

THOUGHT PATTERNS

PULLING DOWN STRONGHOLDS

We have read from II Cor. 10, which I will read as our main text over this short series on Pulling Down Strongholds. Paul in talking about spiritual warfare spoke about a type of weapon, which you and I have. It tells us what this weapon will do. In II Cor. 10:4-6 *For the weapons of our warfare - we are in spiritual warfare with the enemy where Satan and his cohorts have built strongholds. But the kingdom of God is being established through your life and through my life altogether to the church of Jesus Christ. It tells us that 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.*

The bible tells us that the end result of the weapons of our warfare is that every thought be subject to Christ. Now in the Greek where it says *arguments*, in some older translation it says *reasoning*. They are thought patterns that you and I have to wrestle with daily. Somehow thought patterns are not just simple psychological thoughts that we have been always considering. They have a dynamic spiritual effect. In fact there are four types or four dimensions of thought pattern in the thought world. You and I have been made spirit beings. We have a soul and we live in a body. We know that Satan is a spirit being. Demons are spirit beings. But when a temptation comes to your life isn't it interesting that you feel it as a thought pattern? Why should the spirit world attacking the natural world cause an experience called a temptation or a flow of thought pattern that stirs wrong desires and emotions? That experience itself shows us that our thought life has an effect in the spirit world. The reverse is true. The spirit world is constantly having an effect on our thought pattern, whether for good that is from God or for bad, which is from the devil. Our thoughts have energy. We are not talking about mind power, mental power, or mind over matter. We are talking about the spiritual world as it reaches

into the natural world. There is a side effect in patterns of thoughts that you and I need to wrestle with.

The first thing that the devil did when he attacked Adam and Eve was to attack Eve in her thought life. He gave her wrong reasonings, wrong arguments in order to convince and persuade her to eat the tree of knowledge of good and evil. His attack through the serpent was in a thought realm. Men and women of God of old have constantly taught us that the battleground is in the mind. It's still the same from the apostle Paul's time to our days, where the spirit and natural realm meets in the battle of the mind. We need to understand what strongholds refer to. From the context of II Cor. 10 strongholds refer to thought pattern. That is why in II Cor. 10 when Paul mentioned about pulling down strongholds, he describes it as casting down arguments that flow from the thought life, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Again he talks about every thought that goes against the knowledge of God. Then he goes on to mention about *bringing every thought into captivity into the obedience of Christ*. Again the word *thought* is mentioned. Until every single one of our thoughts are in obedience to Christ. Obviously the context tells us that strongholds have a direct relationship with thought patterns. The next thing that we need to do is to see some bible examples.

Lets turn to the book of Acts and we give you just a few examples, although there are many, to establish the some definitions of strongholds. Strongholds equal thought pattern. To establish a doctrine we need to have more than one verse. It has to be consistent throughout the bible. Lets turn to Acts 5 and we will see a thought pattern that Satan used to deceive a person by the name of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5:1 *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart?" -* I repeat that statement Satan was attacking the church. How does Satan attack? He doesn't come to you and grab you physically. He grabs your mind. He grabs your thought pattern. He asked, "Why have you allowed Satan to fill your heart?" Filled his heart with what? It says *to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."*

Peter said that Satan has filled his mind with a plan to keep part of the proceeds of the sale of their land and claim that the amount he has brought to the apostles is the whole sum. Ananias and Sapphira may not even have known it was Mr. Devil. But all he had in his experience was a thought pattern. He thought that it was a bright idea. Actually it was a black idea. It was from the enemy. His idea and his plan and his reasoning justify his own act. Did Ananias meet the devil himself? The devil comes knocking at the door and says, "Mr. Ananias, can I come in please?" "Who are you?" "I am Mr. Devil." "O I have been expecting you." No, the devil sent a missile in the form of a thought like a fiery dart at Ananias. Ananias received it. He did not discern that the thought and idea was from the devil. It was a thought pattern. Strongholds are thought pattern. I am just showing the negative side.

I want to show the positive side later but let me show one more person in the book of Acts 8. To establish a doctrine we have to show some examples. This is a different man and his name is Simon. We need to understand his background so that we understand how strongholds are built in our life. All of us have a pattern of thought. If you look at your finger, your fingers have a pattern. I don't believe in palmistry and those hocus-pocus. They are not true. However your hands have delicate pattern. Your thumb has little lines all along it. They are patterns in your hand. There are patterns of thought life that all of us have grown up with according to your background, knowledge and training. One of the most dangerous things is the failure to recognize how our thought pattern interchanges, the failure to discern our thought pattern from the past or to differentiate the thought pattern that is from God versus that from the enemy. The renewal of the mind involves a change of our thought pattern.

