

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide

SB 04.11.2021

Demolishing Strongholds – 2 Cor. 19:3-6

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

In the battlefield of the mind, we must be on guard for and actively battle against wrong ways of thinking that become spiritual strongholds. Though we often think about our obedience in terms of our physical actions, the Bible helps us see that most of the time spiritual battles are won or lost long before our choices are made. Battles are won and lost in the mind. Because they are, the Christian must not only be aware of what's happening in their head, but recognize that the spiritual battle is being fought there. In the battlefield of the mind, we must be on guard for and actively battle against wrong ways of thinking that can become spiritual strongholds. Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion:

1. What struck you or stood out to you from this week's sermon?
2. What was the first thing you remember thinking about this morning? Is that pretty typical for you?
3. How concerned should we be with what goes through our minds if it doesn't lead to action?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 COR. 10:3-6

1. What is the dynamic between the physical and the spiritual Paul presents in verse 3?
2. Are there some issues in life that we treat as physical when they are really spiritual? Can you give an example?

There are times when we might focus on a physical issue or problem we are having without recognizing its true spiritual source. If we restrict our focus to the physical realm, then it's a little like putting a bandage on a wound when there is internal bleeding. We have to look deeper to find the true root of the problem.

3. If we do not wage war in a physical way, what are some of the spiritual weapons God has given to us?
4. What is our responsibility in terms of using these weapons?
5. Paul says we are powerful enough, through using these weapons, to demolish strongholds. What do you think a spiritual stronghold is?
6. Why do you think Paul used such emphatic language—that these strongholds should be destroyed or demolished?

Spiritual strongholds are not to be tolerated; they're meant to be obliterated. A stronghold is a wrong way of

Visitation/Restoration in 2021

thinking that has become embedded in our minds. We may or may not be aware of these strongholds, but each one must be destroyed if we want to be victorious in the spiritual battle.

1. Why is the mind such a pivotal place in the spiritual battle?
2. What are some ways you sense that Satan has attacked your mind as a Christian?

The mind is imperative for spiritual victory. We are to guard our minds, renew our minds, ask God to search our minds, and love God with our minds. Sin begins in the mind and then later comes out in actions. If, then, we want to be victorious, we must start at the beginning—our thoughts.

3. What are some ways you can identify if you have an errant way of thinking?
4. How does being consistently involved in a deep level of Christian community help that happen?

We know if there is a stronghold in our minds if we find ourselves frequently thinking ungodly thoughts, having ungodly feelings, and then exhibiting ungodly actions. But sometimes it's difficult to tell the truth from a lie. That's why we must feed ourselves with a consistent diet of God's Word so that our minds are continually being refreshed with truth. This happens not only through reading the Bible on our own, but also as we give ourselves to being in community with others who can help correct our thinking.

5. What, in your own words, does it mean to take every thought captive to obey Christ?
6. Is this an active or a passive process? Why is that important to recognize?
7. How does what you allow to come into your mind affect your ability to take your thoughts captive?

Once you've identified a stronghold in your mind, you have to attack it. The way the stronghold is attacked and then demolished is through exposing it and then bringing the truth against the lie. Many people don't believe they can control what they think about, but the Bible tells us this is an active process. We should be very careful, then, about what comes into our minds. When we are committed to filling our minds with God's truth, not only will we bombard the strongholds that are lodged in our minds, we will also proactively guard against strongholds in the future.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

1. How does memorizing Scripture help you take your thoughts captive for Christ? What's the biggest obstacle you've found in your own life to memorizing Scripture?
2. What is one way you can integrate or further the discipline of Scripture memory in your life this week?
3. Have you identified any strongholds in your mind yet? If so, what's your battle plan for demolishing it?

PRAYER - Pray and thank God that He has given us everything we need to overcome strongholds. Pray that the Lord will reveal to you any strongholds in your life either of the mind or flesh. Ask the Lord to give you the power to overcome and have victory in Christ over all these strongholds.

"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, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..." 2 Cor, 10:4-5