

Session 3

The Religious Spirit & Spiritual Strongholds in the Workplace





40%

- What percentage market share do you think Coca-Cola has of the soft drink industry?

3% 10% 20% 40% 50%

35-40% of Population Claims to be "Born-Again"

2004: 38%

1999: 40%

1998: 39%

1997: 43%

1996: 39%

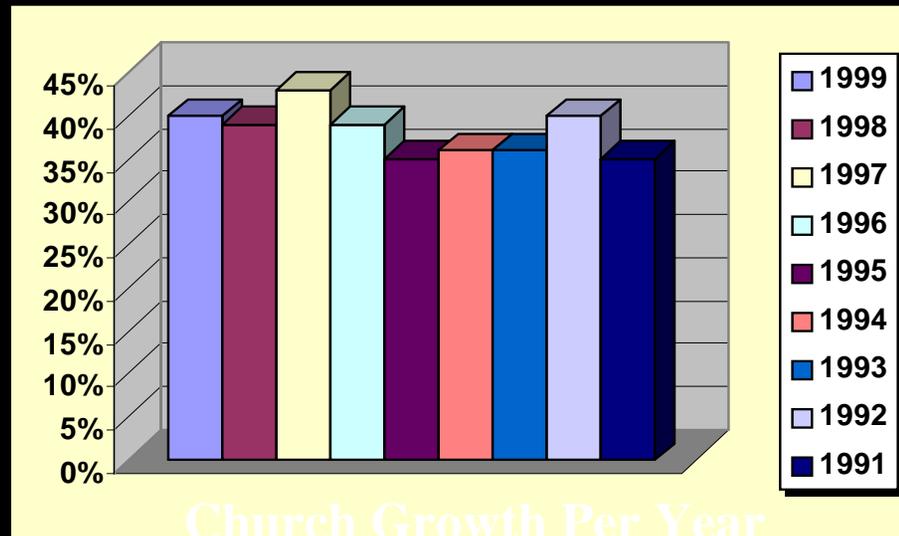
1995: 35%

1994: 36%

1993: 36%

1992: 40%

1991: 35%



Barna Research

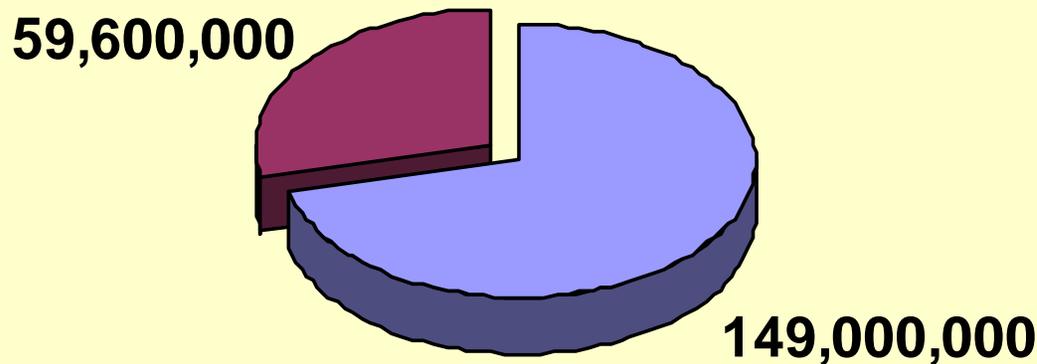
2004 Survey: 38% of all adults and one-third of all teenagers estimates 98 million adults₃ and children who have accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.

