

WHAT IS A STRONGHOLD?

Answer: The word *stronghold* is found once in the New Testament, used metaphorically by Paul in a description of the Christian's spiritual battle: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses [strongholds]" ([2 Corinthians 10:3-4, NASB](#)). This passage reveals the following facts about our warfare:

- 1) Our battle is not planned according to the way this world fights; earthly stratagems are not our concern.
- 2) Our weapons are not physical, for our warfare is spiritual in nature. Rather than guns and tanks, our weapons are those of the "full armor of God" and consist of "the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" ([Ephesians 6:14-17](#)).
- 3) Our power comes from God alone.
- 4) God's plan is to demolish spiritual strongholds.

What are these "strongholds" or "fortifications" we face? In the very next verse, Paul interprets the metaphor: "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" ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)). The "arguments" are the philosophies, reasonings, and schemes of the world. The "pretensions" have to do with anything proud, man-centered, and self-confident.

Here's the picture: the Christian, wearing his spiritual armor and bearing his spiritual weapons, sets out to "conquer" the world for Christ, but he soon finds obstacles. **The enemy has erected strongly fortified garrisons to resist the Truth and thwart God's plan of redemption.** There is the fortress of human reasoning, reinforced with many subtle arguments and the pretense of logic. There is the castle of passion, with flaming battlements defended by lust, pleasure, and greed. And there is the pinnacle of pride, in which the human heart sits enthroned and revels in thoughts of its own excellence and sufficiency.

The enemy is firmly entrenched; these strongholds have been guarded for thousands of years, presenting a great wall of resistance to the Truth. None of this deters the Christian warrior, however. Using the weapons of God's choosing, he attacks the strongholds, and by the miraculous power of Christ, the walls are breached, and the bastions of sin and error are battered down. The victorious Christian enters the ruins and leads captive, as it were, every false theory and every human philosophy that had once proudly asserted its independence from God.

Sharing the gospel is not the only time we see resistance. We can also face demonic strongholds in our own lives, in our families, and even in our churches. Anyone who has fought an addiction, struggled with pride, or had to "flee youthful lusts" knows that sin, a lack of faith, and a worldly outlook on life are indeed "strongholds."

The Lord is building His Church, and the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" ([Matthew 16:18](#)). What we need are Christian soldiers, totally surrendered to the will of the Lord of Hosts, who will use the spiritual weapons He provides. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God" ([Psalm 20:7](#)).