

The Vital Biblical Principle:

'Looking Beyond the Surface of Things'.

1. The Biblical Exhortations: 2 Cor. 10:7

- "Do not only look _____"
- **John 7:24** – Stop judging by mere appearances, but judge with right judgment.
- **2 Cor. 4:18** – So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, (NIV) [ESV - look not at things that are seen] but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

2. The Biblically Revealed Principle

That, often, beyond the surface of events, there is _____

- **Illustration of *the PUPPETEER ... HIDDEN PULLING THE STRINGS... manipulating the 'puppets'.***

3. Biblical Examples of something going on 'behind the scenes'.

1. **2 Kings 6:13-17** – Elisha and his servant: "*Lord, open his eyes ...*"!
2. **Job 1:1-2:7** – The whole saga of Job's tragic loss.
3. **2 Chron. 18:18-21** – The '*lying spirit in the mouths of the prophets!*'
4. **Daniel 10:10-20** – Why the answer to his prayers was delayed.
5. **Matt. 16:15-23** – Simon Peter's rebuke of Christ – *talking like the devil!*
6. **Luke 13:10-16** – A woman crippled by a spirit for 18 years!
7. **2 Cor. 11:3** – Christians being deceived by Satan!
8. **Acts 5:1- 11** – Ananias and Sapphira listen to Satan!
9. **1 Tim. 4:1** – Following false teachings!
The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.
10. **2 Tim. 2:23-26** – Arguments within the Church!
"... that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will."
11. **2 Cor. 4:4** – Explains why '*unbelievers*' find it so difficult to 'see' the Gospel
12. **Luke 22:31, 32; 2 Cor. 12:7-9** – A possible explanation as to our 'trials' and 'testings'.

4. NOTICE IN EACH CASE, THERE IS:

1. An 'on the surface of things' appearance of events – in the 'natural' there is an identifiable event; an observable occurrence; state; condition and/or end result.

And,

2. A usually hidden set of 'beyond the surface of things' activities and dynamics (*behind the scenes naturally witnessed*) which usually remain undetected by mere natural perception, and which are really causing the identifiable event; an observable occurrence; state; condition and/or end result.

5. Note: **NOT** detecting any 'beyond the surface of things' activities and dynamics will always keep us focussed what we observe in the natural. This results in the following:

1. Coming to the **wrong conclusions** about the cause of the problem;
2. Placing the (total) **blame on the wrong person or source** – (repentance is often needed);
3. This, in turn, usually results in a **wrong course of action** (to solve the problem);
4. Attempting to **solve the problem at the wrong level**;
5. And **THIS** usually results in:
 - Aggravating the situation – *fighting 'flesh and blood'*;
 - Exhausting our reserves and patience;
 - Resigning ourselves to false conclusions – (*they' never change; it's their family etc.*)
 - Throwing in the towel – giving up; divorce; resigning; broken relationships etc.;
6. **The real cause/enemy remains** ... and fuels, keeps the conflict going!

6. APPLICATION – **THE 'HOW TO LOOK BEYOND THE SURFACE OF THINGS?'**

1. **Identify the 'problem'** – in a word; a brief phrase.
2. **Ask:** *Is there a (purely) natural explanation to the cause of the problem?*
3. See if a **NATURAL solution** will solve the problem?
4. **Ask:** *Is this **Natural Behaviour?** ... **Sinful Conduct?** Or, ... **Demonic Involvement?** (See pp.13-14)*
5. Depending on the answer from 4. above, **apply the appropriate action** from the 'Key words' below: Is **Revelation** (*insight and wisdom*) needed? **Repentance?** **Resisting?**
6. Besides some common sense, some logic and reason, know how to **draw from the Gifts the Holy Spirit** can give you (or others). Most appropriate will be the Gifts of **Discerning of spirits** – *this will reveal what spirit is at work*; and a **Word of Knowledge** – *God can tell you what is actually going on in that person's life.*
7. **Ask: What spirit is at work here?** (You 'name' the spirit according to the predominant influence, or effect or result. E.g. 'Anger'; 'Rage'; 'Addiction'; 'Unforgiveness' etc.
8. **Take the person through James 4:7**
 - **Submission** to God (a fresh or first time commitment; surrender; yielding. With probably needed **confession and repentance**. Then, **Resist(ing)** the Devil: *get the person to express their authoritative and active resistance to what that spirit has influenced, controlled and possessed.*
9. **Tell and teach them how to respond to the Holy Spirit.**
10. **Emphasise the importance of knowing and living according to God's Word and Ways.**

7. Natural Behaviour? Sinful Conduct? Demonic Involvement? **Differentiating Between them**

So that we ***do not blame the devil for everything***, or escape liability for our actions, we need to know how to discern the source of the conduct.