Market Share (US Mission Field)

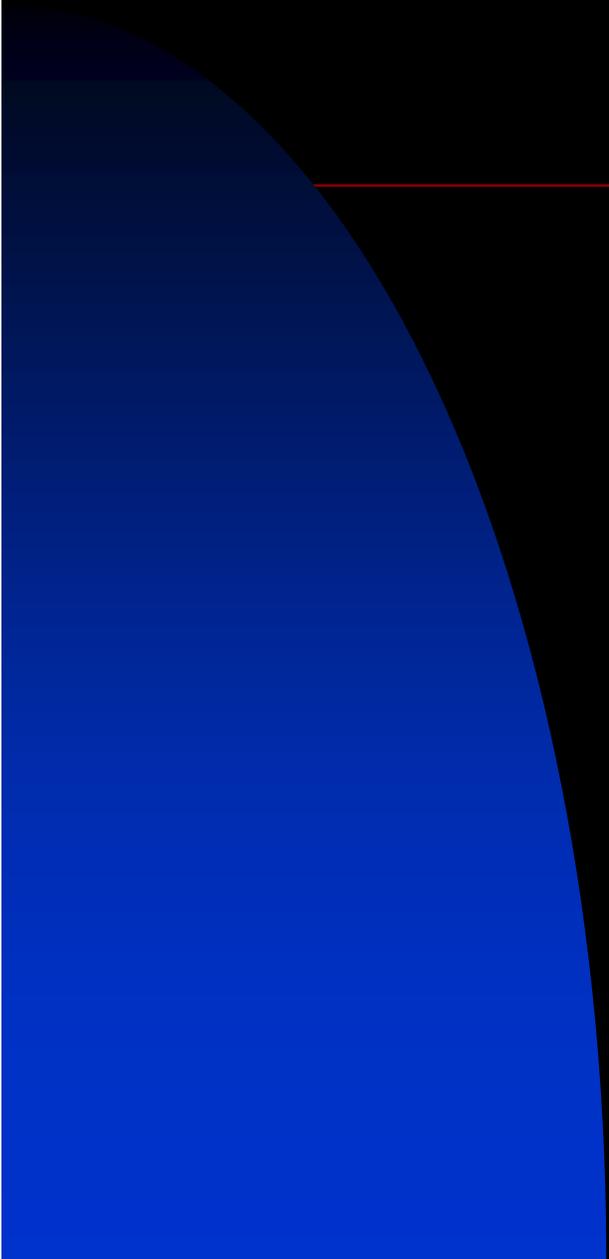
149 million workers Yr 2005

Our Two Target Markets

1. Christians in the U.S.
2. Non-Christians in U.S.



Total U.S. Workforce 149 million



59 million
Christians

So, where's
the impact?

4 Primary Hindrances to becoming a Christian who transforms their workplace for Christ.

- Unbiblical View of Work & Ministry
- Greek vs Hebraic view of God
- Religious Spirit
- Generational Strongholds

How we view & relate to God

Hebraic

Active

Process Focus

Obedience A Priority

Relationships

Transparency, love

Mature Believers

Greek

Cognitive

Program Focus

Information A Priority

Controlled Groups

Service, activity-based

Shallow Believers

What Has Contributed to the Making
of Modern-day Esau Vs Modern-day Josephs?