In the book of Acts 8 a man named Simon his background is given in verse 9. *But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great.* Now that was his thought pattern – he was a sorcerer, a knowledgeable person, and a manipulator. He knows how to get attention. As a proud person, he wants to be someone great. These are all his thought patterns before he was born again. He was proud; he was into witchcraft, sorcery and moved in the occult. His thought patterns follow certain areas. He was someone who was used to entertainment; money is also one

of his gods. All these are a part of his thought pattern. This was before he was born again.

Then he saw Philip preaching the gospel of the kingdom. The bible says in verse 13 *Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs, which were done.* So he was born again and baptized in water. Now here he was born again baptized in the Spirit, amazed at the works of God but the old thought pattern that he had was still operating partially in his life. The born again experience is instantaneous but the renewal of the mind is a process. Unknown to himself and unknown to many others he had a stronghold. See, strongholds are a pattern of thoughts. He had a certain way of thinking. He lived his life in a certain way. All these things came from strongholds in his life in his background. So when he began to see how through the apostles' hand the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money. He said in verse 19 *Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.* He was used to a certain way of thinking that resulted in a certain form of action. That is from his old life.

Peter said in verse 20 *Your money perish with you, because you thought - you thought* indicates a thought pattern, a way of thinking - *that the gift of God could be purchased with money.* Verse 21 he says your heart is not right. Look at verse 22 *Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.* Peter is talking about thought life. This person named Simon the magician had a wrong thought pattern from his non-Christian life. After he was born again he is used to a pattern of thinking that was wrong in God's eyes. Peter says he has to repent for the wrong thinking. Verse 23 *For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.* The wrong thought pattern had literally tied him up so that he could not do the right thing.

I wonder as we are sitting in the presence of God what thought pattern some of you have with you. There is a thought pattern that all of us wear in our soul. Our physical body wears clothes. Our spirit being wears spiritual garment. Our soul wears thoughts. Thought patterns are like clothing that we wear on our mind. It influences how you think. How you relate to others. How you evaluate new things. Look at Simon the magician - his old thought pattern caused him to evaluate

something new wrongly. It was like seeing through a colored glass. He saw the wrong color. Not because what he saw was wrong but because what he saw was colored by his thought pattern. He saw the power of God, the Holy Spirit and the apostles, Peter and John ministering under the power of the Spirit and his old colored glasses told him that such power could be purchased with money.

One of the things that God had been speaking is to pull down strongholds. Unless we pull down strongholds of thought pattern in our life we can never be free to really worship God. To really serve God. To really love God. To really do the works of God. Thoughts come in pattern. Thoughts come in groups and assemble themselves into a pattern. When it has formed into a pattern it has a certain influence and power of its own. It becomes either a stronghold to bind you or a strong God's hold to keep you free from sin. You are used to that new form of thinking, a holy way of thinking, a holy way of conducting your life, and you don't feel the temptation that others feel. The strong fortress of God's way of thinking protects you. It can work for evil and it can work for good but there is a pattern of thoughts that constitutes a stronghold that every believer will have to wrestle with. Satan seeks to build tremendous strongholds in the minds of everybody.

In our lives God is dealing with us to deal with the stronghold. So we established point No.1 that strongholds equal patterns of thoughts. Under this main point we describe a little bit. One of our descriptions is thoughts come in groups. The groups come in different types of patterns. We have also established the fact that we wear our thoughts. Wherever you go whatever you are doing your thought pattern affects you. These thought patterns operate in your life when your mind is in free gear. Free gear means you are not consciously thinking of something whether of your work or of concentrating on certain subject. Your mind is just free. When your mind is left free, it will always go into the thought pattern that you are used to. If you are a negative person and you left it free it will keep flowing in a negative cycle. Most people move into free gear when they are in the bathroom. As they are taking a bath they will be whistling and singing their bathroom operas. That's where many choir members are trained. But if they are having a wrong thought pattern from their early life as they are bathing they keep thinking about what others has said about them. "That person said this about me." These thought patterns keep rolling whenever they engage free gear. Their thought patterns like a source of gravity pull all their thoughts down. Pull their thinking in a certain

direction. Negativism is a thought pattern. Worry is a thought pattern. Every time you got free time you worry. The first word that comes about it is what about this problem. "What about my future?" It's a constant thought pattern. Those thoughts must be broken. The strongholds must be pulled down or you will never have victory in your Christian life. We need to be made aware of those patterns of thoughts.

