

## CONTENTS

OVERCOMING TRAUMATIC EVENTS .....	1
I'M OFFENDED .....	11
WAITING ON THE LORD .....	21
BITTERNESS .....	33
ANXIETY .....	45
FREEDOM: BREAKING THE POWER OF SIN .....	57
MY NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST' .....	71
DEALING BIBLICALLY WITH DEPRESSION .....	87
OVERCOMING ANGER .....	97
SIN'S EFFECTS .....	109
THE WILDERNESS: FROM CONFESSION TO JOY ..	119
BIBLICAL RESTORATION .....	127



## FREEDOM: BREAKING THE POWER OF SIN

As a Christian I struggled with sin that dominated my life for years. I felt as though I could never gain the victory, and may be doomed to spend a lifetime suffering under the weight of the sin in my life. I heard messages many times saying, "Leave it on the altar." Though this sounds very spiritual, I found that no one could tell me exactly how that worked. It wasn't for lack of desire, repentance, or desperation. Finally, I came to the point that I begged God, "If I can't be delivered, please take me out of this world." This may sound extreme to some, but I found that many people have come to the same place in life. Many people who sit in church every service have all but given up hope that there is any way for them to be delivered from the feeling of bondage to their sin. Satan has been successful in stealing the heart out of many who truly desire to serve God yet feel that because of sin in their lives they are doomed to suffer for the rest of their lives. It seems that nearly weekly you hear of people who have been seemingly loyal servants of God, pastors, missionaries, deacons, teachers, and faithful lay people, who have been discovered to be in some form of devastating sin. These are not isolated incidents. Our churches are largely anemic due to the sin that is engulfing the

lives of Christians, from the pew to the pulpit. After years of searching, God opened his word to me in a way that I had never seen before. The things contained in this chapter are not new; they are Biblical. As you read through this chapter I challenge you to search the scriptures to see if these things be so. Do not take my word for it; let the word of God speak for itself.

Mark 9:17-29 says, “And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answered him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oft times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.”

In this passage, the disciples were faced with a spiritual battle: the deliverance of a young man over the power of satanic

forces. Though they did everything they knew to do, they failed in casting out the spirit that possessed the boy. After gaining deliverance for the child, Jesus admonished the disciples that there are some spiritual battles that cannot be won except with prayer and fasting. We are in a spiritual battle, and it is imperative that we recognize the struggle with sin as such. 2 Corinthians 10: 3-6 says, "For though we walk after the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." This passage gives us some important facts concerning this spiritual warfare in which we are engaged. Four of these facts are key to our understanding of this subject, and are listed here in order found in the passage.

1. We have spiritual weapons. What they are and how to use them will be discussed later in this chapter.
2. These spiritual weapons are for the purpose of breaking down strongholds.
3. These strongholds are in the mind. The battlefield of the Christian life is in the mind. Verse 5 says, "Casting down imaginations" and "bringing into captivity every thought".
4. There is a way to revenge **all** disobedience according to verse 6.

For clarity of understanding, we are going to examine in depth these things in a different order, beginning with a look at the strongholds. In our society, we call strongholds addiction, or compulsion. These things may be any multitude of sins. We all have a propensity toward a different sin. One person may take a drink of liquor, and never become a drunk; another may view a piece of pornography and not feel a strong desire to