

# 2026 Men's Conference Session 1 of 3

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Date: 07 March 2026

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 10, if you would. I'll turn there too.

We did this last year, not this exact passage, but we got together last year and did the same! It was a blessing, it was great, and it's like, well, Lord, we don't want to just do something just for the sake of doing it, but, you know, you want to run it back, and not in January.

He said no to that, which is cool. That means there's people here today that maybe wouldn't have been here in January, and there's some that aren't here, but the Lord has those here to hear what he has to say.

But the scripture that had come to mind was in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 here, verses 4 through 5, which says, well, 3 says, for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

[ 1 : 11 ] And then, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And so, there's kind of like three parts there, where he says that we're to cast, it pulls down strongholds, cast down imaginations, and everything that exalts itself, every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

So, we're going to look at those three different parts. My part will be the pulling down of strongholds. But every one of those is in the mind, is what it's talking about here. It's not a physical stronghold, because we see here, it's imaginations.

It's every thought that we're bringing to captivity. So, it's in our minds where this is taking place. And it just, I think in today's day, the Lord has a word he wants to speak to us.

The day we're living in, where there's so many things that come into our minds, that compete for our minds. We only have so much time in the day to give our minds to something. And some of us are up at night with our minds being given to something when we should be sleeping.

But there's only so much that we can give our minds to. So, that's what we're going to talk about today over these sessions. I'm sure there'll be a ton of overlap. It was just cool. Some of those songs that we're singing, how he pulls down strongholds.

[ 2 : 19 ] You know, he casts these, he moves mountains and all those high places. But I'm going to look at with you, to start with this, this morning, my first session is the battleground of the soul.

And I really like that slide. I did one this last Wednesday, and it's a Western one. Like, really cool. But the battleground of the soul.

What is the battleground of the soul? Well, the mind is the battleground of the soul. Would you pray with me? Father, we thank you so much, Lord, that your word is alive, it's active, it's sharper than any two-edged sword.

It pierces even. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. Lord, I pray for you. The thoughts. The intents of the heart, Lord.

Lord, what are the thoughts? Oh, they're competing in my mind, Lord, for the thoughts that you want to be there, Lord. Lord, I pray for these men, Lord. Men of God who have chosen, Lord, to come and to give their minds, their bodies, their time, their day to you, Lord.

[ 3 : 24 ] That you would encourage them, Lord, with your love. That you would encourage them with your word, Lord, that they would be true men, Lord. Men who have given their hearts, their lives, their minds, and their time to you, Lord.

Lord, we thank you that you are such an approachable God. Speak to us now, and in Jesus' name, amen. So the mind is, let me see, hang on, when am I supposed to be done? That will help.

Be done at noon. 10.20, gotcha. All right. Okay.

So the mind is how we interact with God. It's how we interact with the world. It's how we interact with sin. It's how we interact with the devil. There's no relationship with God that does not begin with belief, right?

And belief starts where? Do you feel belief? Oh, I feel like I'm believing today. Sometimes we think that. It's like, oh, today I feel like, Lord, I feel really good today. And other days I may not feel so good.

[ 4 : 23 ] But belief starts in the mind. So there is no relationship with God that does not begin with belief. And that belief starts in our mind. It begins with a choice. God will never force upon us faith.

You shall have faith. It's an act of the will, an act of the mind. It's a choice. In 2 Timothy 1.7, Paul says, God has given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of what?

A sound mind, a solid mind, a secure mind. God has given us that. Something that is ours by inheritance and through the work that Jesus did on the cross.

1 Corinthians 2.16 says, For who is known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him. But we have the mind of Christ. We have a mind that's a sound mind.

It's the mind of Christ. And yet Paul would then write in Philippians 2.5, Let, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

[ 5 : 26 ] Then he goes on to say, What was that mind? They took upon himself the form of a servant and became obedient unto death. So we have a sound mind. We have the mind of Christ. There's a part that's our part. We have to let that mind be in us.

It is through the mind that we make choices. And the more we make those choices, and sometimes the same choices, they turn into what? Habit. It's through the mind that our choices are formed into habit.

Habits then, when they are held onto long enough, they become ingrained in our character. What is character? Character is the moral base by which we make decisions. So as I make choices in my life, and I continue to make those choices, it can become a habit.

It's just the reflex that I just kind of do this habitually. You know, someone says to me, Hey, brother, how's your day? Great. But I'm having a terrible day. But I always reflexively just say, Great.

Great. Great. Everything's fine. You know, it's like that little gif with the little dog sitting with all the fire around him. Everything's fine here. Everything's fine. No problem. Well, that can become part of my character.

[ 6 : 28 ] That can become part of my moral decision making. That I'm not an open person. I'm not going to tell you because now this is a habit. This is a character. And character becomes nature. Nature is just something we act upon.

It's who we are. We just don't even think about it anymore. There are things in my nature that I wish weren't there. That came from choices I made. In my mind, it became a habit.