Reason #2: How We Relate to God

Hebraic

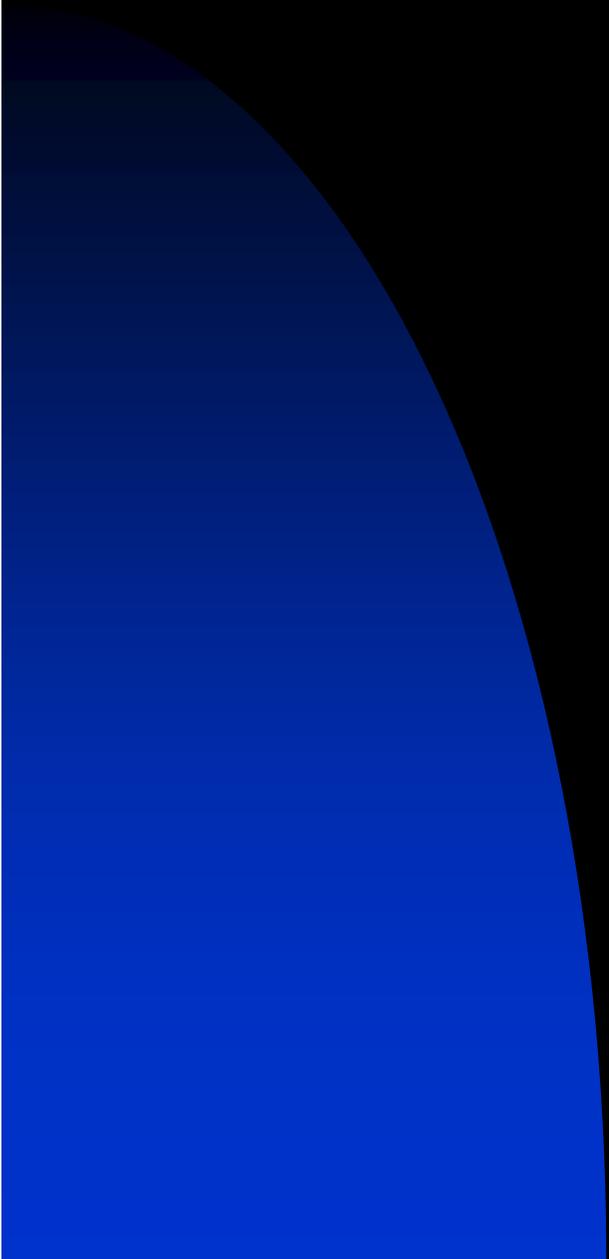
Active

appeals to the heart

Greek

Cognitive

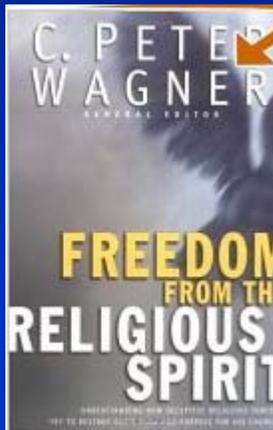
appeals to the intellect

- 
- *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

- ◆ Ephesians 6:12

Dr. Peter Wagner

- Defines the religious spirit as “**an agent of Satan assigned to prevent change and maintain the status quo by using religious devices.**”



Jesus primary opposition

- "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices-mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law-justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. Matt 23:23-24

Key Attributes of Religious Spirit

- Seeks to distort a genuine move of God through deception, control and manipulation.
- Operates out of old religious structures and attempts to maintain the status quo, favoring tradition over a genuine, intimate relationship with God.
- Influences believers to live the Christian life based on works instead of grace.

...attributes

- Depends on human effort to acquire spiritual knowledge and favor from God.
- Deceives believers into thinking that the only way to get God's approval is through works.
- *The spirit of religion's primary strategy here is to promote the idea that belonging to a Christian church or doing religious things is what saves you or makes you holy and acceptable to God..*

Paul Confronted Religious Spirit

- You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit *by observing the law*, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by *human effort*? Have you suffered so much for nothing—if it really was for nothing? Does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you because you observe the law, or because you *believe* what you heard? (Gal. 3:1-5, emphasis added).

Rich Young Ruler

Jesus cut through the religious spirit by speaking to the heart of his issue.

- “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”
- Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”
- When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth (Matt. 19:16-22).

First Martyr Result of Religious Spirit - Stephen

- *“Now Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people”* (Acts 6:7-8).
- Notice how Stephen began to make an impact on his city—by performing signs and wonders. However, his work also stirred up the religious spirit, and Stephen became the first person martyred for his faith.

Jesus was more qualified to be a carpenter than the Son of God.

Opposition to moves of God often come from religious community

The Religious Spirit in the Workplace

Motivates believers to live out their faith in legalistic and rigid ways. Examples:

- ● They may have difficulty praying and applying God's promises to everyday work encounters.
- ● They may believe that biblical truths apply only to their personal lives, families and churches, not to their jobs.
- ● They may focus on evangelizing coworkers, but fail to do their work with excellence. (hypocrisy)
- ● They may give greater priority to religious activity and events than to relationships with others at work or work itself.

In the workplace

- ● They maintain a “we” or “I” versus “them” attitude when relating to non-Christians in the workplace (Jesus hung out with sinners).
- ● They may refuse to join a workplace prayer group or Bible study because they feel that it is trying to replace the role of a particular local church. They don't see a need for such activity in the workplace. They feel the need to compartmentalize faith activities to their local church alone.
- ● They discount the idea that Christianity could transform a workplace, city or nation as “overzealous,” “naïve” or even doctrinally wrong.

