

# “Preventing Strongholds in My Life”

Pastor Eddie Turner  
Sunday, October 22, 2017

2 Cor. 10:3-5(NKJV)- For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> 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

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2 Cor. 10:3-5(NLT)- <sup>3</sup> We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. <sup>4</sup> We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. <sup>5</sup> We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.

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Friends who allowed themselves to become dependent on alcohol, but when it first started it was simply social drinking with friends to take the edge off.

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Others are drowning in consumer debt, but it didn't start that way-it was just an occasional shopping spree to escape the stress of life and reward themselves for their hard work.

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It started just as an occasional anxiety medication because of upheaval our family was going through. And I just simply needed my emotions calmed-so I periodically took the medicine, but now I must have it daily to cope.

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It was an innocent conversation with that co-worker, nothing sinful about it. But over time it turned into an emotional attachment and then the physical attraction consumed my mind and now I am tormented with images of being with this person.

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It was pain medication prescribed by my physician following surgery. I don't know how, but now I am hooked on this stuff. I know it's keeping me from God's best, but I don't think I can survive without it.

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I know I can't go back and change a thing about that past incident. I know it will never happen again, but what they did to me continues to haunt me years later and I can't get past it.

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super stress environment

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Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or upset your balance in some way.

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When you sense danger – whether it's real or imagined – the body's defenses kick into high gear in a rapid, automatic process known as the “fight-or-flight” reaction, or the stress response.

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The stress response is the body's way of protecting you. When working properly, it helps you stay focused, energetic, and alert.

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In emergency situations, stress can save your life – giving you extra strength to defend yourself, or spurring you to slam on the brakes to avoid an accident.

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The stress response also helps you rise to meet challenges. Stress is what keeps you on your toes during a presentation at work, sharpens an athlete's concentration when attempting the game-winning free throw, or drives you to study for an exam when you'd rather be watching TV.

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Yet beyond a certain point, stress stops being helpful and starts causing major damage to our health, our productivity, our relationships, and our quality of life.

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• Stress overload affects our mental abilities:  
It causes memory problems, inability to concentrate, poor judgment, seeing only the negative in life, anxious or racing thoughts and constant worry.

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• Stress overload affects our emotional health:  
Moodiness, irritability or short tempered, agitation, inability to relax, feeling overwhelmed, and a sense of loneliness and isolation, depression and general unhappiness.

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• Stress overload affects us physically:  
Aches and pains, nausea, dizziness, chest pains, rapid heartbeat, frequent colds

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• Stress overload affects our behavior:  
Eating more or eating less, sleeping too much or too little, isolating yourself from others, procrastinating or neglecting, using alcohol, cigarettes or drugs.

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Luke 12:22-31 (NLT) - Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. <sup>24</sup> Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! <sup>25</sup> Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? <sup>26</sup> And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?"

27 “Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. 28 And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

29 “And don’t be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don’t worry about such things. 30 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. 31 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) - Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus

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How did I get this way? Where did it come from?

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Rom. 8:6 (NIV) - 6 The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace

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Often the stress of life, tragedies, disappointments, or unmet expectations consume us. Our minds become consumed with harassing and tormenting thoughts. So, to escape we turn to unhealthy remedies, alcohol, drugs, prescription medication, erotic relationships, isolation, binge shopping or simply giving up the disciplines in our life. When that happens, we have allowed a stronghold to be set-up in our life.

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What is a Stronghold?

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2 Cor. 10:3-4 (NKJV) ~ 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.

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The Holy Spirit uses the term “stronghold.” The word “stronghold” is the word “fortress,” in the original language.

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A stronghold is something in our lives that becomes a fortress, a hindrance or a barrier that prohibits us from being or receiving God’s best!

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Anything in our personal lives that prohibits us from being our best for God is a stronghold!

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We can prevent strongholds from being set up in our lives!

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Mark 4:26-29(NKJV)- And He said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, <sup>27</sup>and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. <sup>28</sup>For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. <sup>29</sup>But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”