

# Deliverance from Strongholds

## An Introduction

Why this study now? God is in the process of restoring true, Biblical salvation to his Church. The Greek word "sozo", which we translate "saved" or "salvation", really means 3 things together: save, heal, and deliver. The benefit of Jesus' death and resurrection for those who believe is total salvation, healing, and deliverance. Again, God is restoring this to the Church, which has largely jettisoned the "healing and deliverance" part. This study seeks to reinstitute these two crucial aspects to salvation, which Jesus died to afford us. Not only this, but as we move toward the end times, the ability to not only stand against, but to oppose and defeat the enemy will become more and more crucial to those who seek to walk with the Spirit. These skills, lost by generations of apathy or lies, are being recovered now, so that we'll be prepared for what God has set before us.

Remember in *The Matrix*, when Neo had the option of taking the blue pill or the red pill? That's what walking into the spiritual reality is like. Our aim is that your life will never be the same after this class! In our introduction, we'll cover the history of Satan, his minions as listed in the Bible, your relationship to the forces of evil, Body/Soul/Spirit, how Jesus dealt with demons, his commissioning of his followers, your relationship with, and need for, the Holy Spirit, doorways of the enemy, the spiritual roots of disease, repentance, strongmen and underlings, and God as Deliverer. **The aim of this class is to uncover the work of the enemy in your life and equip you to stand against him, receiving new salvation from Jesus.**

**The Spiritual Growth Model.** We believe that people roughly go through four stages in their spiritual growth: Seeker (when someone is asking good, big questions, and honestly wants the answers), Receiver (when someone has said yes to Jesus' offer and is in the process of being saved, healed and delivered), Follower (when someone has left *everything* to "take up their cross" and become a disciple of Jesus and His training), and Producer (when someone focuses on reproducing their faith in another, and multiplies their still-growing relationship with Jesus). Inasmuch as this four-step model accurately represents a spiritual growth path for anyone, this class is designed primarily for the Receiver – but may be applicable to the Follower as well.

**The History of Satan.** As we look over the central passages to Satan's history (Is 14:12-15; Eze 28:11-17), we can observe:

- He was once in heaven, anointed as a guardian cherub
- He was the perfection of beauty, and full of wisdom (intelligent!)
- He said "I will raise my throne above the stars of God... I will make myself like the Most High."
- Through his "widespread and dishonest trade" he was filled with violence.
- His heart became proud on account of his beauty, and his wisdom became corrupted because of his splendor.
- He was cast out of heaven, expelled
- He was in Eden
- His home is the pit and the grave, and he is consumed by fire
- Now, all who are aware of him are appalled at him (if you're not appalled at him, you're not really aware!)

**Rev 12:3-9** *...another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon.... His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne... And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who **leads the whole world astray**. He was hurled to the earth, and **his angels with him**.*

**Luke 4:5-6** *The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me..." (Satan is called the prince of this world in John 12:31, 14:30, and 16:11)*

## **Who is Satan to you?**

*Rev 12:10 Satan is "the accuser of the brothers, who accuses them before God day and night." (This is what he did with Job.)*

*John 8:45 Jesus said the devil "was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."*

*1 Peter 5:8 "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." He wants to eat you. He thinks that consuming Christians is nutritious.*

*John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." How might he set about destroying you? Romans 6:23 says "the wages of sin is death."*

*Eph 4:27 "Do not give Satan a foothold/opportunity." The word is beachhead.*

*Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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.*

### **Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Colonel, General**

This list (just as one with lieutenant, captain, major, colonel, general listed) is a detailed military arrangement. In the Kingdom of Darkness, there are ranks, battle plans, ammunition, power, targets, and a goal. Satan has a militia set up to take you out, thwart God's plans to redeem mankind, humiliate Jesus as incapable of conquering with love, and destroy the object of God's love – people like you and me! This army is comprised of demons (also called evil spirits). Some are named specifically in the Bible:

Numbers 5:14	~ Spirit of jealousy
I Sam 16:14-16	~ Spirit of insanity
II Chron 18:20-22	~ Lying spirit
Isaiah 19:14	~ Spirit of dizziness
Isaiah 61:3	~ Spirit of despair
Hosea 4:12	~ Spirit of prostitution (whoredom)
Mark 9:17	~ Mute spirit
Luke 13:11	~ Crippling spirit
Luke 4:33-34	~ Unclean spirit
Acts 16:16	~ Fortunetelling spirit
Romans 8:14	~ Spirit of slavery
Romans 11:8	~ Spirit of stupor
I Cor 2:12	~ Spirit of the world
Eph 2:2	- There is an evil spirit at work in all the disobedient
Timothy 1:7	~ Spirit of timidity/fear
I John 4:6	~ Spirit of falsehood

These guys, once they get in and operate, create **STRONGHOLDS**. "Having a demon" is the same thing as a stronghold- the enemy comes in and takes hold of something. And no matter what you do or how hard you try, you can't seem to feel free of it– patterns of thoughts, patterns of behaviors. (And you may very well be unaware of them.) You might feel stuck and think if you pray harder, work harder, it might go away. But it may be an evil spirit.

Example: The Garden of Eden

Gen 1:31 "God saw all He had made and said it was very good" – God loves you. It took an action by a human to open a door for the devil. By one act of disobedience, evil spirits went to work:

Genesis 3:7 realized they were naked; sewed fig leaves (shame)

V8 they hid (shame/guilt)

V10 hid b/c they were afraid (fear)

V12 "she gave me the fruit!" (accusation)

These evil spirits create separation: from God, then from others, then from ourselves. We are divided, isolated, and alone. Easy killings!

Some of us have heard that demons cannot attack believers; we are somehow demon-proof. This idea is a tactic of the enemy; the Body of Christ is his #1 target. Who was Jesus addressing when he said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan" in Matthew 16:23? (Good example of how to address temptation.)

*Romans 16:19-2- I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.*

*Psalms 144- Praise be to the LORD my Rock, Who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war.*

## How Does Satan Attack?

Satan can't just walk in and occupy territory: he comes from without, so must be granted permission. He tempts us, then, when we sin, we actually agree with him and allow him access to some part of our belief system. Our beliefs are part of our soul: You are a triune being, made as a reflection of the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). You are body, soul, and spirit. (See I Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12)

*Romans 7:18 "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh... I keep doing the evil I don't want to do." (see also Galatians 5:19)*

Your flesh, your body, will never come to God. It won't be renewed by following Jesus on earth; it will be renewed at its death. "...the corruptible will put on the incorruptible." I Cor 15:50-54. As it is, your flesh is in league with the world (I John 5:19 "the whole world is under the control of the evil one", 2:15, "do not love the world or anything in the world" James 1:14-

15), and with the enemy. Your flesh likes the system of the world: fine dining, high fashion, fancy cars and houses, status, recognition, not serving, etc. When you see some sensual imagery on TV or in movies, it's the flesh that's being appealed to: Not intellect, not will, but flesh. Our flesh will never understand the things of God, nor should we think that by getting it together on the outside have we become righteous. Phil 3:2-9. Jeremiah 17:5 "Cursed is the man who trusts in the arm of the flesh."

*Ezekiel 36:26- I'll give you a new heart, put a new spirit in you. I'll remove the stone heart from your body and replace it with a heart that's God-willed, not self-willed.*

*II Cor 1:22- [God] set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

Your spirit, on the other hand, is the truest part of who you are. It was renewed when you came to Christ. **Eph 2:4-6** It is that part of you which is "sealed in Christ." This is who you really are. Your true identity is found here, though we are tempted to find identity in so many other places. It is by your spirit that you hear God (a la Revelation 1:10) and it is your spirit that God relates to. Jesus knew "in his spirit" what the Pharisees were thinking (Mk 2:8). Your spirit, which is in Christ, is perfect, pure, whole, righteous, and trustworthy. This is how he "presents you to himself as perfect" (Ephesians 5:27), because he sees you in the spirit, NOT according to the flesh (II Cor 5:16-17). Mark 14:38.