It became part of my character. You see, the enemy has no capacity, has no ability to reach our hearts. It's not like Satan's like, I'm going to reach in there and mess with your hearts. Where does he mess with all the time? Our minds.

It's in our minds. Only God can touch the heart. So Satan seeks to attack the heart. How? Through our minds. He's like, I can't reach in there and screw with your heart.

But out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. And where your treasure is, there is your heart. So if he can, in my mind, convince me to place value in something where my heart shouldn't be, my heart will follow and it will go there.

[ 7 : 29 ] Because where my treasure is, there is my heart. God is the one who knows the heart. And what he knows about it isn't that great. Jeremiah 17, 9 through 10 says, The heart is deceitful above all things.

And desperately wicked, who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart. The Lord is the one who searches the heart. He tries the reins. In other words, he sees how willing is it to move in which direction.

Even to give every man according to his works, according to the fruit of his doings. Proverbs 4, 23 speaks of the heart. It says, keep your heart with all diligence. We're to keep our hearts, for out of it are the issues of life.

And 1 Thessalonians 5, 8 says, But let us who are of the day, you know, God is light and in him is no darkness at all. We are of the day. Contrasting that with those that are in the dark.

We are aware. We see. We're awake. We have put our faith in Christ. We're to be sober. Putting on the breastplate of faith and love. And for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

[ 8 : 33 ] What's the hope of your salvation? What's the hope of my salvation? It's Jesus. And what does that do? It guards my mind. I put that helmet on. You see, as we look at this scripture, the issue is not that we're attacked.

Oh, I'm being attacked. Yeah, you're going to be attacked. It's how we respond when we're attacked. If you are in the light, if you have willingly chosen to follow Christ, you're going to be attacked.

Now, if you haven't chosen to follow Christ, we're still going to be attacked. You just have no defense, and you have no ability to defend yourself. So let's pick up real quick here.

We're going to look at a couple scriptures here. In Corinthians, then we're going to bounce somewhere else. But 2 Corinthians 10, let's look at verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. Paul here is talking about how he has no confidence in his flesh. It's not, that's not what he's putting his trust in.

[ 9 : 38 ] It's not, well, I'm Paul the Apostle. Let me give you my accolades and my whatever. But he's saying, but I recognize that I'm living a life in the flesh. And if you're around the church at all, you think, well, being in the flesh is bad.

You know, I shouldn't follow the flesh. Flesh leads to corruption. You know, spirit leads to life. What he's talking about here is different than living in the flesh. Walking in the flesh, it just means I have a natural, a fleshly, the flesh, I have a natural nature that I live in, and I can't escape that.

Now, to live in the deeds of the flesh, yet it's foolish and will lead to corruption. But being in the nature of the flesh, it's not something I can do anything about. Our walk in the flesh, our everyday walk in the nature of the flesh, it's natural.

It's natural. It's perfectly normal to be a man with a body, with a nature of the flesh. It's continual. It's not like tomorrow I'm going to wake up and be like, I don't have the nature of the flesh.

Praise God. I only have the nature of the spirit today. It's familiar. It's something that, it's so familiar that sometimes we don't even realize it's there. It's comfortable.

[ 10 : 51 ] It's what I'm used to. But this puts us at a serious disadvantage in spiritual warfare. In spiritual war, this is a serious disadvantage. Because when we war in the spirit, all of a sudden we may not be comfortable.

We may not be in something we're now familiar with. This might not be natural anymore. We've been given the mind of Christ. We've been given a spiritual nature. But my walk, as Paul says, my daily life and progression is one that's natural.

And so all of a sudden now, I'm being tasked, in a sense, to use things that are not always comfortable, familiar, and natural. It's not always comfortable to go to a brother and be like, hey, can you pray for me?

Oh, I said it. Okay. What do you need me to pray for you for? Oh, no, you want me to tell you? Can't you just pray for me? Being open, it's not always comfortable. It's not always familiar.

Maybe it's something we haven't grown up doing. It's just, oh, I go to church. I've always gone to church. Yes, sir. Go to church. Church, church, church. You talk to anybody? Well, no, I don't talk to anybody. You know, I just go and I get out. That's what we do.

[ 12 : 00 ] Well, maybe it's time you need to make something new, newly familiar, a new familiar. All right, I'm going to stay. I stayed for 10 minutes, not one person talked to me. Well, you know what? For the last five years, you haven't talked to anybody either.

They're probably going to be like, yeah, I've been waiting to talk to you if only you've waited around. And it's not natural. My natural inclination, right, when I am combating things, as we're talking about in the mind, is to do what?

To fight with the same natural weapons I'm used to. We're told in 1 John 2.16 that all that is in the world, the lust, the desire, that is, a desire I want fulfilled now, no matter the results and consequences.

