

## Strongholds Conversation: Facilitation Guide

After doing the first part of the evening's discussion, introduce the Strongholds conversation. Remind the group that everything shared in the group stays in the group. If this is a co-ed group, separate by gender before diving into the strongholds.

We hope everything will have filled out the strongholds sheet at the end of Day 5. If they haven't, allow some time for them to do so since you will use it for your discussion.

As a group, review the readings on page 92-93 of the Participant Guide about the three ways we get sucked into craving what Satan has to offer.

1 John 2:15-17 lays out three things

- The lust of the flesh - cravings physical pleasures like food and sex
- The lust of the eyes - cravings material things like possessions or status
- The pride of life - "the mother of all sins" is the thinking that we have everything in control and don't need God.

No-one of us can escape getting caught in one or more of these traps. It will take some courage for people to open up and share but it helps to know that we are all in the same boat. Discuss together how these three traps keep you from God.

Strongholds were at one time good/genuine desires created in us by God. However, after the fall, these desires were corrupted and turned into obsessions and addictions that control our lives. We usually keep our strongholds secret out of shame. But that is exactly what Satan wants us to do because sin thrives in secrecy.

- To get started, read out loud the last paragraph on page 89.
- Go around and share current or past strongholds. Be honest. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:9
- Encourage that person sharing to surrender that stronghold to God and claim victory over that stronghold in the name and power of Jesus.

- Thank the person for sharing and encourage him/her to seek accountability where needed. Invite them to pray the prayer of surrender on page 103 of the participant book:

*"Father, I come to you in the Name of Jesus. I recognize the power You have given me by the shed blood to Jesus to demolish spiritual strongholds in my life. I confess that I have given a foothold to sin and renounce the stronghold of (name the stronghold). I claim the truth of (name truth) by the authority of the Name of Jesus Christ. Through your power, I take back the ground I surrendered to the enemy. I pray that You will enable me to trust and obey Your Holy Spirit so that this area of my life will be in conformity to the image of Christ. Amen."*

- Ask the person to the right or left to pray over the one sharing his/her stronghold.
- Close group time by reading out loud the last paragraph on page 102.
- Close by praying especially for the armor of God over each person (Ephesians 6:10-18)