

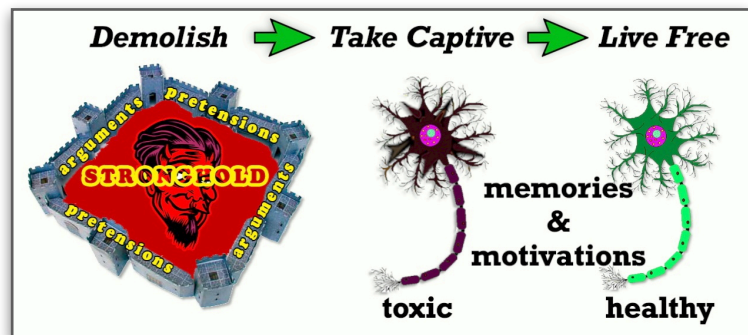
## Have You Seen What We've Seen? (Observation 9)

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In this Observation we'll focus on Christians we've met, who as a group, re-imprison themselves in **the in-crowd of the deluded**. At one time they freed themselves from demonic strongholds in the Name of Jesus. But then they allowed the strongholds to rebuild because they weren't mutually diligent to **"take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ"** (2Corinthians 10:5). Influenced once again in their old mental toxicity, they misperceive people and situations as well as thinking too well of themselves. And all too often you find the *in-crowd of the deluded* clinging to the sides of the funnel.



We consider the most important yet most overlooked chapter of our workbook, *Demolishing Strongholds*, to be Chapter 5, "What To Do After You've Demolished The Strongholds." We detail both how to transform your mental toxicity *and* remain free from demonic strongholds. Putting into practice this chapter is as crucial to maintaining your freedom as is demolishing the strongholds in the authority of Jesus's Name.



Non-toxic, healthy memories and motivations depend on each of you collectively and persistently **"taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."** You need each one who is journeying with you in the center of the funnel to lovingly point out any unChrist-like attitudes and motivations they see in you. Consistently making your thought life obedient to your Lord will not only help stop demonic strongholds from reforming; it will also help you grow into Christ's character qualities together. Becoming free and holding onto your freedom is a *mutual must*. Each of you must be alert for both yourself and each other! Don't let the destructive cycle of negative thoughts > emotions > actions > habits > and strongholds begin again in your soul.

### The In-Crowd Of Delusion Has Parallels To Insanity

*Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.*

As a family or a faith family, *if* you don't *collectively* take your thoughts captive and make them obedient to our Lord Jesus, you'll re-establish the same toxic misperceptions of other people as well as a very distorted appraisal of yourselves. In particular, your collective mental toxicity will deceive you into a lofty view that you're really good

Christians, far more caring, far kinder, far more merciful and far more giving than others you compare yourselves to. This will be you *if* you don't earnestly help each other spot and transform the toxic attitudes and motivations the demons left behind after they were evicted in the Name of Jesus.

### If You've Seen One, You've Seen Them All

What we'll now discuss applies to any group of relatives, a faith community, a Christian ministry, a Bible study, or even a group of Christian friends. Here are just two of our own observations to help clarify what happens if you *don't collectively practice* the biblical recommendations in Chapter 5 after you've demolished the strongholds.

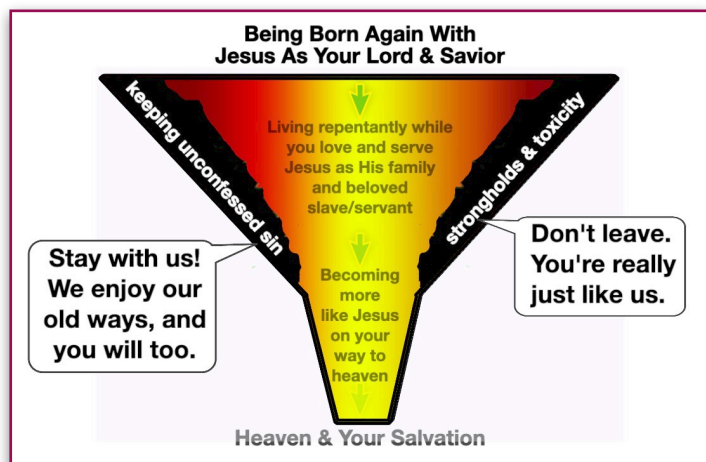
**Observation A.** Thirty years ago we conducted a Demolishing Strongholds workshop at a relative's congregation, followed by another one at their home for their close friends and immediate relatives. Through the Name of Jesus those who attended the workshops successfully demolished the demonic strongholds they recognized in themselves. Right away we sensed the change in spiritual atmosphere among them! Not long afterward we moved across the country. Sadly, these folks didn't continue to help each other rid themselves of the old mental toxicity and "old ruts" of their former behaviors and attitudes. The demons once again took up residence. In subsequent visits over the years we observed how entrenched the demonic strongholds had become.

**Keep this in mind:** Satan will do all he can to keep you out of the center of the funnel. In the center you're a real threat to him. And, if you allow him, he'll use those in your group, who choose to hold onto unconfessed sin, demonic strongholds, and/or refuse to get rid of toxicity, to try to entice you *back onto the funnel sides*.

And make sure that *YOU* aren't the self-deceived person or persons sustaining **the in-crowd of the deluded**.