The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, it's not of the Father. It's of the world. But you know what? I'm comfortable, familiar, and it's natural to have the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

I hate to say that. It's comfortable. It's familiar. It's very natural. Very natural. Very frustrating at times. But this is the enemy's turf.

[13:03] His fallen, our fallen nature is his turf. We are bound to that fallen nature by our flesh. One day, praise God, we will have a new body.

We'll have essentially a new flesh, a new natural that will not have a fallen nature bound to it. But right now, our fallen nature is bound to this natural life. That is the enemy's turf.

He's like, all right. That became his turf in the garden when he says, that's God said. So we can't fight the enemy on his turf and with his weapons. We can't. And so as my mind is being bombarded with whatever, the natural, the familiar, the comfortable, is what I kind of lean into, but I can feel like I'm not making any progress here.

If we attempt to fight the enemy with the natural weapons of our carnal nature, we end up hurting more than helping. And it's like, the more I try, the more frustrated, the more frustrated, the more I just spiral back into then whatever that is that's in the mind.

So here's my verse. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Carnal means having the nature of the flesh under the control of the natural appetites governed by mere human nature and not by the spirit of God.

[14:18] The weapons of our warfare are not of the natural flesh. They're not under the control of the natural appetites and they're governed by the spirit of God. They're not governed by human nature. That is the weapons.

A weapon is what? But some of you got weapons today. Weapon is a what? It's an implement or tool for accomplishing warfare.

You're accomplishing warfare with it? It's a weapon. It's an implement or tool for accomplishing warfare. The implements, the tools that we have for accomplishing warfare, they don't work according to our carnal nature, according to the appetites of the natural.

But they are mighty. They're able. They are powerful. They are strong through God. They're strong through God. Our carnal nature, its implements are not able, powerful, or strong enough to combat the warfare of the mind.

I think that's something we just got to come to terms with. The warfare of the mind, the implements that are part of our human nature, they're not powerful enough.

[15:26] They're not strong enough. They're not able to combat the warfare of the mind. They're not. Whereas the implements that pertain to God, to the spirit, they are able.

They are powerful. And they're strong enough to combat the warfare of the mind. That should give us great hope. Because we're going to see these three areas, they're areas that are not just small things.

These are entrenched, strong positions of power, in a sense, in our minds. Romans 8, 6, for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

The result of combating with weapons that derive their ability from God, so when I then pick up his weapons and I combat, then I exercise my warfare with weapons that derive ability from God, it's the utter destruction, then, of that which the flesh had no capacity to remove.

God is able to utterly destroy and remove that which the flesh could not, that which the natural could not, that which the things I'm comfortable with that are natural, that are familiar, the tools, tools that maybe the world says, yeah, this will work, enough sessions and therapy and it'll work, it won't.

[16:42] They have no ability. They're not mighty. But through God they are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. Pulling down means demolish or utter destruction.

They can demolish it, they destroy it. A stronghold is a fortress or a defense or anything on which one relies. So in this instance, and here's the definition, I'm sure you all remember this one.

Stronghold, in this context with the mind, is the arguments and reasonings by which a disputant endeavors to fortify his opinion and defend it against his opponent. That'll be on the test at the end of the day.

So take a picture of that. Arguments and reasonings by which the person you're disputing with is using to fortify his opinion and defend against his opponent.

Now that could be, that could be a good thing or it could be a negative thing. That could be something that's in my mind that it's the argument, this stronghold, an argument or reasoning by which I'm endeavoring to fortify my position against what?

[17:47] I'm not comfortable with that. I'm not familiar with that. And it's the spirit of God trying to get into my mind. The strongholds that set themselves up in our minds, they can come from anywhere.

Those strongholds that set themselves up in my mind can come from the enemy, they can come from the world, or from my own fallen fleshly mind. Wherever they come from, a stronghold of the mind is a thought, idea, memory, reasoning, or belief that is immovably planted in the mind despite its opposition to the truth.

So a stronghold is something in my mind firmly implanted there despite the fact it is in opposition to the truth. It is a stronghold. It could be a memory.

It could be triggered by an experience I had. It could be something that I just, I don't want it there. I wish it was gone, but it comes back. And it's just, no matter what I do, it's there.

It's part of my character, part of my nature. It's just who I am. I've come to live with it. These are just, this thought process or these fears or feelings or whatever, this stronghold in my mind, I've just come to kind of accept it's just who I am.

[19:03] I'm, you know, whatever. And those strongholds, they may be continual. Just continue. It may even be something we've become comfortable with. I can't imagine living any other way.

It could be natural, it could be familiar, but it doesn't mean it's healthy. It doesn't mean it's healthy. A stronghold in my mind. Paul says in Philippians 4, verse 8, he says, finally, brethren, he's saying finally, I'm not saying finally.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, and lovely, whatsoever things are of good rapport, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on those things.