Taking into account the Scriptures provided in the 3 columns, (plus any others you may think of); and with a basic understanding as what a 'Stronghold' is, seek to list the different characteristics we find in the following behavioural patterns.

Note: Any one of the above can become a *STRONGHOLD* - 2 Cor. 10:4,5

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 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...(NKJ)

A STRONGHOLD

Something that has a strong hold on a person, a group or a region to the degree that it influences, controls and often defines that person, groups or region.

Its influence is often 'sensed' or felt, even if there are no obvious outward manifestations, demonstrations or evidence.

Also, a 'stronghold' is anything that prevents people from freely enjoying what God intended to have or to be.

It is that which is a controlling feature in their life, over which they have little or no control, and they have not been able to get rid of it, or get victory over it.

It can be: - a mental thing – attitude, mindset, (unteachable) opinion etc.;

- a psychological condition or an emotion – fears, phobias, obsessive compulsive behaviour etc.;

- it can be an historically established 'tradition', programme or legalism.

- it can be in the realm of the physical – illness etc.

- it can appear to be a personality trait or a character flaw.

In the wider sense, a 'stronghold' can be regional, affecting whole populations – as in political trends; morality standards; ethnic groups etc.

NOTE: WITH EVERY 'STRONGHOLD THERE WILL BE A 'STRONG MAN' – one who has power over, control over and the 'authority': that is, the 'right to ...'

Natural behaviour?

- Jeremiah 5:4
- Jeremiah 8:7
- Hosea 4:6
- Micah 4:12
- John 16:3
- Romans 10:3
- 1 Cor. 2:14,15
- 1 Cor. 3:1-4
- Ephesians 4:18

Key Word

REVELATION

Psalm 119:18

Psalm 119:130

2 Kings 6:17

Ephesians 1:17, 18

Sinful conduct?

- Romans 1:24-28
- Galatians 5:17-21
- Ephesians 4:22-32
- James 1:13-15

Key Word

REPENTANCE

Revelation 2:5

Many other refs.

Demonic Involvement?

- Luke 13:10-16
- Acts 5:3
- Eph. 2:1-2
- 2 Cor.11:3
- 2 Tim.2:25,26
- 1 Thess.2:18

Key Word

RESIST

James 4:7

1 Peter 5:8

7:1 Natural behaviour

- **Jeremiah 5:4** - Therefore I said, "Surely these are poor. They are foolish; for they do not know the way of the LORD, the judgment of their God.
- **Jeremiah 8:7** - Even the stork in the heavens knows her appointed times; and the turtledove, the swift, and the swallow observe the time of their coming. But My people do not know the judgment of the LORD.
- **Hosea 4:6** - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
- **Micah 4:12** - But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, nor do they understand His counsel; for He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor.
- **John 16:3** - And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.
- **Romans 10:3** - For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.
- **John 3:6** - Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.
- **1 Cor. 2:14,15** - **But the natural man** does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.
- **1 Cor. 3:1-4** - And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?
- **Ephesians 4:18** - This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;
- **2 Pet 1:8-9** - For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is short-sighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Key Word: **REVELATION**

- **Psalm 119:18** - Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law.
- **Psalm 119:130** - The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.
- **2 Kings 6:17** - And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
- **Ephesians 1:17, 18** - that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

7.2 Sinful conduct

- **Romans 1:24-28** – *God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts ... to dishonourable passions.*
- **Galatians 5:17-21** – *the works of the flesh are ...*
- **Ephesians 4:22-32** – *to put off the old self which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt ...*
- **James 1:13-15** – *Each one is tempted when he is lured away and enticed by his own desires. Then...*

Key Word: **REPENTANCE**

- **Revelation 2:5** – *Remember from where you have fallen, and repent*
- **Luke 13:3** - *... unless you repent*

7.3 Demonic Involvement

- **Gen.3: 1- 13** – v.1: *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, ... 13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*
- **John ...** the Devil had already prompted Judas ... to betray Jesus.
- **Luke 13:10-16** The woman bound for 18 years by Satan
- **Acts 5:3** Ananias and Sapphira prompted by the Devil to lie to the Holy Spirit
- **Eph. 2:1-2** You were dead in your transgressions and sins, ... when you followed the ways of ... the ruler of the kingdom of the air
- **2 Cor.11:3** Just as Eve was deceived by the Serpent's cunning, you too have been led astray from you sincere devotion ...
- **2 Tim.2:25,26** The Devil who has taken them captive to do his will (*that is, people in the Church*)
- **1 Thess.2:18** I wanted to come to you - ... but Satan stopped us.

