set impregnated with hopelessness that causes us to accept as unchangeable, situations that we know are contrary to the will of God."

The process of a Stronghold starts when *we give place* to the devil, or let him get a foothold on us.

In doing this we give an open door, then the enemy begins to attack our mind, if we do not resist, and yield to the enticement, then we are moving in the direction of our adversary, he then wins

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the battle that started in the mind, by getting us to yield to the temptations at hand. Now the foothold will become a stronghold.

The sequence of how these strongholds develop in an individual is as follows:

1. Satanic-inspired *thoughts* are introduced into the person's mind-*a foothold*
2. The individual *entertains* these thoughts, which bring out *emotions*
3. Giving in to these emotions eventually leads the person to take some sort of *action-giving place to the Devil*.
4. Continual participation in the action causes the individual to develop a *habit.-foundation is set*
5. As the habit develops, a *stronghold* is built.

Satan starts building *different types of strongholds* starting with a foundation of lies, and deceits:

On this foundation, he builds brick by brick: vain philosophies, erroneous interpretations of Scripture, inaccurate ideas about God, and distorted perceptions of how God sees us and feels about us when we sin. Held together by the mortar of mistaken reasoning, the walls rise higher and higher. Soon lofty towers of stubborn pride and vain imaginations loom above the shadows.

One type of stronghold is where a Christian see his or herself *incorrectly*:

People who suffer from this have a hard time seeing the new person that they are now in Christ Jesus, and often suffer from low self-esteem. They don't understand what Christ did for them, and how it applies to their own life. Common symptoms of this stronghold are guilt feelings (questioning if you've really been forgiven of your sins, low spiritual esteem, they feel like sinners, not saints), they lack spiritual confidence that we are supposed to have in Christ Jesus, they may still struggle with sin (Jesus said that if you keep in His Word, which tears down strongholds, you will be free from the power sin has over you, John 8:31-32, 34-37), and overall you don't feel "worthy" spiritually and lack the joy of the Lord in your life.

But the Apostle Paul says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

"And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." (2 Corinth 10:3-6). We are in a spiritual warfare, and not after the flesh. These strongholds are against the knowledge of God, false imaginations, doctrines, actions and disobedience that are pulled down and conquered with the weapons of God.

What are those weapons?

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

*"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with **truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**;*

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"And your feet shod with the *preparation of the gospel of peace*;

"Above all, taking the *shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all *the fiery darts of the wicked*.

"And take the *helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*:

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" (Eph 6:13-18).

Our weapons are:

1. Truth
2. Righteousness
3. Gospel of Peace
4. Faith
5. Salvation
6. Sword of the Spirit-the word of God.

Truth-Strongholds are birthed and dwell in deception (which are lies and false beliefs), so naturally the cure is to bring the truth in God's Word on the scene. You debunk the lies of the enemy, with the truth, which is in the Word of God! The Bible says that our weapons are mighty for the tearing down of strongholds (2 Corinth 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."). What is our primary offensive weapon? The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph 6:17, "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."). Truth dispels deception and lies, and therefore the more truth you bring into a situation, the more the darkness must flee. This is where it's important to grow in God's Word, is because it is your primary weapon for tearing down the strongholds of deception that the enemy has been feeding you.

In John 8:31-36, Jesus tells us that we can be held in bondage due to strongholds in our lives. And His solution was to, "continue in my word... and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (v. 32-32) Strongholds are torn down as we meditate on God's Word, which is truth!

James said, " Submit yourselves therefore to God. *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.* "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*" (4:7-8). Be grounded in the truth without doubt, or else you become a "double minded" Christian. This gives place for the devil to build a stronghold of doubt inside you. Draw near to God by obeying him keep the covenant relationship with him and he will draw near to you and the devil will flee because one is grounded in truth this is how the battle is won.

Righteousness-What is righteousness? "for all thy commandments *are* righteousness." (Psalm 119:172). Satan tries to tempt you with pictures and movies, deceiving you into thinking this is "ok." The more one gets used to it, the more callous one becomes, and it is accepted. But with God's righteousness, his standards of morality, Satan's ways and standards are not tolerated. All one has to do is examine the "fruits" that are produced; one produces death, the other life. God

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says to "prove all things" (1 Thess 5:21). The proof reveals who is right and who is wrong, God's law breaks down these strongholds.

The Gospel-The idea here is, the mind is to be steadied, kept from fear and flutter, by means of the *good news of peace* the good news that *we are at peace with God*; and "if God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31), "And let the peace of God *rule* in your hearts," (Col 3:15). God peace "rules" in the mind of a Christian, therefore another stronghold of fears and worries are conquered.

Faith-If the Christian stays in his faith, and not waver from the truth, that whatever is thrown at us by the Devil will be absorbed by the "shield of faith," and we will be protected because we keep the shield in the right place *guarding the door of our minds*. Guarding that door will prevent any strongholds from being set up in the first place.

Salvation- The well-founded hope of salvation will preserve us in the day of spiritual conflict, and will guard us from the blows which an enemy would strike. The helmet defended the head, a vital part; and so the hope of salvation will defend the soul, and keep it from the blows of the enemy. A soldier would not fight well without a hope of victory. A Christian could not contend with his foes, without the hope of final salvation; hope of salvation by Christ is a defense of the head against false doctrines; for the helmet is a piece of armour for the head; and it is an erector of the head in times of difficulty, affliction, and distress; and it covers the head in the day of battle, when engaged with Satan, the enemy of souls: Today we must remember that God-Jesus Christ is our Savior and to trust and have hope in him to save us and not a man, or an organization can save us (see John 10:27-29).

Sword of the Spirit- This applies to us, and teaches us to use it both defensively and offensively. The Spirit conquers through the Christians soldier which is the word of God. Thus Peter conquered on Pentecost, and Paul in his labors. Thus always and everywhere (Isa 55:11). The Christian soldier filled with the Spirit must "preach the word." (See Heb 4:12), this will convert people and they become convicted.

Defensively, the word of God can spot deceits and lies that are perpetuated by Satan the devil in the world and in one's mind so strongholds are cast down or prevented to be set up, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

And lastly we must pray! " Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" (Eph 6:18). Our prayer life is vital to stay in contact with God, and pray for strength and protection.

God has equipped us with weapons that can lead to a fruitful abundant life to conquer our fears and sinful habits and to expose the lies and the deceits of the enemy. Put on the *whole* armour of God, and be victorious!