Think on those things. Sometimes those things aren't the natural, comfortable, familiar thing that I put in my mind. Sometimes the pure and the lovely and the virtuous and the just and the honest and the praiseworthy, where am I going to find that, I wonder?

But sometimes it's not comfortable and familiar or natural. I'd rather scroll. Our brains never actually forget a habit.

[20:23] When we have a habit, you think, I'm going to break that habit. We don't actually. They get overridden. This means once a habit is formed, especially a deeply ingrained one, it doesn't completely disappear, even if you stop doing it for years.

The neural pathways that created that habit remain in your brain and it stays like a dormant path waiting to be walked again. That's why relapse can happen so fast and while bad habits feel like they have a permanent backdoor into your life.

It just tucks it away somewhere until something, a mood, a place, a scent brings it back. Ever have any like goofy, like nervous tics or physical things you did as a kid?

And like you find all of a sudden as adults, sometimes you like slide right back into like, oh man, why am I doing that? I used to do that as a kid. That's so silly. Because it's there. It's just lying dormant.

Spirit of God is working in our minds, our hearts, our lives, always seeking to order our lives according to that which pertains to his nature.

[21:28] God wants to order me to order my life according to what pertains to his nature. Is it I don't want that? Like I don't, I don't, I don't really want to live after the Spirit.

I mean, I'd rather live a life as a Christian in the flesh. Anybody here want to do that? It's not very fun. It gets depressing. You get guilt laid in and you're just frustrated and you're not growing and you see other people who have so much peace and joy and you're like, how come I can't have that? God wants me to order my life according to that which pertains to his nature, but what happens? The familiar, the comfortable, that pattern there, it competes with it and it's so easy to slip into that one, to slip back into this habit that I don't want it to be there but it's like a stronghold.

It's like something that, you know, you're trying to beat down a wall, a brick wall with your fist and all it does is hurt worse and the brick wall doesn't go anywhere. Turn to Joshua chapter 6 if you would. In Joshua 6, Joshua and the children of Israel have come into, they've crossed the Jordan River miraculously when the water is parted and it's heaped up, literally being heaped up.

[22:47] I don't remember where the city was being heaped at but I always picture like, you know, some kid going outside and be like, hey mom, the river's doing something weird. It's not just like the Red Sea where it splits. Literally the wording is just stopped but the river's continuing until this point

and just heaping and heaping and heaping.

I just think that would have been so wild to see like, whoa, what's happening here? And so they cross over and their first stronghold in front of them is Jericho.

They come to Jericho. Proverbs 21, 22 says, a wise man scales the city of the mighty and casts down the strength of the confidence thereof.

A wise man scales the city and brings it down and I think Joshua and Israel, they're going into the land like, that's what we're going to do. We're going to go in there and we're going to take down Jericho. Yes.

We pick up in verse 1 of Joshua 6. It says, now Jericho was straightly shut up because of the children of Israel. like they closed all the doors.

[ 23 : 48 ] They've heard about this God who follows, who goes with these people that defeated Egypt, that parted the Red Sea and has kept them in these 40 years in the wilderness, defeated Og, the king of Bashan and Moab and here they come.

They've crossed the rivers but they've closed the doors. Like, this is a stronghold. You're not going to get in here. Jericho was straightly shut up because of the children of Israel.

None went out. And none came in. And the Lord said unto Joshua, see, I have given into your hand Jericho and the king thereof and the mighty men of valor.

Jericho was a fortress of defense, a stronghold. What did it stand in opposition to? It stood in opposition to the progress that God had planned in the lives of his people.

This stronghold kept God's people from moving forward and the progress that he had intended for them. Jericho prevented God's people from progressing any further into promise.

[ 24 : 51 ] God's like, I have so much for you. I have this promise of this whole thing. It's yours. And the people came against this stronghold. Strongholds prevent us from progressing into God's promise for us.

As long as Jericho stood, they could have voided it. They could have left it. Let's just go around it. You know what? It's just a small thing. We'll just leave it. What does that mean then?

It means that there's always a place for the enemy to launch his attacks from. As long as Jericho exists, there's going to be a place now for the enemy to launch his attacks from. As long as these strongholds exist in our mind that set themselves up in opposition to God's path, God's progress, God's promise, and God's truth, what happens?

It's a place the enemy just launches his attacks from. And he's so pernicious too. The enemy will keep you on a chain, and he'll let you go, and he'll let you go, and you'll think, oh, I finally got victory. Praise God. Yank, and down you go again.

Because there's a stronghold there that he's launching that attack from. Psalm 119, 28 says, My soul melts for heaviness.

[ 25 : 57 ] Strengthen me, thou me, according to your word. How is Joshua strengthened here? By God's word. God's might was found in God's word. The word spoke truth.

A truth that was in opposition to Joshua's perceived reality. Truth was, hey, it's already yours. It's already done. Joshua's perceived reality was like, no way.

It's still there. If Joshua chose to not progress forward, according to God's word, well, Jericho would still be there. If he waited to see that it actually came down first.