Martin Luther confronted Religious Spirit

- “Remember Martin, just to pray by yourself is not enough. The church has to pray for you too. Even when the priest has asked that you be forgiven, God will not listen unless you do good works. The more gifts you give to the church and to the poor, the more trips you make to Rome and Jerusalem, the more pleasures you give up, the better will be your chances for heaven. The best and safest way to do all this, and the one that is most God pleasing, is to give up everything and become a monk.”

Muslim Conflict rooted in Religious Spirit

- Rigid – our way only
- Manipulation of followers
- Distorted way to be accepted by God
- Deception – martyrdom = virgins
- Works - pray 4 times a day, follow rules to gain Goes approval

John
Wright
story

4 ways Jesus Operated Free of Religious Spirit

Keep conversations
about Jesus, not
church affiliation.
Focus on their
needs.

- Pray, Care, Share

- His story, my story,
God's story

1. Hung out with sinners
2. Met their needs
3. Prayed for them
4. Gave them the Gospel

Knowledge Vs Power

First NT Transformer

The Samaritan Woman

Personal acquaintance

- **Jesus changed her paradigm. Talked to a woman. (Jews & Samaritans – workplace & faith)**
- **Jesus gave a Word of Knowledge about her life. *Supernatural in the marketplace.***

“Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me everything I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers.” -- John 4:39-41

Sequence of transformation

- **Encounter. Spoke into her life personally.**
- **Woman believed.**
- **Shared her experience.**
- **People had personal experience with God.**

City impacted!

Prayer



Spiritual Strongholds in the Workplace



Meet John

Need for recognition from performance. i.e., civic projects, sports, business success.

Emphasis on building financial security - workaholic.

Lack of emotional intimacy.

Activity-based relationship towards God - works.

Over-control of people & circumstances.

Hillman Family

3 Generations of Business
Owners

Generational Stronghold:

