



GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS Fall Quarter - Lesson 1 - Week of September 11, 2022

Lesson: TEARING DOWN ARGUMENTS AND STRONGHOLDS

Bible Verses: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:17; Philippians 3:3

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

- What do you love most about God?
- If you could wave a magic wand and change one thing about your life, what would it be?

DISCUSSION

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for the 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 Corinthians 10:3-5).”

Jesus has already won the fight! We stand in victory because of His obedience to carry out the finished work at the cross. The only battle left is the war the enemy wages in our minds. And the only power he can exert in the earth is to whisper fleshly, corrupted thoughts in an attempt to get us to accept them as our own and start speaking death. Satan knows more than we do the creation power of our words, and he does everything he can to control and direct what we say. One of the reasons he hates us so much is because he doesn't possess this incredible power.

1. Where is the only battle being fought now?
2. According to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, how do you cast down strongholds and high things that try to exalt themselves above the knowledge of God?

The key to victory in the battle of our minds is in correcting a subtle misinterpretation of this well-known scripture (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Many people interpret it to mean that that we should make our thoughts obedient to Christ. Instead, the instruction is that we are to catch those thoughts as they enter our minds and compare them to scriptural truths. By making this subtle adjustment, the arguments that try to exalt themselves are easily dismantled. They don't hold up in our minds or in the court of heaven. It's an extremely powerful difference in understanding to take hold of in order to successfully appropriate our victory and all of its blessings.

We constantly rejoice and boast in His obedience to go to the cross and to put no confidence in our flesh (Philippians 3:3). The more we look to Jesus and recognize what He did, the more our minds are renewed to the fact that we have been freed from the devil's oppression.

The arguments Paul is referring to in 2 Corinthians 10 are thoughts and reasonings in our minds that set themselves up against the Word of God. First, these kinds of arguments are set up because we have formed

opinions from our own experiences that are different from scriptural truths. Second, Satan is constantly sending us thoughts to try to steal the seed of the Word when it is planted in our hearts and minds.

Strongholds are not fleeting thoughts. They are thoughts that gain strong ground in our minds. We want to learn to recognize these wrong thoughts and wrong attitudes so that we can tear them down. Our goal is to have the Word of God so firmly planted in our hearts and minds that we recognize each lie. Satan is a master liar. We want to tear down every stronghold of wrong thoughts and wrong attitudes in order to build up the stronghold of the Lord. We don't have to live in the shadow of strongholds that steal our joy.

1. What strongholds (e.g., inferiority, manipulation, same-sex attraction, anorexia) and arguments are challenging you today?
2. Does a stronghold have a strong hold on you?
3. What weapons or tools can we use to tear down strongholds in our lives?

Once saved in Christ, we have that direct, spirit-to-spirit relationship with God that the Father restored. The word for knowledge is the Greek word *gnosis* which comes from *ginosko* and describes this first-hand relationship knowledge. We must utilize our relationship with God and His Word to tear down arguments and strongholds.

Five Main Sources of Strongholds

1. The world.
2. Our experiences.
3. The acts of the sinful nature.
4. Wrong doctrines.
5. Counterfeit spiritual experiences.

Strategies for Tearing Down Strongholds

1. Ask God for His help in identifying the strongholds in your life.
2. Make a decision to tear down every stronghold.
3. Repent.
4. Determine to walk in forgiveness and love.
5. Thank God for the covering and protection of the blood of Jesus.
6. Submit yourself to God and resist the devil.
7. Make daily deposits of God's word in your mind.
8. Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
9. Guard what you say.
10. Cast all your cares on the Lord.
11. Be anxious for nothing.
12. Speak to the mountains in your life.

Prayer Focus: God, help me identify any strongholds in my life and please help me tear them down!