REMOVING THE BIGGEST MOUNTAINS (series)

**4— REMOVING BEHAVIORAL STRONGHOLDS**

**Mark 11:23 (NKJV)** 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.**

**2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (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.

**FIVE MAJOR STRONGHOLDS**

1. **DEMONIC STRONGHOLDS**
2. **SPOKEN STRONGHOLDS**
   1. **Mouth spoken**
   2. **Heart spoken**
3. **BEHAVIORAL STRONGHOLDS**
4. **ATTITUDINAL STRONGHOLDS**
5. **BELIEF STRONGHOLDS**

**LET’S TALK ABOUT BEHAVIORAL STRONGHOLDS**

* + - 1. **SINS**

**Proverbs 5:22 (NLT)** An evil man is **held captive** by his own sins; they are ropes that catch **and hold him.**

**DOES THAT SOUND LIKE A STRONGHOLD?**

**YOUR SIN COULD BE FORNICATION, ADULTERY, COMMITTING ADULTERY IN YOUR HEART AND MIND, WATCHING PORNOGRAPHY, LYING, STEALING, CRITICIZING, GOSSIPING, INSUBORDINATION, GAMBLING, FLATTERY, CHEATING, ETC., ETC.**

**IS SINFUL BEHAVIOR A STRONGHOLD?**

**James 5:14–16 (NKJV)** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. **16** Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

**EX – KC’s rash for criticizing**

**Matthew 13:15 (NKJV)** For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.’

**EX – JH threw his back out… “Judgment of God is not always like this [bringing the hand down onto the other]… but like this [removing the hand from the other… protection].”**

**PASTOR JACK HAD A HUMBLE AND HONEST HEART LIKE DAVID**

**Psalm 51:3–4 (CSB)** **[David had not repented of his adultery, attempted cover-up, and murder, but when he was confronted by Nathan the prophet, he finally repented… Psalm 51 captures his repentance… and here’s part of what David said]** **Verse 3** For I am conscious of my rebellion, and my sin is always before me. **4** Against you—you alone—I have sinned and done this evil in your sight. So you are right when you pass sentence; you are blameless when you judge.

**John 5:1–14 (NKJV)** After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **2** Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. **3** In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. **4** For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. **5** Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. **6** When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” **7** The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” **8** Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” **9** And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. **10** The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.” **11** He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your bed and walk.’ ” **12** Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?” **13** But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place. **14** Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

**EX – OJP dying of cancer told my parents why**

**1 Corinthians 11:28–32 (NKJV)** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. **29** For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. **30** For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. **31** For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. **32** But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

* + - 1. **HARMFUL HABITS**

**LAZINESS:**

**Proverbs 6:9–11 (NKJV): ﻿**How long will you ﻿slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? 10 A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep— 11 ﻿So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

**EX – I was SO lazy as a teenager… I would do my chores half-hearted… and I would complain about having to do them.**

**FRIVOLITY IS LAZINESS MASKED IN BUSYNESS ON WORTHLESS THINGS**

**Proverbs 12:11 (ESV)** Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.

**Why does he lack sense? Because he won’t have enough provision.**

* **Hours a day playing video games**
* **Social media**
* **TV**
* **Hanging out**
* **Constantly watching/reading/listening to news, sports**

**EX – I know grown men in their 20s and 30s, and sometimes 40s who waste their time playing video games… and they lack many things.**

**SO WHAT DO YOU DO?**

**YOU STOP SINNING AND ELIMINATE THESE BAD HABITS**

**… BUT HOW? IS IT BY WILLPOWER? DO WE MEDICATE OURSELVES?**

**NO… WHAT DOES 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3 & 4 SAY**

**2 Corinthians 10:3–4 (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**.

**Galatians 5:16 (NKJV)** Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

**Proverbs 16:6 (NKJV) “**By the fear of the Lord one departs from evil.”

**FRIENDS… WE NEED TO REMOVE THESE STRONGHOLDS TODAY!!!**

**WHERE DO WE BEGIN? FIRST BY CONFESSING IT AS SIN AND RECEIVING FORGIVENESS**

**1 John 1:9 (NKJV)** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

**Mark 11:23 (NKJV)** 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.**

**James 3:2 (NKJV)** If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

**1 Corinthians 6:12 (GW)** **[Paul said]** “I won’t allow anything to gain control over my life.’

**Romans 6:12–14 (NKJV)** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. **13** And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. **14** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

**Matthew 18:8–9 (NKJV): ﻿**“If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into ﻿hell fire.

**Philippians 4:13 (NKJV):** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.