

So how does Satan build these strongholds?

- He starts by reminding us of our past failures and sins.
- He brings up things that we ought not to be dwelling upon, and tries to make us agree with him on how badly we failed. We then have the choice to listen and agree with him, or listen to God's Word (which is telling us that those sins have been washed away).
- If we take the devil's bait and begin to meditate on our failures, it will begin to pull us down spiritually and strongholds will develop.
- We will begin to see ourselves as failures because we've taken the bait and chose to meditate on a lie that the devil has fed us!

Strongholds can and do play a big part of how we feel

- If we think we are a failure, we will feel like failures. If you think you're hopeless, you will feel hopeless.
- If you constantly think of how you have been separated from your past when the Blood of Jesus has washed it away, you will feel bright and clean inside. Changing the way you think can make a big difference in the way you feel!

How do we tear down strongholds?

Strongholds are build upon deception and lies that we've accepted into our minds. So how do you counter a lie? How do you counter deception? With the truth.

Ephesians 6:17 | 2 Corinthians 10:3-5,

EXAMPLE: So when the devil tries to tell us, "You really messed up, haven't you?"

- "1 John 3:5 tells me that the reason Jesus went to the cross was to take away that sin! Hebrews 8:12 tells me that even God has chosen to forget my sin!"

What are imaginations?

- They are things that we imagine... the devil usually plants them in our minds when he asks us a question that starts out with "What if..."
- One of the last things Satan wants us to know is God's forgiving and loving nature towards us even after we have messed up!

As you can see, strongholds are built on lies and deception. It is also possible to have strongholds in place because demonic spirits have attached themselves to you at some point or another, and need to be driven out. If you work hard at tearing down strongholds by applying the truths in God's Word and this teaching, and yet you seem to hit a wall, it may be because a demonic spirit needs to be driven out.

A step guide

Preparing somebody to receive and maintain their deliverance is very important. This is a basic list of things that you might explain to somebody before you walk them through deliverance. I always like to make sure they understand what is going on, and not feel confused or in darkness over the process of deliverance. The purpose of deliverance is to receive freedom from any hindrances in your life that would keep you from walking in the fullness of God's plan for your life and your relationship with Him.

Deliverance is often a process

While deliverance can be a one-time event, it can also be a process. If you don't receive all your freedom at once, don't be discouraged! Sometimes it takes time to dig out all the junk in our souls. One session you may address one area of your life, while in another, you may address bondages in another. Or sometimes you may have several sessions to address issues in one area of your life. Either way, don't be discouraged.

The goal of deliverance is wholeness

It is easy to think of the deliverance ministry as a quick-fix... simply casting out demons takes away all of a person's bondages. The ministry of deliverance is often a process which involves more than simply driving out the demons. There are usually strongholds to be torn down. Since strongholds are incorrect thinking patterns, this is done through the renewing of your mind according to the Word of God. There is often inner healing that needs to take place as well.

The four elements

- 1) Legal grounds, as many of us call them, are basically things in a person's life which are giving or have given the enemy a right to enter or remain in the person. Unconfessed sins, ungodly soul ties, unforgiveness, holding cursed possessions (occult etc.) and so fourth can give demons a right to inhabit and torment a person. These legal grounds are removed through repentance, renunciation, extending forgiveness, etc.
- 2) Strongholds are basically incorrect thinking patterns in your mind. If you think God is angry with you, then you will feel like He is (when nothing could be further from the truth). If you think you are worthless, then you will feel worthless. Strongholds are torn down as you meditate as specific areas of God's Word which reprograms your mind to think differently. If God sees you as a precious child of His, and you begin to realize and believe that... it will change the way you see yourself for example.
- 3) Inner healing is often required when ministering to somebody who has been abused, raped or has been exposed to a traumatic experience. Inner healing is a working of the Holy Spirit and is received as a person releases the inner hurt and pain from past experiences and allows the Holy Spirit to come in and heal those wounds. Forgiveness often plays a part in this releasing process and is done by faith (even if you don't feel like you could ever forgive somebody for the damage they've done). Oftentimes, self-forgiveness needs to be received as the person is holding things against themselves which must be released.
- 4) Casting out demons is where the demons are confronted in Jesus' name and driven out of the person. This step is where the actual demons are expelled from the person and cannot be overlooked in most cases. Even if you do feel a measure of freedom after tearing down strongholds and breaking up legal grounds, demons may still be present and need to be cast out.