Now there are four dimensions in which the thought move into. Let me give you the four dimensions in Heb. 11:13 talking about those who live by faith. *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen (No.1 see) them afar off were (No.2) assured of them, (No.3) embraced them and (No.4) confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.* Now the process of faith has four dimensions. No.1 having seen them from afar. No.2 assured of them, No.3 embraced them. No.4 confessed them. Faith is born in the spirit world. But from the spirit world it must travel into the natural world to substantiate those things that are hoped for into those things that are seen. Part of the process faith is not just a mental conditioning it's a spiritual attribute. But it involves a mental conditioning of your mind as part of the process to actualize what God wants you to birth forth in the natural world. We are going to look at it from the thought pattern view. There are these four areas we will touch on them as we go along. We may be able to touch on two or three of them at the moment.

Although we listed the order as see first, assured second, third is embraced and forth is confess, but I like to point to the word *assured* first. There are four different dimensions for the existence of thought. One is where it's already formed. The pattern is already created. That is in the area of assurance. On the positive side when you are assured of something, it is when you believe something. The word *assurance* is tied to the word *believe*. When you say that you believe certain things and it's a part of your life principle, a part of your philosophy, apart of your being, you are saying that, that thought pattern is a part of you. The way of thinking is the way of faith. It exists as a fixed condition, a certain way in which you look at things or a certain way in which you approach certain things. What you believe is very important. If you believe that it's not possible like the ten spies it will not be possible for you. If you believe that it is possible like Joshua and Caleb it becomes possible for you. Now there is a long road to lead a person to what we believe. As we sit here in this auditorium, we all have similar beliefs on major doctrinal issues

but when it comes to some specific teachings, we may have divergent views. This is a result of what we believe. "Believed," "assured," are words that describe the first dimension of established thought. So the first dimension is the established thought pattern.

Some thought patterns could be established wrongly from your life before you were born again. But they are thought patterns that you are used to. Your way of thinking has become a part of your personality and your character. For example in my life I seldom think about other people. I think more about God. If I think about other people it's more on the positive side. But some people think that others keep thinking about others. Or maybe in your life you keep thinking of people. Probably about seventy percent of the time I think about God and the ministry. I don't have time to think about individuals. But when I focus my mind to do a certain task or train a certain individual then only at that time do I think about that individual. Otherwise if that has nothing to do with the ministry work I wouldn't think about that individual. I do pray for the church. I do pray for individuals. But that is intercession. But that is more your spirit lifting up people. But sometimes other people keep thinking, "I wonder what Bro. So-and-so is thinking about me." Their entire mind is occupied in the wrong thought pattern. The sad thing is this they think that it is real. Established thought patterns feel real. But sometimes people are caught in a fantasy of their own creation. Experientially they feel that is real and remember what you believe you start looking for them. You can find evidences to substantiate your own fantasy.

As a pastor I have counseled many people. One interesting part of counseling is boy-girl relationships. Sister So-and-so said, "Pastor, I think brother So-and-so is in love with me." I said, "How do you know?" She said, "Well, the other day when I was sitting in church I caught him looking at me three times. Although the auditorium is very big from the front he looked right back at me. I even saw his eye open bigger." But then later I asked bro. So-and-so, "Brother, in your heart are you thinking of any particular lady at the moment that we could pray for you?" Bro. So-and-so said, "Not quite but I am familiar with several." I said, "By the way on that particular Sunday, were you showing any interest in anybody?" Now this never happened - this is a fictitious story that I cooked up for illustration purposes. If it sounds like your story it has nothing to do with you. So bro. So-and-so says, "On that particular Sunday, no, nobody in particular." "Were you looking behind at

any person three times?" "Actually I thought I heard a sound and I was looking back at the sound room." "Was it three times?" "Yes, three times." That poor sister was thinking that he was interested in her.

