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# The Three Battlegrounds by Francis Frangipane

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## Chapter 5 - Three Sources of Strongholds (Part 1)

*If you want to identify the hidden strongholds in your life, you need only survey the attitudes in your heart. Every area in your thinking that glistens with hope in God is an area that is being liberated by Christ. But any system of thinking that does not have hope, which feels hopeless, is a stronghold that must be pulled down.*

### The First Source of Strongholds: The World

Generally speaking, strongholds originate from any one of three sources. The first is the very world into which we have been born. Perhaps the greatest source of strongholds found in our hearts come from the steady stream of information and experiences that continually shaped our childhood perceptions.

The amount of love (or lack of love) in our home, our cultural environment, peer values and pressures, as well as fears of rejection and exposure - even our physical appearance and intelligence - all combine to form our sense of identity and our view of life. Our souls, wrought with insecurities, are highly sensitive to the criticisms and compliments of others. Such words are poured into your hearts like molten steel which, as they cool, are fused into our natures. These concepts and limitations are structured into us from childhood, built into our thinking patterns through the words, ideas, and examples of others. Indeed, many of our opinions about life are ours only because we know of no other way to think. Yet, we defend and protect our ideas, justifying our opinions as though they were ours alone, born in the very womb of our own creativity!

You see, when we come to Christ, all that we are in nature and character is destined to change. The Bible tells us God has provided for us a new heart, a new mind, a new spirit, a new nature, ultimately, even a new name! (see Ezekiel 36:26; Hebrews 8:10; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:16-17; Revelation 2:17).

The promise of God is this: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Everything, even your intelligence and physical appearance, is now subject to change for the better. This is why our culture and the

boundaries of worldly knowledge must not be allowed to rule over us, for old limitations are destined to go. New faith and hope should be growing within you daily.

How do we attain such a wonderful new beginning? We receive the Spirit of Christ into our hearts to empower us. We study the words of Christ to direct us. And whatever we find in us that is not like Jesus, we crucify.

To be continued...