Insecurity & Fear

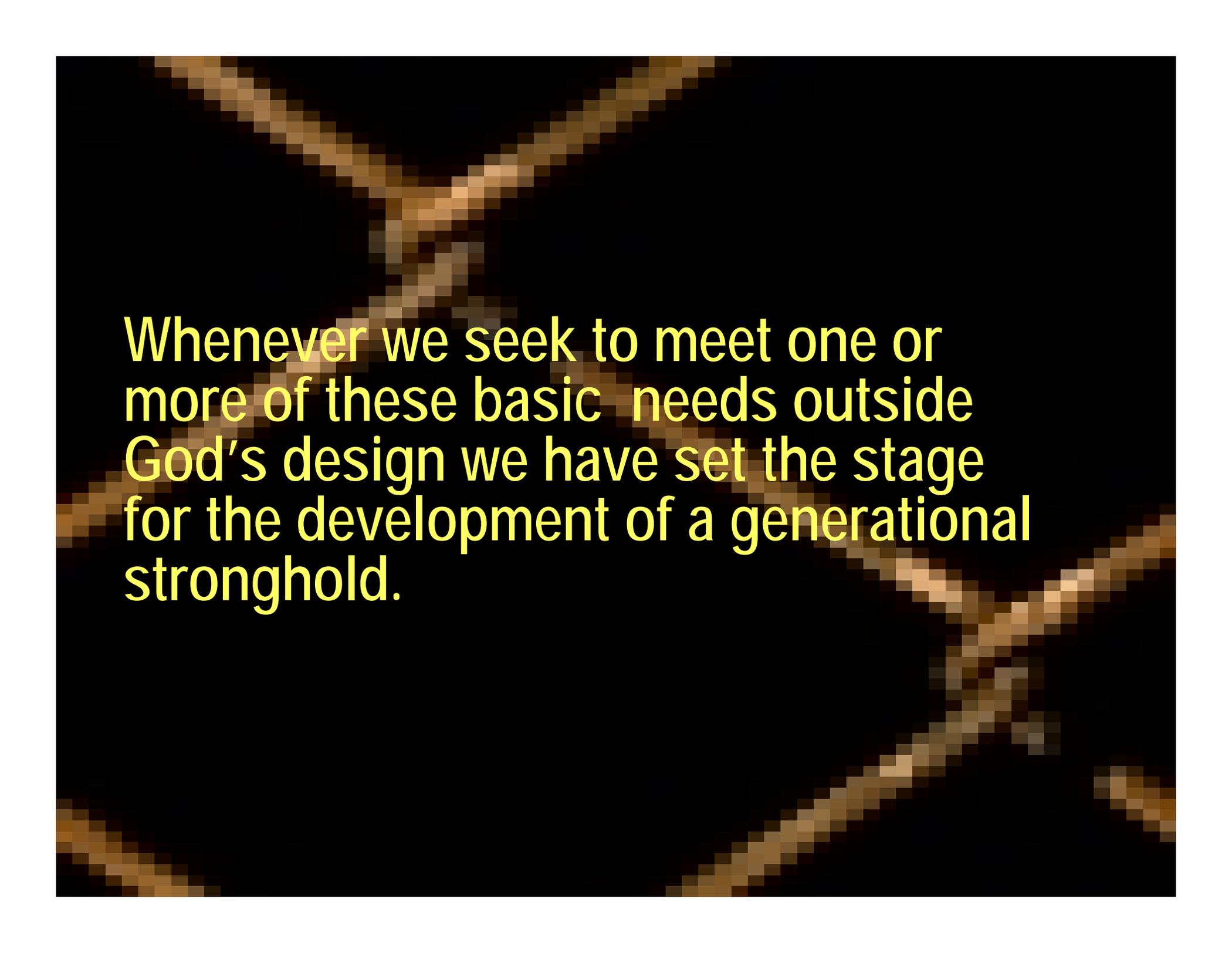


Primary Manifestation:
Control



God created us with seven primary needs:

1. **Dignity**
 2. **Authority**
 3. **Blessing & provision**
 4. **Security**
 5. **Purpose & meaning**
 6. **Freedom & boundary**
 7. **Intimate love & companionship**
- Genesis 1&2



Whenever we seek to meet one or more of these basic needs outside God's design we have set the stage for the development of a generational stronghold.

The Family Test

Overview of Types of Strongholds

___ DECEIT

- ___ Lying
- ___ Fantasies
- ___ Delusions
- ___ Rationalization
- ___ Wrong doctrine/Misuse of scripture

___ CONFUSION (DOUBT & UNBELIEF)

- ___ Suspicious
- ___ Apprehensive
- ___ Indecisive
- ___ Skeptical
- ___ Unsettled

___ INDEPENDENCE & DIVORCE

- ___ Insensitive
- ___ Lonely/Alone
- ___ Self-determined
- ___ Withdrawn
- ___ Excuse making
- ___ Lack of trust
- ___ "Martyr" complex

___ CONTROL

- ___ Manipulative
- ___ Striving
- ___ Lacking trust
- ___ Insensitive
- ___ Desiring recognition
- ___ Violent

___ BITTERNESS

- ___ Resentment
- ___ Racism
- ___ Unforgiveness
- ___ Anger/Hatred
- ___ Violence
- ___ Revenge

___ REJECTION

- ___ Addictive behavior
- ___ Compulsions
- ___ Seeks acceptance
- ___ Unworthiness
- ___ Withdrawal

___ STUPOR & PRAYLESSNESS

- ___ Distanced from God "Cold love"
- ___ Distracted
- ___ Spiritual blindness
- ___ Laziness
- ___ Deceived self-appraisal

___ SEXUAL IMPURITY

- ___ Lust
- ___ Seductiveness
- ___ Masturbation
- ___ Fornication
- ___ Adultery
- ___ Frigidity
- ___ Homosexuality
- ___ Pornography

___ HEAVINESS

- ___ Depression
- ___ Despair
- ___ Self-pity
- ___ Loneliness
- ___ Unconfessed sin
- ___ Suicidal thoughts