But God's might, the power, was found in the word. The Lord says to Joshua now, he says, Joshua, we can't leave this here in your path.

It's going to impede your progress forward. You won't be able to enter promise, and the enemy will launch an attack from here. So you shall compass the city, verse 3, all you men of war, and go around about the city once.

[ 26 : 59 ] Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know, Joshua's like strapping things on. He's putting on his harness, and he's got his shield. He's checking his sword. We'll go around the city, all of us men, go around once, then we run an attack, right? Right?

Thus shall you do six days. Go around it once for six days. Okay. God's solution was not to first remove the stronghold.

It wasn't like, let's just get this thing gone out of your life. No, what was it? It was to establish a new stronghold of faith based on his word.

He said, Joshua, we're not going to take that stronghold. We're going to establish a new stronghold. We're going to show that stronghold that they're surrounded, that they got nowhere to go, that

they're already defeated. Psalm 119, verses 89 through 92.

Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness is unto all generations. You have established the earth and it abides. They continue this day according to your ordinances for all are your servants.

[ 28 : 04 ] All of those things established by God's word. And then the psalmist says, David says, unless your law had been my delights, I should then have perished in my affliction. He said, hey, your word is the solid thing in my life.

It's not Jericho. It's not the stronghold. Your word is what's solid. Your word settled in heaven. It's been faithful to all generations. They continue according to the ordinances, according to this day. And if it wasn't for your word, I would have perished in my afflictions. So the enemy has already been defeated in verse 2. And victory's been assured.

The Lord says to Joshua, hey, I've given into your hand, Jericho. It's done. God would first change Israel's perspective before they would go and remove that stronghold.

And how do you do that? How does he change my perspective regarding something like this? God, this seems so big. It seems so frustrating. It seems, and it could not, maybe it's in someone else's mind. You're like, Lord, I've been praying for that person.

[ 29 : 06 ] They just won't see that you're the way, the truth, and the life. There's a stronghold there, God. What does God do? He gives him his perspective. Before he sends him up to take it, he says, well, march around it once for six days, one time.

March around it. I want you to see that the enemy, in fact, is trapped and surrounded. We got him, boys. March around. March around. March around. Never once did Jericho come out and attack. They're shut up. They're stuck. God's word would lead Israel to experience not just victory, but they would, through this victory, experience a whole new way of looking at battle.

It would change their entire perspective on how they do battle. Remember when David goes against Goliath? He's like, man, you come against me with a sword and a spear, or a shield and spear.

I come to you in the name of the Lord. I got a whole different perspective than you, buddy. You're already defeated. God's word would lead Israel to experience victory, yes, but he wants us to have a whole new way of looking at the battle.

[ 30 : 12 ] Maybe in my life and in your life, there's an area where you're like, why don't I have victory there, Lord? Why have you not removed that? He's like, well, because first, I want you to have a different perspective.

I don't want to remove that and be right back here again with the same type of, you need to have a different perspective. You need to understand how to battle. In verse 4, and seven priests, the Lord says, they shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns.

On the seventh day, you shall compass the city seven times and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And Joshua's like, okay, so now we're not even going out with the men of war first here, it's the priests.

What else goes with them there? The ark. The ark. God doesn't ask us to walk alone into the presence of the enemy.

He goes with us and he goes before us. He didn't just send them out and say, you know, let me know how it goes. I've given you what you need and now go take care of it. He's with them. He goes before them.

[ 31 : 15 ] You all know Psalm 23, the last part of that chapter of that psalm. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I'll fear no evil because you're with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me. Who's preparing the table? He is. In the presence of mine enemies. That means he's there with me. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runs over. God doesn't ask us to walk alone.

He goes with us. He goes before us. Verse 5, and it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with a ram's horn and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout.

The wall of the city shall fall down flat. The people shall send up every man straight before him.

Now we're familiar with this. This is something we're familiar with, this passage.

But if you were there, you're like, okay, we've walked around, we've walked around. All right, this makes sense, God. Now we get it. We're scaring the people. They're like, when are they going to

attack? When are they going to attack? You can picture the people in Jericho, right?

[ 32 : 14 ] The first day, Israel marches around. They're like, you know, they're just out of bow shot. What are they doing? Get ready, guys. They're going to attack any second. They walk around once and they go home. Second day, third day, by the fifth day, you know, whatever chatter is going on on the wall in Jericho has probably just died down and they're just watching.

When are they going to attack? What's going to happen? How long are they going to do this? A week? A month? A year? What's going to happen? This will come to pass when they make a long blast with a ram's horn.

When you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout and you'll go attack, right? That would make sense. Okay, God, I can see how we're doing this.

Yeah, you're working with me. Oh, this is how we're going to work through this. The Lord says, no, no, no. You know, John 3, we're in John on Sundays and we're going to be talking about this scripture on Sunday that that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

There's no crossover. There's no way for there to be a crossover. God doesn't take our flesh and say, you know what? We can use a little of this. No, he says, the weapons of our warfare, they don't fit there.

