

WELCOME TO WORD OF FAITH LIFE GROUPS **WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER**

LIFE GROUP LESSON PLAN

Pulling Down Strongholds, Pt. 4

Thursday, April 28, 2022 – 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Teaching The Bible Through Practical Biblical Teaching

OPENING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

WELCOME TO OUR GROUP (5 MINUTES)

If this is your first time joining us, please introduce yourself! We are glad you took the time to join us today. Our group has four purposes:

1. **L... Learning together from God's Word**
2. **I... Interceding through prayer**
3. **F... true Fellowship in the Spirit of Christ**
4. **E...Evangelizing the lost**

PRAISE & WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

FACILITATION OF LESSON

Sermon Title: *“Pulling Down Strongholds, Pt. 4”*

POINT 1

The disciples spoke and taught about the power and authority invested in Jesus' name, as well as the gospel - salvation through Jesus Christ. Receiving and acting on the word was what brought people out of the grip of Satan's strongholds in every case.

Which leads us to the question of whether Paul attempted to wage battle with strongholds over cities. Let's look at what Paul did as he journeyed and encountered strongholds in several cities. Because he penned two-thirds of the New Testament, we should truly look into what he did.

In the unlikely event that tearing down strongholds over cities by warring tongues or yelling at devils is a scriptural practice, Paul either mentioned something about it or practiced it in the cities where he traveled. So, let's follow Paul all the way to Athens.

There was also a lot of evil in the city of Athens, which was another significant metropolis in the Greek world. What did Paul instruct people to do in order to deal with the spiritual strongholds that existed in that city?

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READ: Acts 17:15-16

*15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto **Athens**: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.*

*16 Now while **Paul waited** for them at Athens, **his spirit was stirred in him**, when he saw **the city wholly given to idolatry**.*

This was really demonic! On Mars Hill, the Athenians had erected a variety of images dedicated to numerous gods.

From what is recorded in the Scriptures, Paul believed that the city of Athens had been completely taken over by idolatry. Because of the strongholds that existed in that city and over the people, Paul's spirit was stirred.

Did Paul wage warfare against the spiritual princes of Mars Hill in high places? No, the Bible clearly states what he did. He preached the gospel to the people. He preached the Word:

READ: Acts 17:17-23

*17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. 22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, **I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious**. 23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, **him declare I unto you**.*

According to Acts, Paul did not seek to destroy any demonic strongholds over the city, despite the fact that he saw many strongholds there. He preached the gospel, and he preached about Jesus. Now he's preaching to scholars and the so call doctorates in this Greek city. He says in **Acts 17:29-32**:

READ: Acts 17:29-32

29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

He's not casting out anything; he's teaching them truths. He goes on to teach them:

*31 Because he [GOD] hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man [JESUS] whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath **given assurance unto all men**, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

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32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

There was no mention of the devil in Paul's sermon. Those who believed what Paul said were saved. That's how Paul broke the strongholds over people's lives – he preached the word so they could get saved! Then Satan no longer had legal dominion over them.

QUESTION

1. How do we free people from Satan's dominion? What are the methods we use?

POINT 2

Acts 19 depicts Paul's ministry in Ephesus. The inhabitants of Ephesus created and sold images of the goddess Diana. When Paul came to town proclaiming Jesus Christ, they thought their livelihood was jeopardized, so they rose up against Paul, causing upheaval and impeding his ability to preach the Word.

Some evil spirit was undoubtedly governing the city, forcing the people to revolt against the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul, on the other hand, did not launch a spiritual militant attack to pull down the Diana spirit! The Apostle Paul was preoccupied with bringing Jesus to the fore. He was busy preaching the Word in order to free people from Satan's grip.

