

Deliverance Minister: How You Can Root Out Strongholds From Your Life

Though I make a point in my ministry of ensuring that believers are aware of the very real battle we are in against the enemy of our souls, the devil, and encouraging them to take authority over him in their lives, I also stress the fact that they must be right with God in order to battle successfully.

Why? Because engaging in spiritual warfare puts us in a very vulnerable position if there is anything in us that can open us up to the devil's attacks. For this reason it is crucial for us to root out any strongholds that may be keeping us in bondage.

Four of the most common strongholds are pride, offense, rejection and control. The difficulty we face in dealing with them is that we often don't realize we have them. People in bondage typically don't know they are in bondage.

- Pride prevents us from seeing we are in bondage.
- Offense thinks everyone else is wrong.
- Rejection is a hidden stronghold.
- No one ever wants to admit they have control issues.

Therefore, instead of being released from these strongholds, we stay in bondage to them.

I was bound in pride and control for years. I did not see it, but my husband would tell me. I knew I had a level of control and pride—everybody does—but I didn't realize how bad it was. The overseer to my ministry would tell me I had pride and

control. I would continually deny it. Finally, one day, I saw it. I was shocked by how blinding it was. I was even more shocked that I had never seen the bondage I carried, even though I was a deliverance minister who had helped thousands of other people get free.

There are many strongholds by which we can be afflicted. Though it is important to address each one, the four strongholds I mentioned are ones I strongly suggest you root out of your life before engaging in spiritual warfare.

Identify and Nullify Four Strongholds

- 1. Offense:** The spirit of offense begins with unforgiveness. A person perceives they have been mistreated in a situation and is hurt. The person gets upset and feels they are entitled to justification, retribution or an apology. But “‘vengeance is Mine. I will repay,’ says the Lord” (Rom. 12:19). It is our responsibility to release forgiveness, not hold people accountable for their actions or desire penance. When an injustice occurs, the desire for reckoning begins to build a stronghold within our souls. Unforgiveness, when not released and walked through, leads to a strongman of offense. Once offense grows, the person begins to think everyone else is wrong and they are always right. Pride accompanies offense, forming a deadly duo of bondage that must be released.
- 2. Rejection:** Rejection is a battle in the mind against lying and deceptive spirits. Rejection is not always uncovered at first because people who suffer rejection often try hard to be people-pleasers to gain acceptance. They don't realize their fear of rejection is driving their behavior. Rejection from family and friends can leave a person feeling defeated and victimized. Rejection follows throughout a lifetime until people have deep deliverance and can conquer mind-binding spirits that lie to them and penetrate their thoughts.

3. **Control:** Issues with control are common. A controlling spirit usually manifests as a generational curse, mostly from our moms, but it can also manifest through our dads. Those who are dominated by a spirit of control can act in a variety of ways; therefore, it isn't always easy to identify. There are many root sources and entry points, such as never being in control, always being controlled and being in an abusive relationship. Receiving deliverance from a controlling spirit is contingent upon the person's wanting to give up control. If the Holy Spirit reveals this is an issue for you, allow God to bring you into brokenness and a place of complete surrender and dependence upon Him, and all control will be evicted.
4. **Pride:** Pride is sneaky and multifaceted. Identifying pride in others is reasonably easy. I like to say people wear pride on their sleeves. Our own pride usually goes undiscovered until we've had a battle or confrontation with another person, or the Spirit of the Lord begins to convict us of it. We all need to ask the Holy Spirit to convict us and expose our hearts' intentions to see where pride manifests because everyone has some level of pride.

Conviction and Correction Bring Deliverance

If you suspect you are bound by any of these strongholds, allow the Holy Spirit to convict you and correct your actions, thoughts and motives. Jesus tells us what will happen when the Holy Spirit arrives. "When He comes, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8). It isn't easy to put ourselves out there and be vulnerable and humble, but something wonderful will come forth as we do. To be victorious in spiritual warfare requires a warrior's heart.

The heart of a warrior cannot be made where strongholds exist. Therefore, a willing mind and heart are needed to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal those things in us; we don't want to be

exposed by someone else or to not realize there are issues. One of my life Scriptures has been, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Ps. 51:10). I also invite the Holy Spirit to “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my concerns, and see if there is any rebellious way in me, and lead me in the ancient way” (Ps. 139:23–24).

Spend time in the secret place, and get to know the Holy Spirit. He will lead you through deliverance. Allow Him to convict you and then obey what He speaks to you. It will lead you to healing and freedom and make you much more effective in spiritual warfare! (eoa}

Excerpted from Chapter 6 of Prophetic Spiritual Warfare: Build a Warrior’s Heart by Kathy DeGraw (Charisma House, 2021).

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