[ 33 : 26 ] They're not usable. And what would seem like the thing to do would be to run up and we're going to do this. But what good would that do? We must await God's timing even in the midst of the battle.

And he says, the wall of the city shall fall flat and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. God's plan for victory is without fail. It will not fail. God's plan for victory for you is without fail.

God's plan for victory for me is without fail. But it takes the participation of the person to experience the victory. It takes participation. God expects his people to participate in victory.

The victory's there. The stronghold's been guaranteed to be torn down. The weapons of our warfare are able, are mighty. God says the victory is there.

Let me lead you in victory. Let me go before you in victory. Let me be with you in victory. And what brings down the wall? As a kid in Sunday school, it was always like, shout real loud.

[ 34 : 27 ] And the walls came down. Yeah, like some kind of like weird sonic boom. You know, it's like, no. God brought the walls down. They were shouting not for war. They were shouting for victory.

God brought the stronghold down and the people followed him, had a different perspective, and realized the enemy was already defeated. 1 Corinthians 15, 57 says, but thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He gives it to us. It's ours. We can have it. And yet, he says, work out, in Philippians 2, 12, your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it's God who works in you both the will and do of his good pleasure.

We don't initiate his plan, but we are expected to carry out his plan. Right? God's plan isn't initiated by the people of Israel here going around Jericho, but they are expected to carry out what God has called them to.

And if they didn't, what would happen? They would not have experienced victory. Think of the weapons that we have that are so much greater. Think of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

[ 35 : 39 ] Think of the gift of the Holy Spirit to be upon us for ability. The gift to his church. Think of the mind of Christ that we can partake of.

All of that. And what am I doing when I'm over here beating on the gates of Jericho with my He-Man sword?

You know? So the people, let's jump down to verse 20. The intermediate section is the description of all that happening. Them going around and around and around.

Let's jump down to verse 20 here in Joshua, chapter 6. So the people, they shouted. This is their seventh day and their seventh time around and that must have been very disconcerting for the people in Jericho.

They went around once all the other days. Now they're going twice. Three times. Four times. Five times. Six times. Seven times. They're getting closer and closer and closer to the seventh time.

[ 36 : 37 ] And they don't know what's going to happen. But God's people do. God wants you to know victory is coming. God doesn't want us to be like, when is it going to take place? Now the enemy doesn't have a clue.

But God wants us to know that hey, victory is just on the horizon. Victory is coming. You don't have to. You're not going to stay at this place forever. Jericho is meant to be engaged and defeated and moved on.

We don't come back to those cities. We don't come back to those strongholds. And so in verse 21, the people shouted. The people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout that the wall then fell down flat.

They didn't shout for help. They didn't shout in anger. They didn't shout in defiance. They shouted in victory and praise to their God. And every man ran straight before him and they took the city.

Psalms 118 verses 14 through 15. The Lord is my strength and song and has become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.

[ 37 : 58 ] The right hand of the Lord does valiantly. What's the operating part of that verse? The right hand of the Lord does valiantly.

What is everybody else doing? Shouting. Singing. The Lord is my strength and song and he's become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacle of the righteous. The right hand of the Lord does valiantly. They shouted. They obeyed and the Lord went and Jericho went and it was no more. The stronghold was demolished when the people received and obeyed God's word.

Step one. Receive and obey God's word. It wasn't their own ideas. It wasn't their own plans. It's one thing to receive God's word. It's another thing than to do it and obey.

They fellowshiped with God's people and they weren't just walking around and one guy's like, I got this and you just see him run off alone and he's over there like beaten on the wall. No, they were all together.

[ 39 : 06 ] Victory came not when they were alone but when they were together. They feared the Lord above the enemy. I want you to walk around this wall.

I want you to encompass this stronghold. I want you to see it from every side. I want you to see that I protected you in every point. Never once did they make a sortie and come out and try and take them. The stronghold was demolished when the people did not engage the enemy.

Keep quiet. Maybe that first day or two or maybe the whole time they're up there jeering at them yelling, what are you going to do? I don't think so because they would have seen the Jordan dry up. Jericho's inside of the Jordan and Israel comes across. I think Jericho's probably quite nervous.

Either way, they didn't engage the enemy and they patiently awaited God's timing.

God, I'm ready now. Can we just be done with this? It's day four. Let's just be done with this stronghold. God's like, no, we're not done yet. We're not done yet. I want you to get to day seven.

[ 40 : 09 ] Day seven is the day of shouting of trumpets of praise and of utter and complete destruction of this stronghold. And at this time then there was what? Strongholds removed and there was no longer a hindrance to the forward progress of God's people.

No longer are they impeded in their progress. The thing that once represented an obstacle, it was now just a source of blessing and testimony in their lives.

