

November 17, 2023

The Three Battlegrounds by Francis Frangipane

Chapter 4 - A House Made of Thoughts (Part 2)

Defeat the Stronghold of Failure

Let us look at other strongholds that may be in your life and see their origin and, more importantly, how they can be removed. First, remember that a stronghold is a house made of thoughts. Therefore, in regard to this type of warfare, Paul explained that our success is based upon “taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Since our goal is to allow the Spirit of Christ full access into our souls, we must capture our thoughts and make them slaves to Christ.

To deal with the stronghold of failure, we must make repentance our way of life. Bear in mind also that repentance “change,” not merely remorse. Our thinking must change. There are herds of erroneous thoughts roaming across our minds, grazing upon the ever-available hay and stubble of unbelief and failure. Thoughts like “I will always be a failure” or “I am just a sinner” or “I tried walking in the Spirit but it didn’t work” converge and form the walls, floor, and ceiling - the building material of the stronghold of failure. To secure victory, you must capture these wrong thoughts.

Capture the thought, “I am a failure!” Repent of it, asking the Lord to forgive you of your unbelief. Let your mind be renewed by the Word of God which states, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). Even though you have failed and will fail again in the future, now because Christ is in your life you can confidently proclaim, “Though I was a failure, my sufficiency comes from God, not myself. He causes all things to work for my good so that nothing is impossible if I keep faith in Him.”

By capturing your self-condemning thoughts and identifying yourself as God’s child, you are tearing down a stronghold of defeat that once oppressed you. In its place you are building a godly stronghold of faith, which is built upon the Word of God. With the old stronghold exposed and the thought-patterns of defeatism coming down, the Word of God will begin to renew you in the spirit of your mind. You will need to persevere in your victory, but as you do, you will begin to walk in tremendous power and peace. You will enter the godly stronghold of faith.

Destroying the Stronghold of Fear!

Another stronghold that oppresses men is fear. Your experience tells you that if you try something new, especially in front of people, you may be embarrassed and rejected. To counter this, a whole series of reactions emerges in your mind. You sit back when you should step forward. You are silent when you should be speaking. That silent, fearful withdrawal into yourself has become a house made of thoughts, wherein dwells a spirit of fear.

God does not want us in bondage. He has not given us a “spirit of fear,” but of love, power and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV). Therefore, let us look at some of the thoughts and experiences that may have formed the structure of this tormenting fortress of fear. Perhaps, when you attempted something new as a young child, the reaction among your family or friends was ridicule. Their thoughtless words went so deep that, in recoiling from the pain, you have involuntarily remained in the recoiled or withdrawn position. Since then, you have refused to place yourself in situations where you can become vulnerable to criticism. You may not even remember the incident(s), but you have not stopped recoiling even until today.

Remember, Jesus said the Father would forgive us as we forgave others. As unjust as it may seem, your reaction to what hurt you was as detrimental to your well-being as were the original, offending words. In fact, your reaction has actually become a part of your nature. You can be delivered from that oppression on your soul by releasing and forgiving those who hurt you. To the degree that you truly let the incident go and forgive the offender, to that same degree God will restore your soul to a balanced and healthy attitude toward people. As you increase in this process of forgiveness, you will grow in love and, as the Scripture says, “There is no fear in love... love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18). The stronghold of fear will be replaced by the stronghold of love.