When you believe certain things you will find evidences to substantiate those things. Accidental thing that has nothing in relation to what your evidences are. Not every girl who drops a handkerchief is waiting for the knight in shining armor to pick it up and give it to her. Bow his knees and plead, "Will your marry me?" She may actually drop her handkerchief accidentally. Not every man who is friendly to a sister or who just invites her out for lunch mean that he is now becoming serious with her. I know that there are some special lunches that are different from others but just because a boy asks you what you are doing for lunch doesn't mean he has special feelings for you. We have this group fellowship here let's go along. Sometimes it is but many times its not. It's just a friendly way of fellowshipping. But if we believe what we believe and that belief is from a wrong thought pattern it becomes a fantasy in our life and we will begin to see things that are actually not there. Therefore what we believe is important.

The first dimension of thought pattern is the word *assured*. I call them established thought. As we look at established thought, comes the next question. The reason why I go on to this point is because after covering point one, you are beginning now to think about your life and your own fantasy. Sometimes a person has what I call a persecution complex. They think that somebody is talking about them all the time. Or they think that somebody is persecuting them all the time. Even if they think on those things why don't they think that somebody could be talking highly about them? Why think somebody is talking evil about him or her. It's called a persecution complex. They always think that others are talking bad about them. People can live such fantasy. These are all thought patterns that God's Spirit wants to deal with. They will destroy our lives unless we destroy them.

It is not because the Israelites cannot cross into the land of Canaan. It is because they were obsessed by a wrong thought pattern. They were as capable as Caleb and Joshua. Caleb and Joshua were not physically more able than them. The difference is the ten spies had a different thought pattern. They were looking for the wrong thing. They found the wrong thing. They were looking for an excuse not to do the

job. They said, "Yes, we were like grasshoppers." They found the reason not to do what they were supposed to do.

Looking at the first dimension of established thought pattern under the word assured or believe, whatever you believe right now in your life can be right or can be wrong. As you grow in God maybe ninety percent of what you believe is correct. We have to examine what we believe based on the bible. As we grow in our Christian life we find that some of the things that we used to believe were not scriptural and we change them and adapt them to the bible. As God reveal His word we began to grow in greater accuracy for Him and in Him. In our life right now everything that you believe is a thought pattern. That means if ninety percent of your belief right now is scriptural ninety percent of your thought pattern is correct. That means that ten percent is incorrect. The ten percent of what you believe that is incorrect is right now torturing your life and making your life miserable, causing fantasy, causing mistakes, and causing misjudgment, and not having a proper balance in your life. That ten percent could actually rob you.

When we look at point one your next question is, "Pastor, how do I break the cycle of what I believe that is wrong?" That's where point two and three come in because there are two areas that we need to look at in this thought pattern. No.1 is established thoughts. Now there are two ways by which thoughts become established. They form point two and point three. Later we will look at the energy of thought, which is point four. There are two ways in which thoughts become established. No.1 through emotions. No.2 through visions. Now you notice the word in Heb. 12 it says *and embraced them*. The word *embrace* speaks about the emotional aspect of your faith. There is feeling in what you believe. What we believe produces feeling. What we feel produces thoughts.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? It's a question that has been asked for a long time. The world doesn't have the bible. The world doesn't believe in God. The world doesn't believe in the revealed word of God. So up to now in the world they still do not have an answer. In fact if the world becomes too scientific they will think that everything formed from an embryo so they will say it formed from an egg cell. But the bible says God created and we have the answer: the chicken came

before the egg. Isn't it wonderful to be able to answer a question that men have not answered for a long time? So when people ask, "Which came first - the chicken or the egg?" "The chicken." "How do you know?" "Genesis chapter one." The chicken came before the egg. Chicken laid eggs and other chicken come from the eggs. So it's continuing process.

Now we know that when you have emotional feeling, your emotional feeling will produce thought. When you have a thought pattern your thought pattern produce emotions back. Both are affecting one and other. Your emotions affect your thought. I mean if you are in love you possibly think of your loved one more often than normal. It creates a thought pattern in your life. We should love Jesus first and most in our life. The opposite is true. When you have an established thought pattern, it produces feelings for good or for bad. If you have a melancholic thought pattern that always feel that loneliness in your life from the time you are small, when you are free that thought pattern would drag you down to feel lonely. On the other hand, if you have a very cheerful outgoing personality, when you are free you always think interesting and humorous thoughts. That's the pattern by which you think that have gripped your life. Some people are always very cheerful because they are thinking of happy thoughts all the time. It produces good feeling and well being in them. So we do know that feelings produce thought pattern.

