



Detecting and Destroying The Roots of Our Sins # 2 “Tearing Down Strongholds” 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

The sin nature we inherited from Adam includes the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

- Therefore, to sin is to prefer anything or anyone before God and to let the things of this world distract us from our eternal goal, which is to glorify God and to praise Him forever.
- Since the world operates on that sinful system, participating in the system is not itself a sin.
- However, when our love for the world and the things in the world exceeds our love for the One who created the world, it becomes sin.

- In Romans 3:23, the Apostle Paul said we all have sinned and continue to fall short of knowing, cherishing, prizing, loving, and treasuring God above all things.
- Therefore, the root of all sinning is to take God off the throne of our lives and put our wants, our desires, and our needs ahead of His desires for us – i.e., the rebel against God.

The Bible describes seven root sins from which all fruit sins arise.

- **Pride** – an excessive belief in one’s own abilities or value, often putting oneself above others or God; no need for God.
- **Greed** – a strong, selfish desire for wealth, material goods, or power, to achieve recognition.
- **Lust** – an intense or unbridled craving for personal pleasure; especially sexual pleasure – when desire is pushed to an inordinate demand.
- **Envy** – a feeling of discontent or resentment aroused by another’s possessions, success, or traits.
- **Gluttony** – overindulgence or overconsumption, usually of food or drink.
- **Wrath** – uncontrolled explosions of anger, rage, and hatred.
- **Slothfulness** – laziness, physical inactivity, or a general apathy toward one’s duties as a man, woman, husband, wife, father, mother, employee, neighbor, or friend. This manifests as spiritual apathy, chronic procrastination, and always choosing the path of least resistance.

Then, according to Hebrews 12:1, at least one of those seven root sins is a besetting sin for us; i.e., we struggle with it daily.

- *“Wherefore, seeing we are encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, **and the sin which doth so easily beset us**, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”*

Every person is born with the same seed-bed or soil of sin, and every person faces the same seven root sins, as well as that one sin that so easily besets them, and each person will stand before the Lord and give account of their sins.

- However, the pattern of how those sins are expressed is established by the behavior of their parents, extended family members, their own friends, and the electronic media they are exposed to.
- Just as a child learns to mimic the attitude and mannerisms of their parents and siblings, so they will learn both good and bad habits which set the fundamental

pattern for their lives.

- In Proverbs 22:15, the Bible says: ***“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”*** The “rod” symbolizes discipline, training, and boundaries that loving parents use to correct misbehavior and teach wisdom.

In Exodus 20:5-6, Moses told the Hebrews, “For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

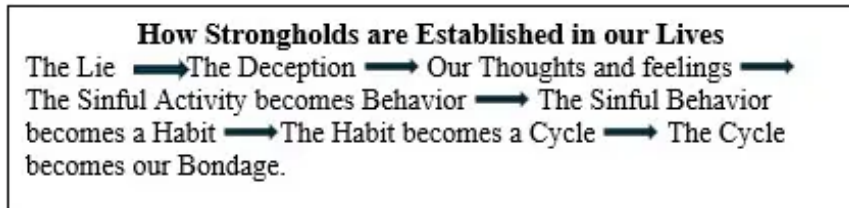
- This passage does not mean that God punishes the innocent children for their parents’ disobedience to God, but that their wicked behavior influences their children, and their children’s children, even down to the 3rd and 4th generation.
- The more children are exposed to the wickedness of the world, the deeper the pattern is set in their minds, so that what one generation tolerates as sin, the next generation will celebrate, and the next generation won’t know it’s a sin anymore.

In his sermons from Proverbs 1-10, Pastor John MacAurthur said: **“Begin early to teach, for children begin early to sin,”** and here are the ten crucial lessons parents must teach their children.

- **To Fear God** – 1:7
- **To Guard Their Minds** – Proverbs 3:3-4
- **To Obey Their Parents** – Proverbs 1:8.
- **To Select Their Companions Carefully** – 1 Corinthians 15:33.
- **To Control Their Body** – Proverbs 2:16-17
- **To Enjoy Their Spouse** – Proverbs 5:15-19
- **To Watch Their Words** – Proverbs 4:24
- **To Work Hard** – Proverbs 6:6-8
- **To Manage Their Money Well** – Proverbs 3:9-10
- **To Love Their Neighbor** – Proverbs 3:27-28

While God is the only One who can save our children, for only the Holy Spirit can lead them to salvation, as parents, we set the example of submission and obedience unto God, or rebellion against Him, and that pattern is handed down to our children, and our children’s children.

- However, at some point in our spiritual journey, we must detect and destroy the roots of those sins that so easily beset us, as well as those bad habits and concepts of life that we inherited from our parents or our peers, which are contrary to God's will, for either we take personal responsibility for our lives, or we will live as victims, and never understand the true meaning and purpose to our lives.



In biblical terms, “strongholds” refer to fortified structures or places of defense. In spiritual terms, strongholds” refer to those entrenched patterns of thought or behavior that are resistant to God’s truth and can hinder one’s spiritual growth.

- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 – *“The weapons of our warfare are not the weapons of the world. Instead, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We tear down arguments and every presumption set up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*
- Ephesians 6:12 – *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world’s darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*

Footholds can be established in any area of our lives: our personal lives, our marriage, our family, our employment, our leisure activities, etc. and it can involve our finances, pornography, drinking, overeating, laziness, lack of discipline, etc., and unless that foothold is recognized, confessed, and fully repented of, including

restitution and reconciliation with those affected, that demon will invite other demons to occupy other parts of our soul, and multiple strongholds are constructed in that person.

Five strategies to destroy the strongholds Satan may have built in our minds:

1. Prayer and Fasting – In Mark 9:29, Jesus told the disciples who weren't able to cast out a demon from a little boy, *"This kind can come out only by prayer."* Fasting and prayer demonstrates a willingness to seek God's power for our personal struggles.

2. Renewing the Mind – In Romans 12:1-2, the Apostle Paul instructed his readers; *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* This is the most important, but most neglected step in the salvation process.

3. Confession and Repentance – In 1 John 1:9, the Bible assures us that confessing our sin is the first step in tearing down any kind of stronghold Satan has tried to establish in our souls.

4. Accountability and Community – The support from our fellow believers is vitally important in this process, for they hold us accountable to our covenant with God.

5. Faith and Trust in God – Hebrews 11:6 says, *"Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him."*