___ PRIDE

- ___ Vain
- ___ Self-righteous
- ___ Self-centered
- ___ Insensitive
- ___ Insensitive
- ___ Materialistic
- ___ Seeks positions

___ REBELLION

- ___ Self-willed
- ___ Stubborn
- ___ Pouting
- ___ Strife
- ___ Factious
- ___ Divisive
- ___ anger leads to argument
- ___ Independent
- ___ Unteachable

___ IDOLATRY

- ___ Frustrated
- ___ Hopeless
- ___ Greedy/selfish
- ___ Financial problems
- ___ Wrong goals/decisions
- ___ Living a lie
- ___ Apathetic

___ JEALOUSY

- ___ Spiteful
- ___ Gossip/lander
- ___ Betrayal
- ___ Critical nature
- ___ Judgmental
- ___ Suspicious

___ RELIGIOUSITY

- ___ Seeks activities
- ___ No spiritual power
- ___ Spiritual blindness
- ___ Hypocritical

___ FEAR & INSECURITY

- ___ Inferiority
- ___ Inadequacy
- ___ Timidity
- ___ Pleasing people, not God
- ___ Lack of trust/worry
- ___ Phobias
- ___ Perfectionism
- ___ Dread of failure
- ___ Inability to set goals
- ___ "Motor-mouth"

Spiritual Strongholds Work At The Subconscious Level. Their Influence Is Often Unseen Until There Is A Problem.

Strongholds are designed to keep us from experiencing God's love.

Strongholds are often generational.

All strongholds that are built in our lives are a result of seeking to meet one or more of these needs apart from God's will for us.

“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ”(2 Corinthians 10:5).

Examples of Some Major Strongholds

- Rebellion
- Pride
- Insecurity
- Sexual Impurity
- Control
- Independence
- Doubt
- Anger
- Fear
- Heaviness/Depression
- Jealousy
- Religiosity
- Rejection
- Deceit
- Doubt & Unbelief

“You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments” (Exod. 20:5). Refer to self-inventory sheet on strongholds.

Stronghold Definition

- *...the Apostle Paul enlists the word “stronghold” to define the spiritual fortresses wherein Satan and his legions hide and are protected. These fortresses exist in the **thought-patterns and ideas** that govern individuals and churches, as well as communities and nations. Before victory can be claimed, these strongholds must be pulled down and Satan’s armor removed.. – Francis Frangipane*