It's something we go to and read as we just did and go, wow, if God can do that, I bet he can't remove the stronghold of my mind though. And we go right back into what's comfortable and familiar and natural and God is like, would you just, it's going to take a bit.

It's going to be different. It's not comfortable. It's not natural. It's not familiar. But follow me because I've got a victory for you. When we do that, all of a sudden, I have a source in my life that was once something that represented a stronghold, a place of the enemy, a place that impeded my progress forward, that kept me from God's promise.

And now, I can tell you, oh, brother, let me tell you what a blessing this is. What a testimony this is of what God has done. What did you have to do? I just praised him.

[ 41 : 23 ] I thanked him. What I did is I said, God, I believe your word. The stronghold's there. The enemy's there. I'm going to thank you. I'm going to shout for the victory that you've given me, even if I'm marching for seven more days, seven more weeks, whatever it is.

if you would turn back with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and we'll jump down and close in the end of verse five there.

Verse five ends with the, we have the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

And they all kind of tie into bringing into captivity every thought of the obedience of Christ. We are to bring into captivity every thought.

We say, wait a minute, now this seems to flip the whole script here. Now I got to go out and take captive this thing. I've got to. Did they have to go and capture Jericho? What did they have to do? [ 42 : 31 ] They had to bring in captivity of their minds to the word of God in obedience and say, okay, I want to bring this thought into captivity, into the obedience of Christ.

Jericho was defeated by Israel. Israel was first captured not by the enemy but by the Lord and by his word. The stronghold of Jericho first had to be defeated and captured in the minds and hearts of the people before they ever could experience it in reality.

Man, if I can't accept that God's word is true and I can't accept that he has victory and promise and blessing ahead of me, I don't believe that. And it's not part of who I am and my nature and my character and I'm not making decisions off of that and I'm thinking on that and it's building habits in my life.

I'm not going to follow the Lord when he says, let's go this way. And I'm like, no, this is how we do this. This is how you do this. This is how everybody does this, Lord. He says, no, I want to go this way.

I want you to go in a direction that's not familiar and not comfortable and not natural, but it's according to what? His word. 1 Peter 1, 13 and 14, wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, means be prepared to run, be prepared to engage and fight and hope, hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ as obedient warriors, children, not fashioning yourselves, not living after the things that are natural, comfortable, fashionable to the world, to the flesh, according to the former lusts, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.

[ 44 : 15 ] Ignorance is a concept of what? It's a lack of knowledge of the mind, right? But once we know, that's why when Joshua takes the gang there, they go from Jericho and they go to Ai and they fall so flat because God said, I just showed you.

Well, he wouldn't say it like, I just showed you. He's like, hey guys, remember I showed you? Let's try this again, boys. Lord, I fell flat. Yeah, because you're just, you're taking the natural perception again. And we can do that.

I think I just had a great victory. I'm sure now it'll work out, my choices and decisions. Watch you stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

And then Galatians 5.1 says, stand fast, therefore, and the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. And the stronghold has gone down and Jesus has removed it.

Don't go sifting through the rubble looking for something, maybe a value still there. Man, I used to have good times in Jericho. Remember that? Come on, kids, let's go on vacation. I'm going to take you back to Jericho.

[ 45 : 23 ] Don't do that. There's a stronghold, a much stronger hold, that is able to secure our minds, our hearts, and our souls against the onslaught of the enemy.

Psalms 27 says, the Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength. The Lord is the stronghold, literally, of my life.

There's a stronghold that is able to secure my mind, my heart, and my soul against the enemy's onslaught. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? He is my strength.

He's my stronghold, the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? If you do not let Jesus have a stronghold of your life, he's not going to be the one who you run to as a stronghold in your life.

When the wicked, even my enemies, my foes, came upon me to eat up my what? My flesh. They stumbled and fell. And the enemy's like, I'm going to attack the flesh.

[ 46 : 29 ] And it's like, no, because the Lord is my stronghold. He's my light. He's my salvation. We are not to be led away captive into the stronghold of our thoughts.

Don't let your mind and your thoughts lead you captive. But we're to lead our thoughts captive into the stronghold of the Lord. I bring my thoughts there. I'm not trying to fight them. I'm not trying to defeat them.

I'm going right to Jesus. Just bring them to the Lord. Jesus does not eradicate our thoughts and memories. Sometimes I wish he would. I wish there's things that he could eradicate.

But he will bring them into the rightful place in our life. He will bring them under his stronghold. He doesn't remove them, but he brings them to a place where now he has hold of them.

He has hold of my mind. He has hold of my past, my thoughts. The battlefield is the mind. The enemy are the thoughts, imaginations, and beliefs.

[ 47 : 28 ] The weapons, they are able. The victory is assured, and the war is finished. It is finished. To be carnally minded is death.