What you can expect during a deliveranceMild manifestations

often involve coughing, spitting up phlegm, burping, deep yawning or sighing, pressure or pain in areas of the body, shaking, screaming, etc.

Stronger manifestations

are usually found in cases where a person is being delivered from severe oppression, deliverance from occult involvement or Satanism. They can cause a body to levitate, physically struggle with those present for the deliverance, cause a demonic convulsion, and so fourth. If you have been involved in energy healing, new age practices, false religions, witchcraft, occult, Satanism or other deeper demonic practices, then it doesn't hurt to let your minister know in advanced so he or she can have additional support present during the deliverance session.

Feelings or emotions

will often rise up as spirits are confronted. For example, if we are dealing with a spirit of grief, the person may experience deep levels of grief as it is manifesting and being driven out.

Demons may speak

Sometimes they will simply take control of the mouth and speak. You may or may not be aware of this when it happens, but don't try to prevent it. Sometimes spirits can be stubborn and require persistence to drive them out. If the minister repeatedly confronts the same spirit, don't worry... I often have to spend a little time just trying to get the demon to come to the surface so I can deal with it. Demons can resist our authority and therefore they require persistent pressure before they cooperate.

What a soul tie is

The Bible speaks of what is today known as soul ties. In the Bible, it doesn't use the word soul tie, but it speaks of them when it talks about souls being knit together, becoming one flesh, etc. A soul tie can serve many functions, but in it's simplest form, it ties two souls together in the spiritual realm. Soul ties between married couples draw them together like magnets, while soul ties between fornicators can draw a beaten and abused woman to the man which in the natural realm she would hate and run from, but instead she runs to him even though he doesn't love her, and treats her like dirt. In the demonic world, unholy soul ties can serve as bridges between two people to pass demonic garbage through.

How soul ties are formed

Sexual relations: Godly soul ties are formed when a couple are married (Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."), and the Godly soul tie between a husband and the wife that God intended him to have is unbreakable by man (Mark 10:7-9). However, when a person has ungodly sexual relations with another person, an ungodly soul tie is then formed (1 Corinthians 6:16, "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."). This soul tie fragments the soul, and is destructive. People who have many past relationships find it very difficult to 'bond' or be joined to anybody, because their soul is fragmented.

Close relationships: King David and Jonathan had a good soul tie as a result of a good friendship (1 Samuel 18:1, "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."), but bad soul ties can form from bad relationships as well. Idolizing somebody can cause a bad soul tie.

Vows, commitments and agreements: Vows are known to bind the soul (Numbers 30:2), marriage itself consists of vows and binds the two people together (Ephesians 5:31), therefore I have little reason to overlook the concept of vows or commitments as being a means to create a soul tie.

How to break a soul tie

1. If any sins were committed to cause this soul tie, repent of them! Fornication is perhaps one of the most common ways to create nasty soul ties.

2. If gifts were given to you by the other person in connection with the sin or unholy relationship, such as rings, flowers, cards, etc. I would get rid of them! Such things symbolize the ungodly relationship, and can hold a soul tie in place. If you are still friends or in a relationship (just now it's no longer an ungodly relationship), like say a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, except you've repented of and forsaken the unholy practices you used to do in your relationship, then I don't feel it is necessary to destroy all the gifts and things that you have been given.

3. Any rash vows or commitments made that played a part in forming the soul tie should be renounced and repented of, and broken in Jesus' name. As Proverbs 21:23 tells us, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." The tongue has the ability to bring the soul great troubles and bondage.

4. Forgive that person if you have anything against them.

5. Renounce the soul tie. Do this verbally, and in Jesus' name. Example, "In Jesus' name, I now renounce any ungodly soul ties formed between myself and _____ as a result of _____."

6. Break the soul tie in Jesus' name! Do this verbally using your authority in Jesus. Example, "I now break and sever any ungodly soul ties formed between myself and _____ as a result of _____ (fornication, etc.) in Jesus' name."