

The Power to Break Strongholds Is Within Your Grasp

Way too many times I allowed a stronghold to capture me and keep me stuck. Can you relate? Have you ever been there?

Then I began to research what a stronghold really is. When I did that, the strongholds in my life began to fall, one by one. That's because I really didn't know what a stronghold was, in what ways it could affect me and how I could really move past it or break it completely.

It felt like sugar was a stronghold when I weighed 430 pounds because I felt like I was in bondage to it. I couldn't seem to stop eating it.

In reality, a substance cannot be a stronghold. My stronghold was the enemy's carefully designed composition of my own thoughts, desires and feelings that made me think I needed sugar, or I would die.

Your stronghold might be different but one thing will be the same, it is something that keeps you feeling stuck. It's sort of like being in one of those roundabouts and you just keep going round and round without figuring out how to exit. The truth is God wants to help you break free of those endless cycles.

Death Sentence Aborted

It was those thoughts, desires and feelings that led me to overindulge in my comfort foods to the point that a cardiac surgeon told me I needed to lose at least 100 pounds and keep it off, or I would be dead in five years.

That was 22 years ago, and it was a true wake-up call.

Sometimes we know things, like the fact that we are overweight, but we don't accept them. I knew I had a weight issue, but I didn't accept that what I ate and how much I ate might one day affect my health and take my life.

So, I decided I would do everything possible to live. It was a turning point, but not a drastic one. I didn't all of a sudden lose 250 pounds. I had to first face why I was a strong, intelligent woman who couldn't stop eating.

I learned it was the strongholds I had allowed to be set up in my life that were keeping me stuck in super morbid obesity. I didn't want my emotions to show, so I ate to keep them at bay. When I felt like my world was falling apart, which was every day, I would eat to anesthetize the frustration, stress, overwhelm, anger, guilt, shame, regret or whatever my current state of mind was at the time.

Pretty Little Lies

I loved foods made with sugar and flour, but sugar and flour were not my strongholds. Eating them was just the way I dealt with my strongholds. One of my big strongholds was a lie I bought into early in my life that I needed to eat foods made with sugar and flour in order to survive.

It didn't matter how many diets I went on; until I addressed that core foundational lie, I would never be able to lose weight. These are what I call pretty little lies. They are half-truths that seem to work to alleviate whatever problem we have.

A stronghold is a tool of the enemy designed to enslave us. The meaning of the word is a fortification, like a walled fortress on a hill. In many places in the Scripture, God is called our strength, our strong tower, the place we run when we need help. God should be our stronghold.

A stronghold also can be something that takes root in our

lives as an argument against God. It's something we begin to believe because of circumstances or situations in our lives, but it is a lie, plain and simple.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV) talks about this. "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 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."

Any argument anyone has against God is a lie because God is the highest authority. No argument will stand against Him. Still, many of us think we know better than God and refuse to follow what we know He wants us to do. When we are following what we think, feel or desire instead of what we know God wants, we are behaving like we know more than God. This becomes a stronghold if we don't recognize it as a lie, address it and refute it.

Breaking Strongholds

The good news is that strongholds set up against God not only can but must be demolished, smashed, torn to smithereens. The Greek word used in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 which is translated demolished in many versions really means to "forcibly yank down, destroy, leaving nothing standing or even in good working order; cast down."

Strongholds are mindsets that God says must be broken. If we can get to the core issue or the lie on which any stronghold has been built, the stronghold has to fall. It has to go down. It will go down, not by our own effort, but by allowing God to reveal the truth to us and help us live it out.

Listen to *Sweet Grace for Your Journey* on the Charisma Podcast Network to unlock strategies on how to defeat your strongholds. {eoa}

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