Minded, what one has in mind, there are thoughts and purposes. To be, to choose, to put in my mind the thoughts and purposes of the flesh is death. But to be spiritually minded is life and peace. My friends, if I can leave you with this thought, it is far less costly to finish the battle. Far less costly than to finish the battle, than to keep fighting the war.

In the Civil War, General George B. McClellan could have potentially finished the war about three years early at the Battle of Antietam in 1862. But his reluctance to act decisively, him and others, particularly when facing a weakened Confederate army, contributed to prolonging the conflict by years.

years. It is far less costly to finish the battle. It may be exhausting, it may be painful, it may go against everything that is natural and comfortable and familiar in your life, but finish it with Jesus so that you can move forward because you can fight a war for years.

[ 48 : 46 ] John 1930, Jesus hanging on the cross said, it is finished. And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

What came after that? Resurrection. Jesus didn't hang on the cross for a year. He's going to keep fighting this battle. No. There is a set time for your victory.

Finish the battle. Maybe you're on day six and day seven is right around the corner and he's like, it's going to come down. Don't quit now. Keep seeking, keep following. Maybe you're just realizing I've left that stronghold back there.

No wonder the enemy keeps coming back. That thing in my mind, that guilt, that regret that I have that eats at me. I need to bring that into captivity to Christ.

And I need to get his perspective on this. I need to let him surround it with faith and with deliverance. And say, all right, Lord, how do you see this? This is, well, your sins I remember no more.

[ 49 : 57 ] Think of the women caught in adultery. And it says that they're ready to stone her, right? And Jesus, he stoops down and writes in the dirt. We don't know what he wrote, but he says that they all left from the least to the greatest.

After he had said to them, he who is out sin, let him cast the first stone. Left from the oldest, I'm sorry, to the youngest. She's still there. It says, and Jesus raising himself up, it says he saw no man anymore.

And he said to her, woman, where are your accusers? And she said to him, Lord, no man accuses me.

What about you, Lord? There's no man left to accuse me. What about you, Lord? He said, neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more. I think Jesus is not condemning me.

I don't know anybody in my life who is. I don't think any of you are. My wife's not. But there is still a man that condemns me. There's still a voice that will condemn me.

[ 51 : 06 ] It's finished. Give up that ghost. Ephesians 4, 23 and 24. And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. And as men in this world that would tell us exactly the opposite, say, oh, no, no, no.

You can't defeat that stronghold. You think you're going to do it by going to church and reading your Bible and trusting Jesus? Before you know it, you'll be out there with the other crazy people walking in circles around the stronghold thinking it's going to fall down.

It did fall down. They did get victory. They did take the land. They did experience promise. And I can tell you that I have in my past and my life right now because of my past and victory, I have a testimony and I have blessing and things that should have been a stronghold.

God would have nothing stand in opposition to the progress he has planned in your lives. There is nothing that has taken hold of you that God's hold is not stronger still.

[ 52 : 21 ] Our Father holds us tightly in his hands. Nothing can pluck us out. So the question for us this morning for this section on strongholds is, what will we allow to have a stronghold upon our minds?

Are we going to allow God to have a stronghold on our minds? Are we going to allow his word to have a stronghold? Or are we going to allow the things that are natural, comfortable, familiar, and of the flesh to have a strong hold in our minds?

And I would say that victory is assured. Promises in front of you. The implements by which you fight that warfare are able. They may not be the most familiar and comfortable thing, but they are able to be victorious.

Yes. Amen? All right. I'm only two minutes over. Praise God. Father, thank you, Lord, that Lord, we can look at your word and see these beautiful pictures, Lord.

Lord, through the history, Lord, of a nation. I think, why would you put that in there? It's just the history of these people and how you dealt with them. And Lord, we know the New Testament, it tells us these things were written for our learning, Lord, so that we could see that our God is faithful.

[ 53 : 33 ] Lord, I don't live in a time where there's a Jericho, a physical Jericho that I got to go and take out of my life. Lord, I do live where there's a Jericho that none of these men here can see.

There are things that have strong holds upon my mind, my thoughts, my beliefs, and my feelings. Lord, there are things that are so comfortable and natural that you want me to get a new perspective on, that you want to show me a perspective that doesn't condemn me, it doesn't belittle me, it's a perspective that leads to victory.

It's according to your word. Lord, I pray for these men, Lord, I pray they would be encouraged, Lord, because we can put on that mind, Lord. We have the mind of Christ. We can put on that new man. We can be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and I pray that's what you would do throughout this day, Lord. Lord, you would renew our minds as we spend time in your word, as we talk to one another, as we think about these things, Lord.

Renew our minds. Give us new perspective, Lord. Give us joy that there is victory coming and the strong holds are going down, and remind us, Lord, in the midst of all that, you've gone before us, you're with us, and your hold on us is stronger than even death.

[ 54 : 48 ] Thank you, Jesus. You love these men, Lord. Bless them. In Jesus' name, amen.