READ: Acts 19:1, 8-10,

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

Verse 8-10:

*8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading **the things concerning the kingdom of God.***

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

*10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia **heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.***

Verse 20:

*20 So mightily **grew the word of God and prevailed.***

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The city of Ephesus was taken over by the temple cult of Diana, which established a permanent residence there. The city had been devoted to the worship of idols. Nevertheless, Paul overcame those demonic strongholds by proclaiming the Word of God. It took him two years, but according to the Bible, the word spread and eventually won out.

As a result of the large number of individuals who believed the Word Paul preached, the Word began to prevail in their lives. Individual people accepted the gospel and declared Jesus Christ their lord in that city, demonstrating that the Word of God had prevailed.

If you truly want change in St. Thomas, stop just lip-synching and come out with us on the SWAT team and get somebody saved or find someone on your job to minister to. Even if you only share your testimony. When the Word of God begins to prevail in the lives of the people, change will occur in St. Thomas.

QUESTION:

1. What constitutes idol worship in today's world? Have you ever ministered to someone and witnessed a transformation in their life?

POINT 3

The early church began with 120 persons on the day of Pentecost. It's clear from the book of Acts that the devil tried to prevent the early church from growing. Persecution, tests, and trials were used by the devil to assault the early church from all sides.

In the early days of the church, Satan attempted to destroy it, but believers overcame him through the Word of God.

And because the Word prevailed;

READ: Acts 2:47, the Apostles were:

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

You transform a community by getting people saved! Satan employs the same techniques today - tests and trials – that he employed in the early church. He is still attempting to undermine the church's ability to promote the gospel.

QUESTION:

1. What are some of the ways Satan is attempting to oppose the church in our time? Why?

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POINT 4

READ: Matthew 16:18

*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [REVELATION OF THE WORD] I will build my church; and **the gates of hell shall not prevail** against it.*

The church today is equipped with the same armor the early believers used against the devil to successfully withstand his onslaughts and remain victorious over him. We can overcome the enemy's strategies just like the early church did, not by focusing our attention on fighting a defeated foe or by trying to pull down demonic strongholds over cities. We have authority to bind principalities and powers in their operation against us. And we can pray to God for people's hearts to be open to the gospel. Then we need to get out and preach the word and tell people about their covenant rights in Christ so they can be set free.

Besides, have you ever been somewhere where people have supposedly pulled down demonic strongholds over them? It's interesting that after they've pulled them down, they're still there!

That's because it's only the Word that changes people and affects nations and communities like ours. It's only the Word that brings people out from under Satan's dominion and bondage so they can learn how to stand against him.

QUESTION:

1. What strategies can we use to overcome the enemy in our community?

POINT 5

Now another practice that's wreaking havoc in some churches today is so called "Schools of Deliverance."

Most of the time all they are doing is hollering and yelling at the devil at the top of their voices thinking they're tormenting the devil. Instead of being schools of deliverance they turn into schools of bondage because they teach people to be devil-conscious and to fear the devil.

Trying to torment a defeated foe by hollering at him is missing the real battle. The believers primary battle is with his own unrenewed mind and their unrenewed mind is won as the believer stands in his authority in Christ.

Some believers seem to think yelling at the devil shows their authority over him. But the devil doesn't have to bow to the loudness of your voice. He isn't afraid of noise; he's afraid of the name of Jesus!

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He's afraid of the believer who stands in his authority in Christ. The devil doesn't have to cease and desist in his operations against you based on how loud you can yell at him.

But he does have to stop in every strategy against you when you exercise your authority in Christ. You just have to know your rights and privileges in Christ and enforce Jesus' victory over Satan with God's Word.

QUESTIONS:

1. Has anyone had an experience with a deliverance ministry? Explain.
2. What does Satan fear the most about believers? How important is it for you to know your rights and privileges in Christ?

We are not trying to win the victory over Satan. Jesus has already done that! Once again, we are simply enforcing Jesus' victory with the word of God in our lives.

You have some people that teach that the bible says Jesus went into the synagogues and evil spirits would cry out, have you come to torment us? So, they say we're going to torment the devil!