Your soul (mind, will, and emotions), then, is the battleground. It can be used to follow your flesh, and creatively engineer sin and death, or they can be used to follow the spirit, and creatively engineer worship and holy living for you. The soul is a good follower, but it was never designed to lead. That's why religious people who let their minds lead end up in death. Or people who're led by their emotions are all unstable. Your soul is where righteousness or sin will be pursued. It's where we're fragile, scattered, inconsistent, and human. Psalm 23 "He restores my soul". David is repeatedly addressing his soul in Psalms. **Romans 12:1-2, II Cor 10:5** In this battleground of the soul, the enemy comes in to tempt you: he wants to trick your mind, or overpower your will, or weaken your emotions, so that you'll agree with any number of his lies. Once you do, he has an open invitation from you to come set up shop. That "shop" is the very thing we seek to destroy (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). See also Phil 3:16, Ephesians 4:17-24.

*Hebrews 10:14 He has made perfect forever [read: spirit]  
those who are being made holy. [read: soul]*

*Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

## **How did Jesus deal with demons?**

*Luke 4:33-36 In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, "Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" "Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him. All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!"*

**Jesus commanded demons simply and with total authority.**

*Matt 8:28-32 When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"... He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water.*

**Jesus proceeded without fear. The demons are well aware of Jesus' name and power. Again he speaks with utter simplicity and commands them.**

## **Could we do what Jesus did?**

*Luke 9:1-2 Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*

**We've been delegated authority by Jesus.**

*Luke 10:17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

**The disciples, when they tested their authority, saw results. Jesus reiterated their authority. He reminds them that authority over unclean spirits is nothing compared to being a son of God!**

*John 14:12 ...anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.*

*James 4:7 Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

Jesus expectation, and that of the early church, was that we would all actively oppose Satan, the thief, and reclaim stolen property from him. Dealing with demons was a fundamental part of Jesus' ministry, and we are called to continue the fight. Satan's attack against us will continue and increase if we sit idly by and refuse to challenge it with our authority. We need only recognize that we have been in agreement with our enemy, repent and walk away. It's easier than you would believe.

*II Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 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.*

*II Corinthians 2:11 ...Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.*

## Receiving the Holy Spirit

God is our Deliverer. This is one of the names God has given Himself so that we might know Him and understand our relationship to Him. See Isaiah 9:4, Psalm 70:5, Romans 11:26, et al. When we oppose the enemy, He comes to rescue us. Luke 11 tells us that when a demon leaves a place (in someone's soul), that place is "unoccupied"—that is to say, a lie has left, but truth has not yet taken its place. What do I do if I've always relied on self-pity to get me out of conflict, then I break agreement with it? How do I cope going forward? We must receive the Holy Spirit; He will come into that broken place and heal us. The Holy Spirit was promised to be given to the Church (Eze 11:19, 36:26, Joel 2:28-29), was given to Jesus as well (Luke 3:22 and 4:1), and is ready and waiting for anybody who'll receive Him, regardless of our background, past, or experience with Him. See Acts 19:1-6, Luke 11:9-13, I Thes 5:19-20.

## Repentance

Repentance is the method for the above to happen: it's how we oppose the devil, break agreement with his lies, and get the light of the Holy Spirit into what's been a dark place of deception. It's good! It always leads to salvation! (Isa 30:15, 2 Cor 7:10) It is NOT: shame, guilt, or self-hatred. On the contrary, those things are tools of the enemy that are meant to keep us from the life-giving freedom of repentance... and we should break agreements with THEM and repent of them too! Repentance is simply waving the white flag before God and saying, "I need a Savior here!" The Bible implores us to

stop trying to fix ourselves or somehow pay for our sins by “doing good” (see Luke 5:32, Romans 4:4-8, Galatians 3); this kind of activity is actually offensive to God and plays into the evil spirits of religion and performance. We must repent of trying to work for God as well! Repentance is the end of my efforts, the admission of my bankruptcy, and a cry for help. God loves repentance.

## The Spiritual Roots of Disease

Deuteronomy 7:1-9 and 14-24 describes the process of doing spiritual warfare in the land God’s given us—our souls. God says He’ll not drive them all out at once; it’ll be a process. He also links the absence of our enemies (read: demons) with physical healing. So the more we walk in repentance, the more health we might expect? This isn’t, by any means, the only Bible passage that makes the connection between demonic activity and physical freedom...