Thought pattern also produces feeling. Which comes first? Here is an interesting point. In the bible it is definitely shown that when feelings come it moves you to a new direction of assembling those thoughts. I have studied the brain structure. Although we could say that we have developed the ability to exert control from the secondary brain over our primary brain, yet in our brain structure the primal brain still supersedes the external cortex. Just one incident in our life that is good or that is bad can affect your entire life. Why because that one incident produces and establishes a system of thought pattern.

Lets look at the negative side. Lets say a very traumatic experience happened to you. You feel hurt, backstabbed, wounded, and it actually happened. Something painful has registered in your soul. What happened? That emotional experience hardened the flexible thoughts that are around. See thoughts are constantly being hardened, like cement hardening, into established pattern. When cement is mixed

with water and sand and exposed to air, it hardens. When our thoughts that are free and loose are exposed to emotional experience they hardened and form a pattern of established thought. So our feelings are important. Guard our emotions carefully. When you have the wrong emotional experience they will create and establish a certain thought pattern around you. Then as you yield to that thought pattern for fifteen years, it becomes a part of your character and life. Unforgiveness becomes a part of your temperament.

On the positive side is when you have great emotional experiences with God. God touches you and releases you in the move of laughter. As you weep before God and cry, you feel the presence of God in your life. All these great emotional experience you have in God are forming the right thought pattern in your life. Sometimes for a long period of time when nothing has changed, suddenly a person experiences an emotional outburst of holy laughter and then he is changed. You know why? A wrong thought pattern has clammed them down emotionally. Suddenly it cracked opened as they experience that experience in God. You can't theologize laughter. If you theologize too much you lose the laughter. I mean think about the theology of laughter. *Ha, ha, ha*, means that you are normal. *Ho, ho, ho*, theologically means you are slightly more expressive. *Hee, hee, hee*, is when you are looking over a situation. There is no such thing. Some people laugh *ho, ho*, some *ha, ha, ha*, some *hee ho, hee, ho*. It is an emotional kind of experience and not a theology. Lets not try to theologize something that belongs to our emotion. You theologize it too much your lose your emotion.

But what we want to say is that spiritual experience does have an effect emotionally on our life. There are emotional experiences that we have in God. Sometimes as you worship God tears run down your eyes. You feel like you want to burst out in tears before God but you look around and everybody is looking so you hold back. Next time let go. Don't hold back. You say, "Pastor, if I let go, my mascara will melt and stain the carpet with pink and green and black droplets." Use waterproof makeup next time. Let go or when you are coming forward to the front and you are being prayed for and the Holy Spirit is giving you an emotional experience, yield to it. Let me tell you we are not against emotional experience, provided the emotional experience is in line with God.

How can you have Christianity without emotion? Think about living a life without emotion. Lets say you tell your family, "From now onwards, our family will not display emotion anymore because we have grown spiritually. We are now the redeemed family. Redeemed from the curse of the law. Redeemed by the blood of the Lord. We will have no more emotion. We are now spirit beings. We walk about like spirit beings. We conduct ourselves like spirit beings. Emotions are of the devil. We are now higher than those carnal human beings who still need emotion. We are the super breeds." You know what? When you come home from work your wife says, "Hello dear, lunch is now on the table. You will please proceed to your table." "Thank you, dear, I am coming now." Your daughter and son come back from the school and say, "Father, we are here to inform you that we are back. We will not hug you because such emotional display is of the devil and we will not tolerate them in our family. Just to report that we are back. Thank you. God bless you." Think about a family without emotion. It's dull. It's not the way God made it. Think about Christianity without emotion. Now emotions are fine the only difference is we do not base our theology on emotion. Emotions are to be enjoyed and experienced.

When we worship God we must have emotions. When we say to God, "I love You," we must have emotions. We all need emotions. God made us with emotions. The devil has been abusing our emotions. But God originally made emotions. We need to let go. When you worship God sometimes you are so excited you want to shout onto God. But then you look around because one of the ushers is looking at you very fiercely. Tell the usher to smile more. You look around and you don't have to shut up in case they kick you out of the church for shouting. Let me tell you right now in the Olympic games people are screaming. Then the moment people come near to the church they keep silent saying this is a holy place. Where is the excitement? I mean if heaven is like that, in heaven we all walk on tiptoes. We don't want to disturb God. No, God wants you to enjoy His creation. That's the way God wants you to be. When you worship God you get excited. Tell everybody that Jesus Christ is Lord. We need to worship God and allow our emotions to be part of the worship of God. Some of those breakthroughs are important to break down old cemented thoughts and to create new thoughts and new thought patterns. That's point two the embrace, where you hold those thoughts together.

