



## **Sunday Sermon**

### **Study Guide September 25**

**Brian Bales: Lead Pastor**  
**BREAK DOWN: *Getting Free***  
**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**

*For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 2 Cor. 10:3–5 (ESV)*

### **A Life Application Study Guide**

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God’s word.

### **REVIEW**

Last Sunday was the 3<sup>rd</sup> sermon in a three-part series. The first in the series answered the question, as a Christian, “What really matters in life? The answer was/is to fulfill the great Commandment (Matt 22:35-39), “Love the Lord your God... and love your neighbor as yourself.” The 2<sup>nd</sup> in the series answered the question of “How” to do that by discerning God’s strategy (which is always better than ours!), and then executing it as “a spirit-directed and spirit-powered” Christian. The 3<sup>rd</sup> looked closely at “Loving our Neighbor as Ourselves,” which even the Apostle Paul acknowledged to the Galatian church to be “tiring and discouraging.” Brian encouraged us to love our neighbors and become “indispensable to the community”. Today we begin a new series on Breaking Strongholds.

### **LESSONS TO EXPLORE**

1. The struggle between two worlds
2. What is a Stronghold?
3. How a Stronghold develops
4. How to recognize the correct power source
5. Your role/God’s role

### **INTRODUCTION**

This week we look once again at the 7 rhythms or spiritual disciplines foundational to spiritual growth.

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. Pastor Brian talks about his father-in-law’s pick-up truck running out of gas. We can be tempted to look for an alternative power source (often ourselves rather than the true power source).
  - a. Imagine watching the owner of a Tesla try to fill it with gas rather than charging the battery. What would run through your mind?

- b. What do you believe about the struggle that Pastor Brian mentions that is taking place in the spiritual world but not visible in our physical world?
    - c. Where have you personally witnessed a spiritual battle either in your life or in someone close to you? Describe the weapons used to fight the battle and the outcome.
2. Brian talks about a spiritual stronghold as one of the greatest barriers to spiritual transformation.
  - a. How would you define a stronghold?
  - b. Where does the battle most often originate?
  - c. In those moments when we struggle, what might we believe about God? What does Pastor Brian call this?
3. Brian describes the sequence of events that can lead to the development of a stronghold.
  - a. List those events and talk about why we must recognize the impact and power over us (and our families) when we allow the cycle to continue.

- b. When have you believed a lie that on the surface looked like a truth? What did you do with that message and who did you check in with to confirm what the actual truth was?
  
- c. Sometimes a stronghold can seem as we are doing the right thing. Consider a time when you thought you were doing the right thing only to discover that you had become captive to what seemed good and right.

4. Who is asking us to take every (*noēma*) captive?

- a. We live in a highly educated part of the world where we have the resources to be very self-sufficient, problem solve quickly and move to the next project, task, challenge .....and yet we are being asked to surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit in this teaching. How does this sit with you?
  
- b. If you are a parent, what do you teach your children about listening to and surrendering to the Holy Spirit? How is this counter cultural?
  
- c. How do you know if there is a stronghold in your life that needs to be broken?



## **MAKING IT REAL**

- Spend time this week with God asking Him to show you where he would like to bring freedom into your life.
- He is the God of Hope, will you allow Him to forgive you and free you?