

Pushing Back the Darkness! Part 8: "When You Just Don't Know!"

"People whose minds are made up to advance the kingdom of God take their objectives by force..." – Jesus, Mt 11.12

2Corinthians 10.4-6 *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.*

2Corinthians 10.4-6 *For the tools of our warfare are not carnal but powerful in God for: demolishing arguments, demolishing computations and every elevated thing that rises up against the knowledge of God, and for making a captive of every perception for submission to Christ, and being prepared, to vindicate all disobedience when your submission is fulfilled.*

Last week... Opened up the topic on our "strongholds!" The rock hard enclosures we build to seal off pain, fear, shame! Arguments/vows we make/names we take from the battles of life! Walls that keep out all our help! **Must demolish every argument, computation, thought that is contrary to the word of God!** Not talking about the power of positive attitude, thinking, confession! *"Intentional vindication of all 'disobedience' when our submission to Christ is fulfilled."* **2Cor 10.6**

If we're going to be free, we must be free indeed: without a doubt, in reality, completely! Surprisingly, we don't always want to be free!

Freedom! Some of us won't be free because we don't take our bondage/ freedom seriously! No big deal to have a few hang-ups! "Not as bad as..." (WHO?) Is that the standard? "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, they are not wise." **2Cor 10.12** Where did you get that idea? "My sheep hear My voice and they will not follow the voice of a stranger!" **John 10**
Freedom!

Some of us don't really want to go to all the trouble of getting free! "The things we're talking about sound like a lot of work for a little gain!" "Small foxes that spoil the vines!" **SOS 2.15** "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily trip us..." **Heb 12.1** "Let us not be careless with so great a salvation... *What is man that you are mindful of him?*" **Heb 2.2ff**

Some have adapted to their strongholds and have adopted their "tags" and won't let go! "It is much easier to believe lies than the truth...Because lies are manufactured to satisfy the emotions. And anyone would rather blame someone else for their misfortunes. The truth is hard. Don't fool with it unless you realize that." –Van Stockum *"Someone else gets the blessing instead of me."* **John 5.7** We are His sheep, and He calls us by name! **John 10.3** If we believe anything less than God's words about us/idolaters! If we embrace anything less than complete freedom/life is vanity! *When God's voice is different from ours or others we must flee from them and draw near to Him!*

But then there are people who aren't free because they don't know they've been taken captive! My Story! And I'm not sticking to it!

Breaking it down... I was attending a celebrity church, but didn't know it! The shepherd protecting his flock didn't know me... w/o realizing it, picked up an offense and made an inner vow! 2nd encounter worse! No doubts now, hurt, picked up an offense, made an inner vow! More encounters, the "bricks" mounted, the inner vow chiseled! *Forgiven, but, "I can't trust spiritual leadership!"*

With every encounter the walls got taller and stronger... Two more spiritual figures and the blow out was complete: "I quit!" God sent a rescuer/jumped ship! Worked well with spiritual peers, but not with leaders! Submitted to order, but not open! Every negative "connection" mortaring in another brick! "My cleats are tearing up your wood floors!" Yep! Disheartening/confirming

41 years of Christian experience... 31 years of ministry experience here... 20 years of "new" ministry experience/our results... Lost to all but a few people on the outside! *I sat in an auditorium realizing I had been taken captive...* And a lot of outside ministry had been lost... I was **UNDONE** and **MAD**!

And when you find out, you must aggressively demolish every argument and submit yourself and every perception to Jesus!

From the whispers of "Rejected!" "Lost in the shuffle!" I heard my name changed to a resounding... "Located!"

Strongholds! What you believe about yourself... What you call yourself or allow yourself called... Has a lot to do with how life, purpose and mission turn out! And if you have allowed yourself to be named by the "Stranger..." Instead of your Shepherd... ***You may live and die without ever knowing the opportunities set before you for freedom and mission!***

Strongholds! By *design*, are arguments we make and computations we accept in an "event!" By *function*, they keep us in and everyone else out! As *a result*, they arrest and shackle champions of aggressive kingdom advancement! **Must be torn down on discovery** if we are ever going to know the freedom for which Christ set us free!

[Final exercise]