Stronghold Development Process

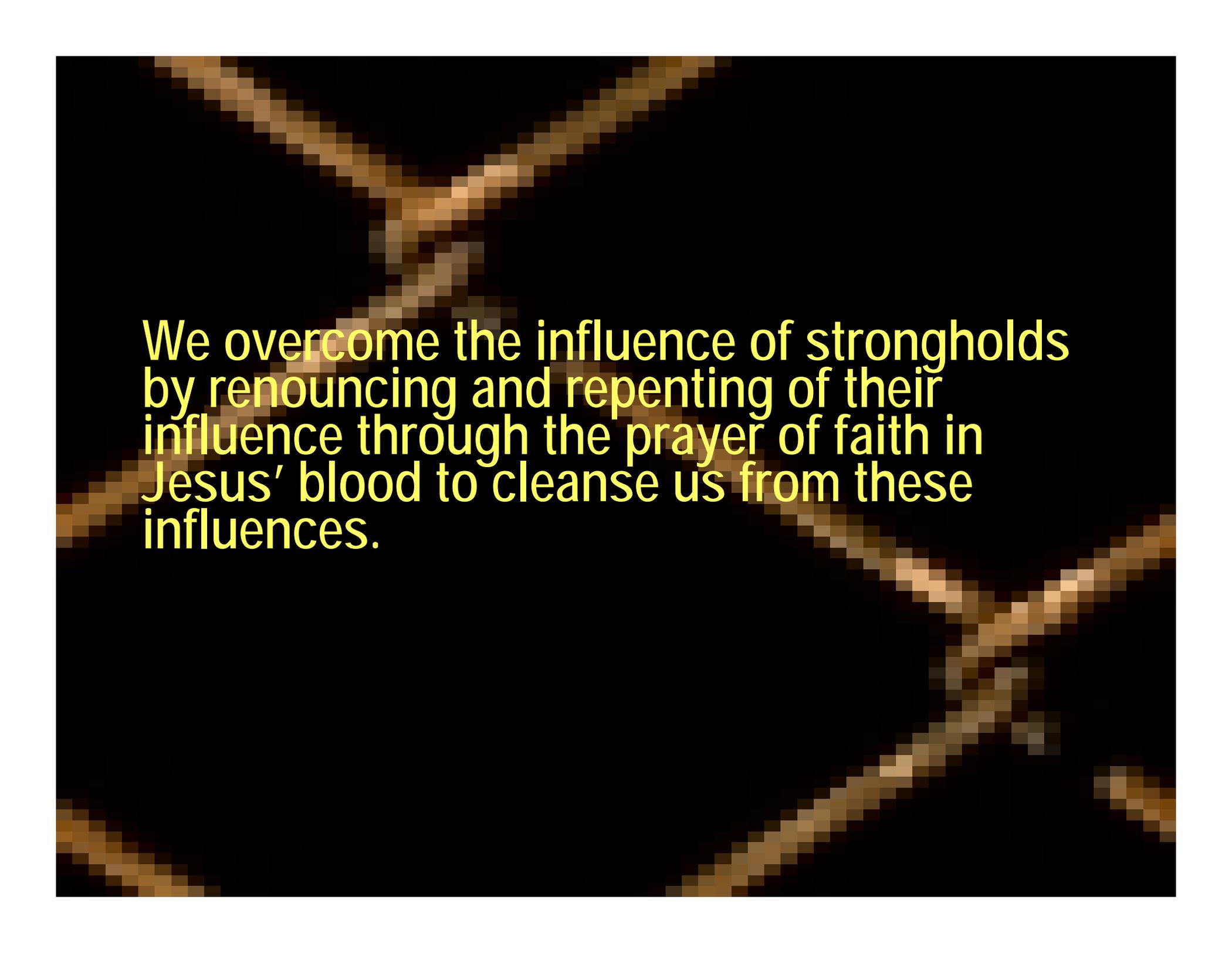
- 1) Satan inspires **THOUGHTS** into my mind (subconsciously) which appeal to my natural tendencies to meet needs.
- 2) Entertaining these thoughts brings on **EMOTIONS.**
- 3) Giving in to emotions eventually leads to taking some sort of **ACTION.**
- 4) Continual participation in this behavior causes me to develop a **HABIT.**
- 5) Once a habit is developed, a **STRONGHOLD** is built by that spirit

Strongholds *oppress* versus *possess*. They:

- (1) Control, dictate, and influence our attitudes and behavior;
- (2) Oppress and discourage us; and
- (3) Affect how we view or react to situations, circumstances, or people.

Singapore woman

"Sunglasses"



We overcome the influence of strongholds by renouncing and repenting of their influence through the prayer of faith in Jesus' blood to cleanse us from these influences.

Examples of Generational Strongholds

- **Deceit & Lying**
Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob
- **Control**
Laban, Rebekah, Jacob, King Saul
- **Sexual**
Rahab, David, Bathsheba, Absalom, Amnon, Solomon

A Stronghold Rejects Truth

“I’m so angry at those lawyers! They’re all out to get me!”



“John, I see this is getting you very angry. They really aren’t doing anything out of order.”



