REMOVING THE BIGGEST MOUNTAINS (series)

**2— REMOVING STRONGHOLDS**

**Mark 11:22–26 (NKJV)** So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. **23** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. **24** Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. **25** “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. **26** But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

**2 Corinthians 10:3–6 (NKJV)** For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. **4** For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down **strongholds**, **5** casting down **arguments** and **every high thing** that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing **every thought** into captivity to the obedience of Christ, **6** and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

“strongholds” = Gr. **ŏchurōma**, *(okh-****oo´****-ro-mah)*; used only once in the NT (here)… = a place that’s fortified to hold or defend its position or territory.

**WHAT ARE “STRONGHOLDS?” I WANT TO DEAL WITH FOUR MAJOR STRONGHOLDS.**

1. **DEMONIC ROOMMATES**
2. **YOUR OWN WORDS**
3. **YOUR OWN HEART ATTITUDES**
4. **YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR**

**1. DEMONIC ROOMMATES**

**LET’S BEGIN WITH DEMONIC ROOMMATES… WHETHER YOU’RE POSSESSED BY DEMONS OR OPPRESSED BY THEM… WHEN THEY GET A FOOTHOLD IN YOUR LIFE, THEY TAKE UP RESIDENCY AND CAUSE PROBLEMS.**

**JESUS SAID IN…**

**Matthew 17:14–18 (NKJV)** And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, **15** “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. **16** So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him.” **17** Then Jesus answered and said, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me.” **18** And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.

**NOW LET’S GET A FEW MORE DETAILS FROM MARK’S GOSPEL BEFORE WE MOVE ON…**

**Mark 9:17–27 (NKJV)** Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. **18** And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.” **19** He answered him and said, “O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.” **20** Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. **21** So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. **22** And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” **23** Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” **24** Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” **25** When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “**Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more**!” **[JESUS OFTEN CALLED OUT WHAT SPIRIT IT WAS… “DEAF AND DUMB SPIRIT”] 26** Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, “He is dead.” **27** But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

**THIS BOY WAS HEALED OF EPILEPSY, SEIZURES, MUTENESS (THE INABILITY TO SPEAK), BEING THROWN INTO THE FIRE OR WATER BY THIS DEMON TO KILL HIM… NOT TO MENTION THE SHEER EMBARRASSMENT TO HIM AND HIS FAMILY… ALL BY CASTING THIS DEMON OUT.**

**PAUL SAID IN…**

**Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV)** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

**WELL… HOW WAS THIS DEMONIC STRONGHOLD REMOVED?**

**JESUS SPOKE AND COMMANDED THE DEAF AND DUMB SPIRIT TO BE REMOVED.**

**Matthew 8:16 (NKJV)** When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He **cast out the spirits with a word**.”

**BUT WAS IT ONLY SPEAKING WORDS THAT REMOVED THIS DEMONIC STRONGHOLD?**

**LET’S COME BACK TO MATTHEW AND SEE SOMETHING VERY INTERESTING THAT JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES**

**Matthew 17:19–21 (NKJV)** Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” **20** So Jesus said to them, “**Because of your unbelief**; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. **21** However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

**Matthew 10:1 (ESV)** And he called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

**Luke 10:19 (NKJV)** Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

**HOW WOULD THEY USE THAT AUTHORITY?**

**BY SPEAKING AND BELIEVING**

**LET’S LOOK AT ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A DEMONIC STRONGHOLD...**

**Luke 13:10–11 (NKJV)** Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. **11** And behold, there was a woman who had a **spirit of infirmity** eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

**WHAT DOES “SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY MEAN?” LISTEN TO A COUPLE OF OTHER TRANSLATIONS…**

**VERSE 11 (NASB 2020)** “There was a woman who for eighteen years had had **a sickness caused by a spirit**.”

**FOLKS… THERE ARE SICKNESSES CAUSED BY DEMONIC SPIRITS**

**VERSE 11 (CSB)** “A woman was there who had been **disabled by a spirit** for over eighteen years.”

**FRIENDS… THERE ARE DISABILITIES CAUSED BY DEMONIC SPIRITS**

**OKAY, LET’S KEEP READING**

**Luke 13:12–17** But **when Jesus saw her**, **He called her** to Him and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.” **13** And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. **14** But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.” **15** The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it? **16** So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” **17** And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

**JESUS SAID IN…**

**John 10:10 (NKJV)** The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

**HOW DO DEMONS GET IN? WE… IN OUR IGNORANCE OF SPIRITUAL THINGS… WE LET THEM IN**

**Ephesians 4:26–27 (NKJV)** “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, **27** nor give place to the devil.

**1 Peter 5:8–9 (CSB)** Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. **9** Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.

**James 4:7 (ESV)** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.