

Stormie Omartian: Warning Signs You Need to Break Ungodly Strongholds in Your Children

Have you ever observed something in your child that bothers you but you can't identify what it is? When that happens, don't ignore your God-given instincts. Ask God to reveal what it is you're sensing. We are aligned with the Creator of the universe, who understands perfectly what is going on, and we need to ask Him for wisdom and **revelation**.

Have you ever detected an expression on your child's face that you knew was guilt but you didn't know the reason for it? In other words, you suspected an offense worthy of some kind of discipline but you didn't have the hard evidence. Whenever that happened with either of my children, I prayed, "Lord, You know our foolishness and our sins are not hidden from You (Ps. 69:5). Reveal to me what I am sensing in this child." Each time He revealed an ungodly stronghold erecting itself in the flesh. For instance, one time one of the children was smuggling forbidden foods into the bedroom for secret consumption. Another time, a lie was being set in motion in order to achieve a desired result. In every case the sins were revealed after I prayed.

I always told my children it wasn't worth it for them to **disobey** their mom and dad because God would always reveal it to us. They soon believed me.

One particular instance stands out in my mind. It occurred when Amanda was about 7 years old. Every morning I gave her three tiny vitamins to swallow. These had been prescribed by our doctor, and I always made sure she had them in a tiny dish

by her plate at the breakfast table. In the beginning she protested every time she had to take them. After a while she became more cheerful about it, and eventually she stopped complaining altogether. Around the same time, I sensed something about Amanda that troubled me, but I couldn't put my finger on exactly what it was.

"Show me, Lord. Is there anything in Amanda I should be seeing?" I prayed.

Nothing happened over the next several days, and I didn't think much about it because I was busy packing our household goods for a move to another location. The day the moving company came to pack the large items, we started to remove the little cushions that were tied to the seats of the kitchen chairs. There, under Amanda's seat cushion, I found twenty-six little vitamins spread all around the seat. I couldn't believe my eyes. I called my husband in to show him what I'd found, and we both chuckled, even though we knew she'd have to be confronted when she arrived home from school.

We proceeded to untie the other five cushions and, much to our amazement, under all but one we discovered twenty to thirty vitamins. Only the chair furthest away from hers was empty. This time we rolled with laughter.

When Amanda arrived home from school, we wiped the smiles off our faces and presented her with well over a hundred vitamins and a cup of water. We told her that unless she wanted to take all those vitamins she had better do some explaining.

This incident seems humorous and minor, but if Amanda's deception had gone undetected and never dealt with, it could have led to bigger deceptions until deception had a foothold in her life. I'm grateful to God that He reveals such things to us before they become serious.

It doesn't necessarily have to be a child's sins you are sensing. It could be hurt or fear over something he (she) has

thought, seen, or experienced. It could be hopelessness, confusion, envy, selfishness, or pride. It's impossible to guess, so it's best to ask God to reveal it to you. Even if you don't get a clear leading right away, you can still pray about it. Jesus instructed us to pray as a matter of course, "Deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13). Sometimes we don't have to be any more specific than praying for God to penetrate the lives of our children by the power of His Spirit and deliver them from evil. The point is, don't ignore these warnings.

Even if you don't sense anything in your child now, it's still a good preventative measure to pray the following prayer. Not that you have to be forever suspicious of your children, but you do have to be suspicious of the enemy lurking around waiting to erect a **stronghold** in their lives. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). The verse following that one gives us directions on how to deal with this: "Resist him," it says. Shall we pray?

Prayer

Lord, Thank You that You have promised in Your Word to deliver us when we cry out to You. I come to You on behalf of (name of child) and ask that You would deliver him (her) from any ungodliness that may be threatening to become a stronghold in his (her) life. Even though I don't know what he (she) needs to be set free from, You do. I pray in the name of Jesus that You will work deliverance in his (her) life wherever it is needed. I know that although "we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our **warfare** are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Give me wisdom and revelation regarding him (her). I know there are areas of enemy operation which I cannot see, so I

depend on You, Lord, to reveal these to me as I need to know them. Speak to my heart. Show me how to pray when there is something deep in my spirit that is unsettled, disturbed, or troubled about him (her). Show me anything that I am not seeing, and let all that is hidden come to light. If there is any action I need to take, I depend on You to show me. Thank You that You help me parent this child.

Lord, I put (name of child) in Your hands this day. Guide, protect, and convict him (her) when sin is trying to take root. Strengthen him (her) in battle when Satan attempts to gain a foothold in his (her) heart. Make him (her) sensitive to enemy encroachment, and may he (she) run to You to be his (her) stronghold and refuge in times of trouble. May the cry of his (her) heart be, "Cleanse me from secret faults" (Ps. 19:12). According to Your Word I say that the Lord will deliver him (her) from every evil work and preserve him (her) for His heavenly kingdom (2 Tim. 4:18).

Weapons of Warfare

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19).

"There is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known" (Matt. 10:26).

"Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished; but the posterity of the righteous will be delivered" (Prov. 11:21).

"The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (Ps. 9:9).

"Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know" (Jer. 33:3).

Stormie Omartian is the best-selling author of *The Power of a Praying* series, including *The Power of a Praying Parent*, from which this article was adapted. *The Power of a Praying Parent*®. Copyright © 2007 by Stormie Omartian. Published by Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR. Used by permission.