Secondly the thought realm has feelings. Feeling can control the thought realm and

later on whatever your thoughts are, they produce feelings because they have been locked into them. We do know that feelings can be locked up. Feelings work by locking up a pattern in your life. Some of us are so locked up emotionally by an emotional experience of the past that we keep on having that same experiences emotionally produced by that established thought pattern that was not of God. You need a new experience. God is an experience. When you have good experiences and store up good emotional feelings in your thought patterns, you will never be the same. Every time you allow yourself to experience those good experiences, they re-establish the thought pattern. I am not saying that there is only one thought pattern in our life. All of us are creative human beings and we have lots of thought patterns locked up as a part of our character. As you grow more you have more and more thought patterns stored up in you. All the thought patterns come together and produce one main personality and that is you. But in line with the ongoing process feelings are important. As we allow the right experience to harness and establish the thoughts we will lock into our minds the experience of God. There are certain experiences that only God gives you. It changes you eternally. Sometimes when you talk about those lovely experiences in God you can pull back those wonderful emotional experiences. Those emotional experiences locked them in. So thought can be established. Feelings are the establisher of thought.

The third dimension of established thought is sight or seeing. Vision is the expander of thought – it expands and gives wings to your thoughts to travel into uncharted horizons. If feelings are the establisher to establish thoughts, then sight or vision is the expander. Feelings are like a lasso. To have a good experience you lasso in your good feelings like you lasso in a bull or a horse or it becomes a part of your life. But vision is like an expander. It pushes you further than you have gone in your thinking. My friend you can theologize a vision faster than you can theologize a true intellectual argument. You can see faster than you can think. That is why vision is in that dimension.

Let me illustrate with different things here in the world around us. Lets talk about water, water vapor and ice. Point one established thought is like ice. When ice, which is H₂O, solidifies, it takes a certain shape. It's very hard to change the shape. Have you tried cutting a block of ice? It's not easy. You could throw metal into the ice. Long ago in World War II, they were experimenting with an ice shield. If they were to shoot a cannonball into that ice shield, that cannonball would become a part

of that shield. It wouldn't even destroy that shield. We know that huge icebergs have destroyed man-made ships. Think about the many big giant ships that have sunk. It is caused by huge block of ice that we call iceberg. They are powerful established thought pattern. Feelings are like water. Water will take the shape of whatever container you put it in. If you put water into a square container and freeze it and remove that container it will remain square. If you take water and you put it in a round container and freeze it, it will remain circular. It retains its solidness after it freezes. But before it's frozen it is fluid. You need to contain it properly.

That is why feelings are a part of God's creation of us as human being. But we need to have feelings contained by the word of God. Whenever the feelings are wrong feelings remember this - all wrong feelings are a perversion of a right feeling that God gave you. Satan has never been able to create. He has only been able to pervert. Fear is not created. Fear is faith in reverse gear, faith in the negative thing. Hate is opposite from like and also love although we say the opposite of love is self. But lets look at it from the emotional point of view. When you hate someone what happens? You think about that person often. Like you cannot get that person out of your life. That person is torturing you. Now that is a very negative and opposite of loving somebody. That somebody becomes a constant imparter into your life. It becomes a constant encouragement. All you have to do is think about that person and you feel encouraged. Satan has perverted it. Do not despair if you have the wrong emotions in your life. It is the twisting of the right emotion into the wrong area.

So feelings are like water. It flows and finds its own level. We need to contain it with the word of God. Whenever there is a wrong feeling that comes by men and you feel hurt, quickly run to the word of God. Run to the blood of the Lamb. Cleanse it, forgive and exercise love. The agape love of God will produce all the other fruit. Do you notice that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, song-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance and that is Gal. 5:22-23. When you tie it to I Cor. 13 you find that all the areas there *love rejoices, love is patience*, you find all the fruit of the Spirit is tied to one word *love*. So we guard our emotions so that only the emotion that is in line with the agape love of God will be allowed to remain. When it's in line with the word of God, it will then form the right thought pattern.

The third dimension of established thought is the expansion of thought in terms of seeing. It is like a cloud. Water vapor rises up as tiny droplets of water and gathers together to form clouds. If you were to reach out and touch a cloud you can't. You can't feel it. You can see it but you can't feel it. You cannot catch a cloud with your hand. Your hand passes through the cloud. The cloud and the water vapor represent the thought life in the form of cloud. Thought life in the form of ice is the first dimension of established thought. Thought life in the form of water is feeling and is the second dimension of established thought. Thought life in the form of cloud is sight or vision and is the third dimension. It's very interesting to see thoughts in the form of vision.