Angie

Generational Stronghold

Family Stronghold: Rejection

Event: Father – orphan

Angie - father left at age 12

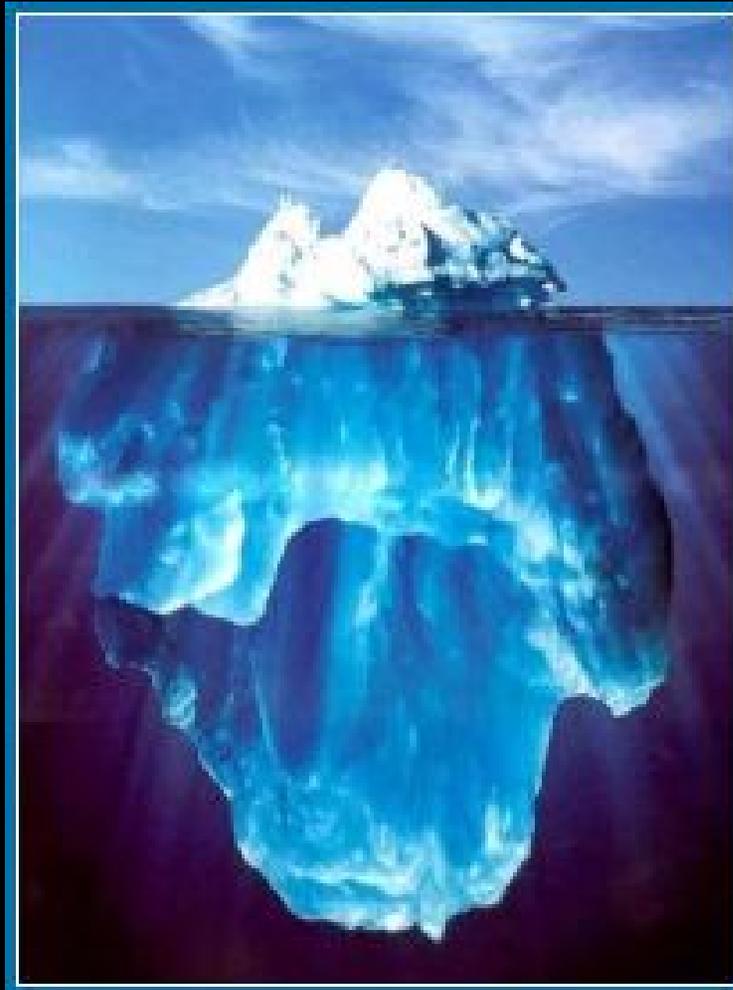
Sister:

- Overachiever
- Demanding

Symptoms: Sought acceptance from men.

Unable to make long term commitment

The Sympton Merely
Indicates there is a Root



Other Factors

- Likeminded strongholds attract one another. The primary stronghold of the marketplace is mammon (greed) and pride.
- Companies can attract the same stronghold.
- Churches can attract the same stronghold.
- Cities and nations have strongholds.
- Industries have strongholds. (Brett story)

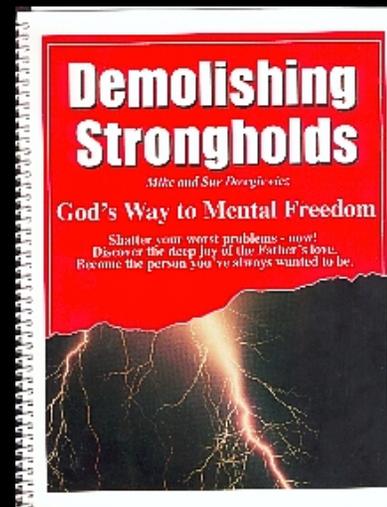
Steps to Freedom From Strongholds

- 1. Identify Strongholds and their Symptoms.**
Rank them from 1 (lowest influence)-10 (greatest) by the level of influence they have. Work with someone close to you to confirm the strongholds. i.e., spouse, close friend.
- 2. Confess and renounce the influence of strongholds in Jesus' name.** Each believer has the power of the Holy Spirit to renounce the influence of strongholds over their life. We "have divine power to demolish strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4).
- 3. Meditate and walk according to the Word.**
Renew your mind.

Personal Reflection

- Self-inventory stronghold test
- Further study

See resource
table



Prayer

- In the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, we renounce the influence of _____, _____, _____ in Jesus' name and by His shed blood on the cross in order that I can be free to know and choose to do the will of God. As children of God seated with Christ in the heavenlies, we agree that every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ be bound. In Jesus' name. Amen.