

## Briefing Document on "Our Greatest Weakness"

December 14, 2025

### Executive Summary

This briefing synthesizes the key themes from a message delivered at New Life Benson on December 14, 2025, which centered on identifying, understanding, and demolishing spiritual "strongholds." The central argument posits that a stronghold is a fortified sin or ungodly mindset that sets itself against the knowledge of God. These begin as "footholds"—areas of life willingly surrendered to Satan—which he then fortifies, often with the individual's unwitting help through repeated sin.

While a believer's soul is secure in Christ upon salvation, Satan continues to attack the mind and flesh through these entrenched strongholds, which can manifest as fear, resentment, entitlement, or addiction. The strategy for victory is not to reason with these strongholds but to actively demolish them. This spiritual warfare requires wielding the "mighty in God" weapons outlined in *2 Corinthians 10*, which include submitting to God, resisting the devil, and using the Word of God as the ultimate truth. The message concludes with a challenge for believers to make a definitive choice: to enthrone Christ in their lives and put their past sinful nature "on the cross," thereby living a life of genuine obedience and victory.

### Introduction: The Foundation of Perseverance

The message begins by establishing perseverance as a critical theme, citing historical and modern examples of success achieved through tenacity in the face of repeated failure.

- **Thomas Edison:** Quoted as saying, *"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."* His documented 1,000-plus attempts to find the right light bulb filament were framed not as a thousand failures, but as one success.
- **General Perseverance:** Another quote emphasizes this point: "Success seems to be largely a manner of hanging on when others let go."
- **Michael Jordan:** The basketball icon, who was once cut from his high school team, provided a powerful testimony to failure as a catalyst for success: *"I have missed in excess of 9,000 shots. I have lost over 300 games. 26 times I was trusted to make the winning shot and missed. I have failed over and over and over. That's why I succeed."*

These examples serve as an analogy for the spiritual persistence required to overcome personal weaknesses and strongholds.

### Understanding Spiritual Strongholds

The core of the message focuses on defining spiritual strongholds and identifying how they manifest in a believer's life. A stronghold is presented as a spiritual fortress built around a sin or a destructive worldview.

### Doctrinal Foundation

The primary text for this topic is *2 Corinthians 10:3-7*:

*"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 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, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced of himself that he is in Christ, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ, even so we are Christ."*

### Defining Characteristics

- **A Fortified Sin:** A stronghold is a sin or sinful attitude that has been fortified by life choices and experiences to the point that it feels insurmountable.
- **A Worldview Lens:** It acts as the lens through which an individual filters and interprets everything in life. A godly worldview produces righteous thoughts and actions, while an ungodly one produces the opposite.
- **A Mindset of Hopelessness:** Biblical scholars define a stronghold as a mindset "impregnated with hopelessness" that causes an individual to accept something they know is contrary to God's will.
- **Surrendered Territory:** It is territory in one's life that has been surrendered to Satan, where he has built a wall around a particular sin, holding the person in its grip.
- **An Argument Against God:** A stronghold is any argument, pretension, or challenge that appears bigger than God and makes a person experience the opposite of what God has promised in His word.

### Common Manifestations

The message identifies several common strongholds and ungodly worldviews prevalent today.

Category	Examples
<b>Personal Strongholds</b>	Fear, Resentment, Bitterness, Unforgiveness, Pride, Greed, Addiction (Drugs/Alcohol), Materialism, Discrimination, Foul Language
<b>Ungodly Worldviews</b>	<b>Entitlement:</b> The belief that one deserves certain things, summarized by the attitude of "I deserve it. It's all about me." <b>Political Correctness:</b> Allowing news reports and societal pressures to maneuver and manage one's attitudes and assessments, leading to unbiblical conclusions.

### The Anatomy of a Stronghold: From Foothold to Fortress

A detailed process is outlined describing how a stronghold is established and strengthened over time.

1. **The Foothold:** Before salvation, while living in a carnal state, individuals surrender territory to Satan without resistance. This initial surrendered ground is a **foothold**.
2. **Satan's Strategy:** Satan knows that upon salvation, he loses a person's eternal soul but still has access to their flesh and mind. His goal is to exploit the footholds established in their life.
3. **Fortification:** Aware that the Holy Spirit will convict the believer to reclaim this territory, Satan immediately works to **fortify** the foothold, elevating it to a **stronghold**. An analogy is given of a cavalry

unit that first establishes a temporary camp (a foothold) and then builds tall, strong walls to create a fortified place (a stronghold).