Right now if you have a business and you are thinking of expanding the business you may need many ideas, many plans, many sub-steps towards that goal. But it takes you just a few seconds to visualize and see the results. That's how powerful vision is. Vision will pull out just like this speaker here in front of me. It is solid. Lets pretend it's a piece of ice. Once upon a time this solid speaker here was water. It has been crystallized to the right experience into this square block. Now it is formed in that state we want to bring it higher. We want to enlarge it. We want to lift it up higher. That is vision. It brings you beyond your feeling. You only depend on feeling to establish your thought but you are limited. The word of God and love will establish it. But we need to go beyond into the higher dimension of God.

Paul says in the book of Colossians 3:1 *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.* Set your mind on things above. We need to go beyond this earthly life into the other life, spiritual life to be able to see the realm of God. Set our mind on the things above. How do we set our mind on the things above? How do we rise above the gravitational pull of this earth? In the world people revolve their life around food, clothing, shelter, luxury and earthly materialism. We need to rise above those areas. It is possible through vision to rise above those areas.

The illustrators will be walking around with two posters. The first poster is a photograph. Many of you probably have seen the photograph of the earth taken from the moon. Now this photograph is taken from 6.2 kilometers from the earth. No human being has gone that far. It was taken by a satellite on its way to Mars and Jupiter. The satellite turned back and photographed the earth and the moon. It was far enough to catch the earth and moon in one photograph. Physically you and I can never take that photograph of this earth. As long as you remain on this earth you can never have that kind of photograph. You can stand on the North Pole, South Pole or anywhere on the earth, you cannot photograph the moon and the earth together in that way. You can take part of the slant of the earth and the moon in the background. But you cannot take the whole earth and the whole moon. But that photograph taken from 6.2 kilometers from the earth captured the earth and the moon together.

In vision you can go beyond your situation. You can go beyond your limitations. If you want to fly, close your eyes now and you can see yourself flying. Men have always visualized before they invented. Man has always visualized first before he invented. It's when that vision is born that man began to put things together to crystallize and to create. That vision in your thought life is important. Vision is to cause you to go beyond your life and yourself, your family and your kinsfolk. Go beyond into the dimension that no man has gone before. To be able to catch something from the spirit realm of God. Crystallize it and bring it to the planet earth and be able to bless mankind.

The second poster is a picture of the Milky Way galaxy. There are trillions of galaxies throughout the universe. The solar system with all its nine planets is a part of this single galaxy called the Milky Way. Scientists have now recognized that it is not the biggest galaxy. It seems big to us because of our smallness. That picture of the galaxy is roughly from a point of about a hundred and fifty thousand light years away from where we are. A light year is the distance it takes light to travel in one year. In one second light travels a hundred and eighty thousands miles. How many seconds are there in a year? That is a picture taken from about a hundred fifty thousand light years. Now the first poster was a photograph. The second poster cannot be a photograph because to take that photograph you would have to send a rocket a hundred and fifty thousand light years away. Which is equal to hundred and fifty thousand earth years. Man has not been able to travel at the speed of

light. Man has been able to travel at a speed of about one tenth of the speed of light. So to travel a hundred and fifty thousand light years at our present technology and speed times, that would mean that you have to travel for one million five hundred thousand years. By the time you send the rocket to take that photograph, the planet earth civilization has gone through one million five hundred thousand years. The people who invented that rocket would no longer be alive. Obviously no human being could travel to that distance and back.

Thank God in the spirit world we can travel at the speed of thought. How then did we have that picture? A computer was used to paint that picture after the positions and distance of the stars were noted and calculated. Scientists gathered together to work with an artist. So that that picture is as accurate as a photograph. All the stars in that picture of the galaxy are in their exact scientific position. It is painted like a photograph of the Milky Way. It is a photograph that you and I can never take. That picture took them about six months to one year to collaborate. All the calculations had to be put in. They did it within one earthly year. It would have taken one million five hundred thousand years to take that photograph. We are somewhere on the fringe of the Milky Way. Now that is just to expand your thoughts. Imagine we have in our hand a picture that no man has photograph but we are able to produce it as a photograph accurate right to the calculations possible. How is it done? Through knowledge and through the imagination. In the same way, vision is a powerful area. The bible concentrates on vision a lot. Vision is a powerful realm, which can help you to go beyond yourself, beyond all your limitations. Feelings are important to crystallize thoughts. But vision is important as it helps you go beyond yourself, beyond your limitations.