Key Word: **RESIST**

- **James 4:7** – Resist the Devil and he will flee from you
- **1 Peter 5:8** – Resist, steadfast in the faith...

8. OTHER AREAS WHERE THIS PRINCIPLE CAN BE APPLIED**'THIS SIDE' and the 'THAT SIDE'****1. IN PRAYER****2. IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP****3. IN PREACING AND TEACHING****4. IN GATHERINGS****5. IN WITNESSING****6. IN STEWARDSHIP (GIVING)**

'TERRITORIAL SPIRITS'

Ephesians 6:10-13

- 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.
 11 Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
 12 **For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**
 13 Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. (NIV)

Psalm 149:6-9

- 6 May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, 7 ... **to bind their kings with fetters,** ... 9 to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the LORD.

Psalm 44:5 **Through You we push back our enemies;** through your name we trample our foes.

Luke 10:17-20

- 17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "**Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.**"
 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.
 19 **"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.**
 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." (NKJ)

1. Some DEFINITIONS

1. **'TERRITORIAL SPIRITS'** – those spiritual beings that have a controlling influence over a particular earthly region, influencing a people group, tribes, nations, cities, groupings etc. They usually will work through human instruments.
2. A **'STRONG MAN'** – that being (spirit or human) which has control, power, possession and authority over certain things.
 - a. **Matt 12:29** – *"Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house."*
 - b. **Luke 11:21-22** - *"When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armour in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils."*
3. **'STRONGHOLD'** – (It is like a fortress; a blockhouse) and is that which has a strong hold over a person and prevents them from freely enjoying what God intended them to be, to have and to enjoy. STRONGHOLDS oppose, resist, reject and block Biblical revelation, instruction, exhortation and direction.
 - a. **2 Cor 10:4-5** - *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have **divine power to demolish strongholds.** We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*
 - b. **'STRONGHOLDS'** usually manifest in the realm of the mind in the form of attitudes, mind-sets, opinions, preferences, processes of reasoning, arguments, trends, fads, philosophies, ethics, moralities; **resulting in** fanatical movements, bizarre and irrational behaviour; excessive indulgence, excessive and uncontrolled emotional displays, many psychological and psychotic disorders, compulsive obsessive behavioural patterns, etc. A 'STRONGHOLD' can also be an emotional state of heart; a spiritual condition and even a physical affliction.
 - c. **NB.** Wherever there is a 'STRONGHOLD', there will always be a 'STRONG MAN' (working in and through that 'STRONGHOLD').
 - d. **'STRONGHOLDS'** are usually built over a period of time, but can be established spontaneously during an experience of trauma.
4. **'BIND'** to tie up; radically restrict movement; to remove the freedom to come-and-go at will; to prevent and deny access to.
 - **Psalm 149:6-9** *May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, 7 ... **to bind their kings with fetters,** ... 9 ... to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the LORD.*
 - **Matt 12:29** – *"... how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless **he first ties up the strong man?** Then he can rob his house."*
5. **'DRIVE OUT'** – to forcefully expel and evict from the territory.
 - **Psalm 44:5** - *Through You **we push back our enemies;** through your name we trample our foes.*
 - **Mark 16:17** - *And these signs will accompany those who believe: **In my name they will drive out demons;** ...*

2. TERRITORIAL SPIRITS/STRONGHOLDS CAN BE:

1. REGIONAL

- 1Kings.20:23 - *the gods of the hills.*
- Mark 5:1-10 - *"Do not send us out of this region": the demons.*
- Rev.2:13 - Pergamum – where Satan had his throne, lives.