*Exodus 15:26 He said, “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.” Also, Ex 23:24-26*

*Matthew 17:14-18 a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.” “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.” Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.*

*Matt 12:22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see.*

*Proverbs 17:22 A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. Also, Prov 14:30, Eze 34, James 5:16*

We believe there are often spiritual roots of physical disease. (It seems the USA TODAY publishes articles at least monthly that make this connection as well: “poor self-image causes obesity”; “fearful children develop asthma”; “rejection produces depression”; “stress and adrenaline produce tumors” etc.) Peb Smith and Henry Wright estimate 85% of all illness is spiritual. We don’t believe that all sickness is demonic in nature, nor that medicines and doctors are always bad. We believe that all illness should be brought to God, though.

*Exodus 20:4-6 “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 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.*

Sin can be a choice that you, personally, made, but it can also be generational. Think of it: your physicality comes from the DNA of your parents: you can only be what they were (or carried), whether that's dark-skinned, blue-eyed, or long-limbed. The same is true with your spiritual DNA: you came from a specific family with specific virtues (loyalty or hospitality or generosity) and vices (judging, self-hatred, rejection, etc.). These are the things that were passed on to you. Jesus can heal generational sins and ailments.

## **Strongmen**

1 Corinthians 12:10 says we should be seeking to distinguish between spirits – that means being able to identify them. One way to do that is to know which are “strongmen” (Jesus talks about strongmen in Luke 11:19-22) and which are “underlings” (that is, inferior demons that serve the aims of the strongman). Through a study of scriptures, coupled with the experience of those who've been doing spiritual warfare for decades, a list of strongmen also corresponds to the outline of this class:

1. Bitterness and Unforgiveness
2. Accusation, Envy, and Unloving
3. Rejection
4. Religion
5. Occult
6. Fear

## **Doorways For the Enemy**

The last thing to understand as a set-up for the class is what we mean we talk about “doorways”. These are the entry points for strongholds to come into one's life. They would include generational entry points (such as the “Bastard's Curse” specified for children born out of wedlock in Deuteronomy 23:2), traumatic events (such as a car crash or other tragedy, where spirits like fear, self-protection, and unloving can gain access), or oaths you've spoken (“I'll never be like my father.” “I'll never have sex.” “I promise I'll keep your secret or may I die.” “I'll never lose”), which can produce all sorts of spiritual shenanigans. Other doorways may include:

- Womb: Unwanted pregnancy (rejection)
- Trauma at birth (fear, possibly rejection)

Adoption (rejection)  
Absent father via war, job, divorce, or emotionally absent (unloving, fear, failure, abandonment)  
Divorce (abandonment, fear)  
Traumatic event: Car wreck, near drowning, choking, brushes with legal system (fear, abandonment, accusation)  
Church hurt: Being used, pressured, not cared for (fear, abandonment, accusation, religion, unloving, performance)  
Abuse: physical, emotional, or sexual (fear, abandonment, accusation, heaviness, depression, rejection, guilt, shame)  
Financial loss or failure; poverty (fear, abandonment, poverty)  
Witnessing violence in any way (movies are a big one; see Psalm 101:3) (guilt, shame, violence, anger, pride, callousness)  
Military violence (fear, war, pride, anger)  
"Family secrets": making a child avow silence (defeat/victim, shame, isolation)  
Broken heart, dashed dreams (rejection, unloving, hopelessness)  
Death of family member; parent/sibling (fear, rejection)

As we prepare to investigate the strong men, and all the doorways of their entry, ask the Holy Spirit to show you places where you need healing and deliverance now. Ask the Lord to reveal your own heart to you, and to show you the lies you believe. As He does, we'll repent together and walk out into freedom and salvation like we've never known before. Gonna be awesome.

## Finally

Know this, as we walk into our Jesus-bought authority and deal with the enemy, repenting and receiving: the LORD is our deliverer! This is the salvation that has been afforded us! It is God's will that we walk in freedom. Know that He wants this for you, and will deliver you.

*Ps 27:1 The LORD is the stronghold of my life- of whom shall I fear?*

*Ps 109:21 But you, O Sovereign Lord, deal well with me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me.*

*Ps 3:8 From the LORD comes deliverance.*

*John 14:27 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*