I like to close by looking at Mk. 11 to show you that all those processes are there. Jesus talked about the faith that will move mountain. Let me show the four forces working. We know that faith is a spirit attribute and not just a mental condition. However the spirit attribute does involve a mental renewal of the mind. That's where the breaking down the strongholds is. In verse 22 *So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your*

Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Now first of all look at verse 23 *Does not doubt in his heart but believe*. Doesn't that talk about established thought? Whatever you believe and becomes a part of your life is a set of established thought pattern. That's why faith has not worked in many people. They are not established in God's thought pattern. We need to believe correctly. Believe in line with the word of God. Our philosophy, our principles, and our whole life system, must be built upon the word. If your belief is not in line with the word change it. When it's in line with the word you have established the thought pattern.

Second area is the feelings and emotions it says in verse 24 *whatever things you ask*. Now the word *ask* is the Greek word *aiteo*, which is, whatever things you desire. Desire is a feeling. You haven't quantified what it is. You haven't theorized what it is. But the desire is there. It is linked up to your feeling. Now it's in your spirit but it effects your emotion. That's where you find point two. Obviously if you don't feel and desire for something you will not have the stamina to go through. Belief is one area. But the feelings for it and the desire for it must be there, then only you can go through.

Thirdly the area of vision. It tells us in verse 23 *whoever says to this mountain, "Be removed and be cast into the sea." And does not doubt in his heart*. The word *heart* is used and the attribute of the heart is a visual area. One more verse in verse 24 *whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you received them, and you will have them*. The Greek is the past perfect tense. Believe that you have received them. You must be able to see that you already have them. There is a visual area. Now believe that you have received are tied to the book of Romans chapter 4 and gives you an example of Abraham. Rom.4: 20 *He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform*. If you read the story of Abraham you find that before Abraham's belief was established, he still doubted sometimes. You know what God did? He got him to see. He says, "Abraham, look at the stars. Can you count them? Your children will be like the stars. Abraham your children will be like the dust of the ground. Abraham look North, South, East, West, look as

far as you can. I give you the land.” What was God doing? Before Abraham’s thoughts were established, sometimes even before his feelings have developed God had him to see vision. So that is why vision is important. It starts in that area.

At first what you see doesn’t produce feeling. You just see it in God but slowly it consumes you. Now the correct order when it comes to faith is *see, believe, embrace, and confess*. But according to thought pattern that we have analyzed we have reversed and looked at it differently. Established thought is already there because in our life we already have established thoughts. Then there are liquid thoughts like water and we need to form them carefully. Then there are thoughts that are like cloud we can see but we can’t touch. You know what produces water? When the vapors are gathering together into clouds, one day the clouds become so heavy that the water starts coming down. That’s rain. So you substantiate what you see into tangible realm. My friends as you begin to see the things of God and allow your thoughts to rise above you into the heavenly places, the cloud begins gathering in your life. One day it will pour down like rain. As it rain, it forms water. You can gather that water and you can solidify it into block of ice for your life – thought pattern. The times between ice changing into water and water into ice and the times between water changing into water vapor and water vapor changing into water are chaotic sessions. It looks chaotic when there are thunderstorms and lightning. Or when water vapor evaporates and form cloud above. Or when the big pieces of ice melt and form ice berg. Those in between area look chaotic. But out of the chaos God forms the world. God forms you and I. There are many loose forms coming but there is only one gravitational force that should pull all our thoughts together - the name is the name Jesus Christ.

Every head bow and every eye close. Even right now there are strongholds to pull down right where we are. Sometimes the stronghold of sickness comes from the thought pattern. Sometimes it comes from the stronghold of brokenness because of thought pattern that have gripped you. The Spirit of God is hovering above us. Sometimes your life looks chaotic. When the Spirit of God moves, He hovers over the chaos. Sometimes the water vapor is condensing into water. Sometimes the water is changing into ice. Sometimes it is the reverse - the ice wrong thought pattern is changing back into water. But God knows your life. Is there stronghold in your life that God has to break? Stronghold in your life that the Spirit of God has to break? Stronghold in your life that need to be pulled down?