**4. The Believer's Role:** Satan, having no inherent authority, deceives the individual—the rightful owner of the territory—into helping build the fortress. Every time a person commits that particular sin, they are "laying another brick" and strengthening the stronghold.

**5. The Paradox of Romans 7:** The speaker references the apostle Paul's struggle in Romans 7 as a perfect illustration of this dynamic. Paul expresses exasperation at his own actions, doing what he does not want to do, which culminates in his cry: *"Oh wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"* (Romans 7:24). This highlights how even believers can find themselves strengthening the very strongholds they wish to be rid of.

### The Strategy for Demolishing Strongholds

The message provides a clear, multi-step plan for spiritual victory over these entrenched issues. Demolition, not negotiation, is the only effective approach.

- **Step 1: Stop Laying Bricks:** The first and most immediate action is to cease strengthening the stronghold. This requires a conscious decision to stop making excuses and engaging in the sin.
- **Step 2: Demolish the Walls:** Strongholds cannot be reasoned away or ignored; they must be torn down "brick by brick, stone by stone," just as God brought down the formidable walls of Jericho.
- **Step 3: Wield the Word of Truth:** The primary weapon is God's Word. Jesus, when tempted by Satan in the wilderness after 40 days of fasting, countered every deceptive manipulation of scripture with the true interpretation of God's Word. Knowing the Word is essential to fending off these attacks.
- **Step 4: Execute the Divine Plan:** *James 4:7-10* offers a two-part directive:
  - **For the Believer:** *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you."*
  - **For the Unrepentant:** *"Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep... Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you."*
- **Step 5: Take a Personal Inventory:** Believers are encouraged to examine who they associate with and what influences they allow in their lives. This includes assessing whether they are being a positive Christian witness or are being drawn back into old, comfortable, but destructive patterns. A personal testimony was shared about overcoming a 35-year-old stronghold of resentment by asking for forgiveness, which led to restoration.

### The Throne of the Heart: A Call to Authentic Faith

The message concludes with a powerful call to action, framing the battle against strongholds as the central issue of Lordship in a believer's life.

- **Christ on the Throne:** As long as old issues, sins, and strongholds "reign in your life, Christ's seat is taken." The primary job of a Christian is to put Christ on the throne and place their past "on the cross."

- **Burying the Past:** An analogy from *Leviticus 22:3-4* is used, noting that an Old Testament priest could not enter God's presence if he had touched anything dead. This signifies that a believer walking with God must "bury your old lifestyle" and not even touch those dead issues again.
- **The Final Choice:** God is able to take the sting out of past memories and replace it with the "sweet taste of victory." The ultimate decision comes down to a fundamental question each person must ask themselves: "Am I a Christian, or am I just pretending?"

#### New Life Benson Church Announcements and Events (December 2025)

The following announcements were made during the service:

Event/Item	Details
<b>Christmas Cards</b>	The collection box is full. Members are urged to check the box for cards addressed to them (filed alphabetically) and to pick them up. Cards can still be dropped off.
<b>Fundamentals of Faith</b>	This class takes place immediately after the service.
<b>OCC Online Boxes</b>	The deadline is December 16th.
<b>Christmas Store Setup</b>	Volunteers are needed to help set up the Christmas store for the children's ministry. <b>Chair Stacking:</b> Help is needed after the Sunday PM service to stack all chairs under the outside awning to make room. <b>Store Setup:</b> Help is needed on Monday at 10:00 AM to set up tables and inventory. The store allows children to use money earned in Wednesday classes to buy gifts for their families.
<b>Angel Tree</b>	The deadline is December 18th at the DAV. See Nikki or Vicky King for questions.
<b>New Life Outreach Team</b>	Meets on December 19th at 10:00 AM.
<b>Praising Puppets</b>	A puppet ministry performance will be held on Sunday, December 21st at 6:30 PM.
<b>Christmas Eve Service</b>	Wednesday, December 24th. Caroling begins at 5:30 PM, with the main service at 6:30 PM. Refreshments will follow.