

Pursuing Partnership: Moving Mountains of Strongholds

Stronghold #6 – The Body and Immorality

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In this series of blogs, Leslie and Chad identify spiritual strongholds that need to be unearthed and removed so that godly men and women can partner well together for the completion of the Great Commission. Pray with us into these mountains, and by faith may these tectonic plates move in Jesus' name!

The Body and Immorality



Holiness and purity are spiritual weapons.

Men and women, how are you battling? Do you advance on offense with your righteous life and honorable choices? Do you play strong defense, vigilantly keeping watch over the gates of your eyes and ears?

Or... not?

May we as brothers and sisters in Christ battle the demonic stronghold of immorality with the weapons of holiness and purity.

The Body is Good!

God had the amazing idea to create people with bodies – male and female. Every part of the human body and mind, our senses, chemicals, and emotions sprang from the heart of a generous God. How creative was God to design male and female human bodies out of literally nothing?! And with bodies came the blessings of oneness, and pleasure, and children. We should all pause and give thanks to God!

God created sex as a powerful and protective stronghold for our safety and flourishing. A godly “strong...hold” is a fortress that keeps our most precious things safe and keeps away enemies. God

designed the stronghold of sex as a massive godly hug/embrace/hold. Within God's boundaries, we and our loved ones are kept safe.

When God's people think and act about sex in ways that honor God's creative design, humanity flourishes. Singleness blesses the nations with speed and focus. Marriages demonstrate loving, Christlike unity. Children are born with joy and expectation. Societies grow with honorable laws and God-honoring justice.

Immorality

Satan hates God's plan for our bodies. He works havoc, splitting the body and mind with a worldview called body-soul dualism. [Humanity is fragmented. The body is expendable. Only the mind counts as "your true self." See *Love Thy Body* by Nancy Pearcey]. This destructive worldview pervades Western thought and serves as the source for much of today's secular agenda that promotes sin such as hook-up culture, abortion, pornography, and transgenderism.

In addition, Satan wants to exploit and wreck the godly stronghold of sex. He seeks to gain access and build a kingdom run by his devious rules. Depravity creeps in... and individual lust is just the tip of the iceberg. Sex in the kingdom of darkness is used to pillage, demoralize, and devour. Satan also twists reality through self-hate, body mutilation, and gender confusion.

Paul exhorts believers in Ephesians 5:3, "*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.*" Yet, rates of pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex, living with boyfriends/girlfriends, and a host of other immoral actions compares almost equally between Christians and non-Christians. The statistics of Christian men and women (and Christian leaders) viewing pornography run close to the rates of non-Christians. Living in permissive and pleasure-seeking cultures, Christians' unholy lifestyles must break the heart of God who gave us an awesome gift we choose to distort! We appeal to you, brothers and sisters, *Honor the Creator!*

God established purity, faithfulness, and personal holiness as spiritual weapons! May we train and use well these battle-ready weapons!

Some Gates Keep Women Out... Be Creative!

Troubling statistics reveal that many Christians fall into sexual sin. Yet, Satan has also used the *fear* of falling into sexual sin to prevent women from full participation in Church leadership. The concerned, "It's just easier to have men-only" results in many doors shut for women. This limitation hurts the harvest and pleases the enemy.

Some use the "Billy Graham Rule" to protect themselves. With this rule, men pledge to never be alone with a woman other than their wives. We whole-heartedly agree that all believers (single, married, male, and female) need to have strategies for our protection and accountability. But we must not use fear to shut out women from good and godly ministry. We must find creative solutions that advance the Gospel, without a *hint* of impropriety.

Personally, we do not meet with the opposite gender *one-on-one* (other than our spouse) over coffee or dessert or dinner for work meetings. We think of other options to get the job done and honor Christ, without limiting God's female laborers.

Sacred Siblings!

The Bible offers a fantastic solution to purity and propriety in the Church so that we walk in holiness since *"God is holy."* The Apostle Paul said, *"Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity"* (1 Timothy 5:1-2).

The "Sister Model" and "Brother Model" answer so many questions.

- How should you treat and view women? Like your sister.
- How should you treat and view men? Like your brother.

Take some time and expand the thought, "Treat her like your sister." "Treat him like your brother." What does this practically mean?

Our kids have each modeled this well. Just the other day, our youngest had a doctor's appointment. Afterward, the medical staff let her choose three stickers. She carefully chose one for herself, one for her brother, and one for her sister. As a good sister, she did not just think of herself. She wanted her siblings to be part of the experience.

What if we as Christians battled with pure hearts as we navigated our work, our entertainment, our ministry, our conversations, and our decisions. The enemy would tremble! What if we treated one another as sacred siblings – honoring our Creator and God's image-bearers? The enemy would have no foothold, no stronghold!

Pray that believers will live with holiness, faithfulness, and purity as sacred siblings! May the mountain of IMMORALITY be moved, in Jesus' name!