

The Way of the Lord

33. The Lordship of Jesus: Mutually Becoming More Like Him (Part 1)

In our last four segments we discussed various aspects of what it is to live with Jesus as LORD of your life. How would you respond if someone asked you this question: “*When did you start following Jesus as LORD of your life?*” LORDship means He’s your King and Master, and you are His beloved slave. You probably know many people who can tell you when they got “saved.” But very few can identify when, if ever, they began to live to serve LORD Jesus, with Him ruling their mind, will and emotions.

In our workbook, *Demolishing Strongholds*, we discuss your old sinful attitudes and behaviors that were produced by demonic strongholds. We call these “ruts in a dirt road” that need to be filled in *after* the stronghold is demolished. Keep in mind these facts about demonic strongholds in your life:

- (1) they control, dictate, and influence your attitudes and behavior;
- (2) they oppress and discourage you;
- (3) they shape how you view or react to situations, circumstances, or people.

Even after you’ve renounced the demons by the authority of the Lord Jesus, their *influence* on your memories and motivation still remains until you do something about it. The problem is that most people don’t make the effort to *confront* their demon-influenced memories and motivations and *replace* them with the character qualities of Jesus. We recommend you revisit Chapter 5, *After You’ve Demolished the Strongholds*. We discuss how you can press on in spiritual freedom to hear and obey *only* the voice of the Holy Spirit. Many people overlook the importance of this chapter, only to see demonic strongholds reestablish themselves. Remember, your *mind* is the battlefield Satan seeks to control. That’s why we’re directed to take our *thoughts* captive and bring them into obedience to Christ (1Corinthians 10:5).

Earlier this year we explored research by Dr. Caroline Leaf of South Africa. Dr. Leaf uses MRI images, CT scans, and other medical advances to investigate the brain. She’s shown that the brain’s *memory parts* which the demonic strongholds once influenced or controlled still have *negative chemical attachments*. She refers to these negative attachments as “*toxic memories*”, because they have such an adverse effect on how you react to current people and situations. We investigated her findings further and found her research to be well-supported by others.

We want to review with you why it’s essential to rid yourself of any remaining toxic memories and motivations that remain even after the strongholds are demolished. In other words, we want to make clear how important it is that you *fill in* those old, unChristlike ruts that Dr. Leaf calls “toxic memories.” As long as these unChrist-like responses continue to influence your brain, Jesus won’t be LORD of your mind, will and emotions.

You may have been influenced by demonic strongholds for much of your life. Most people inherit them from their parents at conception. These UNChrist-like motives and responses have been with you a long time and become intertwined with your identity. As a result, without the help of others who care about you, you’re unable to recognize them any more than you can identify your own breath.

In order to recognize the toxic memories and motives in your brain, you need the help of others in the faith who deeply care about you. If you're married, you've got to be willing to receive input from your spouse. You need the help of others you trust to point out these old negative ways to you *without* you reacting defensively or rationalizing about them. Having your old, UnChristlike motives and responses exposed is your first step in developing Christ's character qualities. What things do you need exposed by someone who loves you enough to confront you?

- Any unconfessed sin
- Any unrenounced strongholds
- Any toxic or passive aggressive motivations and behaviors

There are some key motives needed by both you and anyone who comes alongside you to mutually identify hindrances to growing in Christ's character:

- a wholehearted desire to be transformed into the character of our Lord Jesus.
- an earnest intent that Jesus be LORD of your life.
- a humble willingness to be confronted and to receive biblically-based, constructive criticism.

It will take some purposeful training for you and your companions to mutually cooperate together. This process may be frustrating at first. Your sin nature *doesn't* want any dark motives exposed. But if you habitually resist the help of others, your close relationships will be negatively affected by *ongoing apprehension*.

- (1) Picture ongoing apprehension with another person as if you're both facing each other on a seesaw.
- (2) The normal, UNChristlike reaction whenever a toxic memory or motivation is pointed out is to emotionally distance yourselves *away* from one another.
- (3) If the situation remains unresolved and the root cause is not exposed and remedied, you or the other person may look for people who'll take your side. You begin to badmouth the other person through gossip and slander to anyone who'll listen. That way you can tip the situation to your favor.
- (4) But if you want a Christ-like resolution, each person involved must instead purpose to neither blame the other nor defend himself or herself. Each person must be willing to *fully hear* the other's input, especially taking into consideration how your negative actions affect their feelings.

The goal of *mutually* resolving this is to develop Christ-like character qualities through confronting the source of ongoing apprehension. Mutually growing Christ-like character needs to be at the *forefront* whenever you're exposing the root cause of your ongoing apprehension with one another. If you keep Christ-like character development as your goal rather than trying to resist or blame, you'll find yourselves *mutually* walking in the way of the Lord.

For Further Study

Book: *Demolishing Strongholds*

Hebraic Article: *Demolishing Your Strongholds*

Hebraic Article: *Demolishing Strongholds Questionnaire* (For "Christians")

Each is a free download on our website: <restorationministries.org>