If you habitually fail to point out what you know is not like Christ in those you care about, whether among relatives or any group you belong to who identifies themselves as "Christian", you are sinning grievously. When you refuse to point out the toxicity of old actions or attitudes or stop others from doing so, you are deluded into believing that you're very caring in not wanting to have anyone's feelings hurt. But you sin by keeping others on the sides of the funnel. In your self-deception you use seeming kindness to cover over your own mental toxicity: fear of rejection, and/or fear and insecurity.

We'd like to use our observation of our relatives as a case study of a group of people who were freed from strongholds but fail collectively to take their thoughts captive and make them obedient to Jesus. Our relatives may be just like your relatives. (What we observed in our relatives has gone on for several generations.)



- It begins with the *dominant person* or married couple whom the others shrank from confronting even before they collectively demolished their strongholds. The most dominant person(s) may surprise you! Outward appearance of dominance isn't always accurate. It's those whom others fear getting on the wrong side of or displeasing who carry the most power or influence.
- Next in the progression is a person or couple who are the *codependent(s)*. They fear pointing out any toxicity in the dominant person(s). Under the guise of appearing caring, they hinder anyone else — the *significant others* — from pointing out the toxicity. Again, the codependent person(s) misperceive themselves as the kindest and most caring, and often see themselves as instrumental in maintaining family and/or group unity. But Father sees them sinning!



So, what is the sin of the codependent? They refuse to trust the *power of our Lord Jesus to bring glory to our Father* if they humbly and lovingly come alongside the dominant person(s) and point out the unChrist-likeness. And, the codependent(s) act like “god” themselves as they stop anyone from confronting the dominant person. They “play everyone else’s cards for them,” bringing up what they think will be the dominant person’s response if they do speak up. But all they’ve accomplished is to perpetuate **the in-crowd of the deluded** – the dominants, the codependents and the significant others. And *there’s no Jesus*.

### **The terrible consequence caused by the in-crowd of the deluded:**

We grieve that so many of our relatives continue to live evidencing no viable relationship with Jesus as Lord of their lives. Many are plagued by bitterness toward other relatives, and are so hardened in their stance that they refuse to listen if anyone tries to point out any unChristlike attitudes or strongholds. Many consider themselves “Christian” but find it almost impossible to *speak the Name of Jesus*. Since we live across the country and have tried at times to reach those who are more open, we’re now relying on intercession for our Father to bring about fertile ground for change.

Our Lord issues a somber warning about people who once tasted freedom but then went back to the demonic bondage which had been so familiar before: “*Then [the demon] goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first*” (Luke 11:26). If our relatives actually began to discuss together our Father’s criteria for being welcomed into heaven, they’d likely be surprised at how dissimilar their responses would be. (Perhaps this scenario is one that’s all too familiar to you too.)

**Observation B.** In carrying out the ministry our Father assigned us of “*availability and mobility*”, we lived for a period of time near a major city in the South. After several months Mike found himself leading a weekly gathering in which he shared the Hebraic

foundations and conducted a demolishing strongholds workshop with Christian businessmen and low handicap and ex-professional golfers. All but a few of these men had been divorced at least once. But what they had in common wasn't Christianity as much as the strongholds of fear and insecurity, and control—and they felt comfortable with each other because of those familiar spirits.

Wherever the stronghold of fear and insecurity exists, the stronghold of control is there to protect it. Control turns the table on anyone who is exposing the spirit of fear and insecurity by defensively claiming, “You're judging me!”

Each of the men ran their own business and/or was striving to have the lowest golf handicap so they could win competitions. These factors provided each of them with a sense of control. Mike helped each man individually, and each began to anchor a pattern of taking his thoughts captive and responding as Jesus would. But whenever two or three of them got together for business or on a golf course, they returned to be the in-crowd of the deluded. The old response “ruts” returned. *“Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and, ‘A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud’”* (2Peter 2:22). Some later even “controlled” themselves into another divorce.

***“It's no use. We will continue with our own plans; we will all follow the stubbornness of our evil hearts”*** (Jeremiah 18:12).

We know that freeing yourself from people who seek to be *the in-crowd of the deluded* can be very emotionally painful. And when it comes to your own relatives, it hurts a lot when they don't want to be free. Yet consider this. ***If*** you've gotten free of strongholds yourself and purpose to rid yourself of toxic attitudes and motivations while others you care about choose to remain on the sides of the funnel, be careful that you don't slip back into their darkness! **You must press on down the funnel!**

If you're feeling more responsible to stay with the stubborn person(s) than you are to our Lord Jesus, you're forfeiting your service to Him and your transformation by Him. Being sidetracked from our Lord's use of your fruitful service can do more harm than you may think. If you belong to Jesus, you don't want to leave a hole in the fabric He wants to weave through you. He tells us, *“Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the Kingdom of God”* (Luke 9:60).

We strongly encourage you and those who are purposing by His grace to proceed down the center of the funnel with you to read, *“I Chose You To Go And Bear Fruit That Will Last”* <<https://restorationministries.org/download/21b.-triage-checklist.pdf>>.

Be assured that if you do choose to head down the center of the funnel, the devil will try to blindside you through your care for others and/or through your fear of losing their relationship. You must turn inward to the Spirit of our Lord for His guidance as you follow our Father's will. Never choose to care more for people who want spiritual darkness than you do for our Lord Jesus.

Mike & Sue