They're quoting **Mark 5:7**:

*And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou **torment me not.***

READ: Luke 8:28

When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Matthew 8:29 clarifies something:

And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

He says before the time. Jesus couldn't torment these evil spirits yet, and neither can we. Until Adam's lease runs out, demons and evil spirits are here on the earth. But thank God, the day is coming when they will be cast into their eternal abode and they will be tormented:

READ: Revelation 20:1 Where the apostle John tells us:

I And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

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2 And he laid hold on **the dragon, that old serpent**, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

The question remains why would anyone want to torment the devil when Jesus already whipped him at the cross?

Get this in your heart, Satan is a defeated foe, so I'm not overly concerned about him. I know what to do with him if he shows up! I'm more interested in preaching about Jesus, so that people can come out from under the devil's dominion and learn how to successfully take their stand against Satan in every test and trial.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it a waste of time trying to torment the devil with loud noise? What does the bible mean when it says before the time?
2. What should we be interested in when it comes to dealing with Satan?

Let's find out what the bible says and base our strategy against the kingdom of darkness on scriptural grounds so we can win the lost in the world for Jesus.

POINT 6

Examine the Bible for yourself. You'll notice that Jesus, the twelve disciples, and the Apostle Paul all taught believers how to preach the gospel. They talked about the Name of Jesus and the power that believers have over all the powers of darkness because of it.

They taught believers to stand strong in faith in god's word because it's the word that dispels strongholds in people's lives and thinking.

The anointing on the word has the power to break any demonic bondage.

That's why we have get the word of God out by any means possible. Through witnessing, through Covenant Partners Ministry, through the VIP Silver Saints Ministry, through Single with Purpose Ministry, through IBC our Young Ministry, through our Youth Ministry, through Children's Ministry and through Life Groups. It's all designed for the word to break the strongholds over people's lives.

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1. What did we learn about how Jesus' ministry, the ministry of the twelve disciples, and the ministry of the Apostle Paul dealt with strongholds?
2. Why is it important to get involved in what the church is doing through it's various outreaches?

ALTAR CALL - TIME OF DECISION (EVERYONE BOW YOUR HEADS)

PRAISE REPORTS - *2-MINUTES PER PERSON

PRAYER FOCUS / INDIVIDUAL PRAYER REQUEST (10 MINUTES)

Prayer focus:

- 1) Your Circle (friends and family)
- 2) Life Group members
- 3) Word of Faith Leadership:
 - a. Pastor Ronald D. Walker, Jr., Evangelist Sharon L. Walker, Minister Promise Walker, Brittany and Christian and the ministerial staff.
 - b. Bishop Keith A. Butler and Pastor Deborah Butler

Have you reached out to your circle today?

ANNOUNCEMENTS (5 MINUTES)

1. Join us **Saturday, April 30th for our Beach Day Picnic at Magen's Bay Beach, Shed #3.** Food and drink donations are needed. Volunteers are needed for set up and break down. Trucks are needed to transport item to the beach. Volunteers are needed to serve food. Volunteers are needed to assist with games and others activities on the beach. To sign up see Minister Creque.
2. Join us for **Holy Communion Service, Sunday, May 1st at 10:00 am.** For those viewing online, by radio or phone prepare your communion elements in advance so that we can break bread together.
3. Join **Generation 6:20 Youth Ministry for Friday Night Live. Friday, May 6, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** Admission to Friday Night Live is \$1.00 for more information please contact Minister Julie Francis

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4. Join us on **Sunday, May 8th at 10 am for our Mother's Day Celebration** with Ministry of the Word by Evangelist Sharon L. Walker. Get ready for a mother's day filled with special surprises just for you.
5. Join us for **Baby Dedication, Sunday, May 8, 2022 at 10:00 am**. To register please contact the church office at (340) 774-8617.
6. **Telephone Ministry Google Doc Training, Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.** For more information contact Minister Creque.

OFFERING

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CLOSING PRAYER & DISMISSAL