2. POLITICAL

- Daniel 10:10-21 - **Prince of Persia; of Greece; Michael, 'your prince'**
- 1Chron.5:26 - *God stirred up the spirit of Pul, **king of Assyria***
- 2Kngs17:26-33 - *'the **god of that country**'.*
- Isaiah 14:3-15 - *the **king of Babylon.***
- Ez.28:11-19 - *the **king of Tyre.***
- **These all 'authorities'.**

3. PSEUDO-SPIRITUAL

- 2Chr.18:5, 18-22; - 'prophets'
- Matt.16:21-23 - Peter rebuking Jesus
- 1Tim.4:1 - *Doctrines of demons.*
- 1John4:1 - *'Do not believe every spirit, but test them ...'*
- Rev.3:9 - *'the synagogue of Satan'.*

4. PERSONAL

- To DAVID - 1Chron.21:1
- To PETER - Matt.16:21-23
- To JUDAS - John 13:2,27
- To the CRIPPLE WOMAN – Luke 13:10-16 (bound 18 years)
- To ANANIAS and SAPHIRA – Acts 5:1-11
- To CHRISTIANS – 2 Cor.11:13; 2Tim.2:24-26; 1Tim.5:15
- To UNBELIEVERS – 2Cor.4:4

5. The 'KOSMOKRATOS' - Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against ... *kosmic powers over this present darkness ...*

- *'kosmos' – that which is orderly; structured; attractive; beautiful.*
 - *'kratos' from krateo – to seize with powerful, brute force and hold; to grab and possess.*
 - *So as to block out the light, and to prevent no more/new light from coming in.*
 - Therefore, the *kosmokratoi* (*..oi is the plural*) are spirits/demons which take hold of anything that is structured, orderly, attractive and beautiful so that they can hold it in their possession, ensuring that no more/new 'light' (revelation) can come in. They see that, initially useful and helpful systems and programs, become so entrenched, that any further grow and development is prevented or stunted as no more 'light' (revelation of God's further plans) is kept out and resisted.
 - **Some Examples:**
 - *Young, alive and vibrant **Churches** become bound by tradition... and never grow; die.*
 - *Entrenched, inhibiting, restrictive **attitudes** get encouraged and reinforced by the *Kosmokratoi*, blocking any new or developmental thinking.*
 - ***Marriages** settle into a 'dead' routine.*
 - ***Music** – gets 'possessed' and used by the *Kosmokratoi*.*
 - ***Sex** (something beautify) gets 'taken over' by the *Kosmokratoi*.*
-

3. DEALING WITH TERRITORIAL SPIRITS [*'STRONGHOLDS'* and the *SPIRITUAL 'STRONGMAN'*]

3:1 GENERAL BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Take a/your STAND against them/it** – Eph.6:10-17

- Eph 6:11-13 - *Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.*

2. **Make sure you are in SUBMISSION to the Lord**

- James 4:7 - *Submit yourself therefore to God ...*

3. **Resist! ... Fight back, to reclaim territory**

- James 4:7 ... *Resist the Devil,*
- 1Peter 5:8,9

4. **Drive out! Expel; Evict**

- Psalm 44:5 *through you we push back our enemies;*
- Mark 16:17 *And they will drive out demons*

3:2 A MORE SPECIFIC PROCEDURE

1. **DETECTING THEM: - ASK QUESTIONS:**

- *Is there a natural explanation/cause?*
- *Is there a blockage (resistance to something good, such as truth)?*
- *Is there a prevailing negative influence?*
- *Is there resistance to Biblical instruction?*
- *Is there an illogical element to the person's behaviour?*
- **If the answer is 'YES'** to all, or most of the above, then this is an indication of the presence of some type of 'Territorial Spirit', 'Stronghold' and 'Strongman'.

2. **DIVEST THEM OF (*TAKE AWAY*) THEIR 'RIGHTS' / 'AUTHORITY' TO BE THERE.**

- **BY ADDRESSING THEM, IN JESUS NAME, TELLING THEM TO 'GO!'**

1. **By bringing JESUS into the picture** – 1John 3:8; John 11:22; 2Thess.2:8

2. **Through, by PRAYER** – Mark 9:29; Eph.6:18

3. **Repent of any sin**, especially those that opened the door for demonic intrusion –
Eph.4:27 *Do not give the Devil a foothold*

4. **Through PRAISE** – Ps.8:2; 149:6-9; 2Chr.20:21,22

5. **By PRESENTING THE GOSPEL** – Is.61:1-6; Acts 28:18

6. **By Proclaiming TRUTH and DIVINE ORDER as God's way**
Eph.6:17 – *take the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.*

7. **REMOVE, DESTROY** anything with occult connections - Eph.4:27 *Do not give the Devil a foothold*

8. **ESTABLISH DIVINE ORDER** through Christian principles and actions.