

The Stronghold of Self

Most people struggle with the Stronghold of Self. Have you ever thought to yourself, “I should have, I would have, I could have...?”

It’s a sin consciousness rather than a God-consciousness, that can lead us to self-punishment. “I blew it, and now I deserve to be punished.” At the core of the stronghold is self-judgment, shame and condemnation. But wait! Jesus isn’t punishing us, He’s forgiving us. Instead of accepting forgiveness, we may partner with the lies of the enemy and play both judge and jury, to condemn ourselves. This leads to self-hatred and a negative emotional spiral that can cause demonic infestation.

For most of us struggling with this stronghold, we first need to surrender the whip with which we beat ourselves in religious self-flagellation. Say, “Jesus here’s the whip! I’ll stop punishing myself for the sin you already paid for on my behalf.” Then bind the demons on that nasty thing, cast the whip and the demons out in Jesus Name.

Next, renounce and break all agreement with the following spirits, and cast them out too.

Pointing Finger	Unworthiness	Perfectionism	Independence	Pride/Ego
Self-accusation	Self-sabotage	Fear of mistakes	Rebellion	Pride/Vanity
Self-blame	Self-martyrdom	Self-torment	Self-will	Narcissism
Self-judgment	Self-pity	Self-deprivation	Self-righteousness	Entitlement
Self-condemnation	Self-consciousness	People pleasing	Self-reliance	Self-absorbed
Self-criticism	Self-awareness	Man pleasing	Self-atonement	Self-centered
Self-punishment	Rejection	Performance	Self-justification	Self-idolatry
Self-deception & Delusion	Self-rejection & extreme rejection	Pretension	Rationalization	Self-edification
Self-abuse	Low self-esteem/Unloved	Defensiveness	Intellect Idolatry	Self-seeking
Self-hatred	False humility	Self-mutilation	Distrust of others	Self-exemption
Self-loathing	Self-deprecation	Shame/Guilt	My Way Stubbornness	Self-edification
Self-contempt	Inferiority	Religion	Control	Self-enthronement

Romans 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

Emotional Care Related to Enemy Accusations

In the book, "Paradox Lost", Catherine Skuja outlined steps for grappling with enemy accusations that had a profound effect on my life. I discovered that it is helpful to provide emotional care around enemy accusations before addressing the Stronghold of Self. I believe it would be a disservice to someone to go after the demonic strongholds, before addressing the shame and pain holding the demonic stronghold in place. The enemy's lies can create shame and pain. By addressing the lies first, and possibly some trauma experiences and feelings, healing will come. The deliverance will then be more effective when the Stronghold of Self is dismantled.

Essentially the steps to address the enemy's accusations are as follows:

- 1) Make a list of the enemy's accusations
- 2) Describe the feelings associated with the accusations
- 3) Turn your face toward God and ask Him to respond to the accusations
- 4) Write down the Lord's response
- 5) Let the Lord wash away the shame and guilt
- 6) Be refreshed in the Lord's presence
- 7) Then cast out the demonic

Sharing from personal experience, I have often wondered why I cycle in self-condemnation and then the stronghold of self. Recently, I was able to see that the enemy's accusations are the key to initiating the spiral. As always, the Lord is merciful, patient and quick to respond in love.

Being totally transparent, I struggled with an enemy accusation of being a failure for a couple of months. It produced much pain, shame and torment for me. I brought the accusation before the Lord using the steps above. Below is the conversation I had with the Lord and the notes from my journal.

Enemy's Accusation: You are a failure.

I asked, "Lord, what would you like to say to me about this accusation? Am I a failure?"

God's response: "I designed you to reflect me. You are an overcomer. Katie, I measure success differently than the world does."

My reply: God my real fear is that I failed you! And those you put in my care.

God's response: "Katie did you love them?"

My reply: Yes Lord, with all I had to give.

God's response: "That is how I measure success. - Katie did you walk in faith?"

My Reply: Yes Lord, every step, I was wholly dependent on you.

God's response: "Without faith it is impossible to please God. – You walked in faith."

I could feel His love and I let it wash over me, displacing the lie of the accuser. Perfect love casts out all fear.

When I believed I had failed, the Stronghold of Self was activated. I mistakenly believed I then had to solve the problem of my inadequacy and failure. (Did you see how many I's were in that last sentence?)

Once my heart was healed, it was easy to then break the Stronghold of Self.