



MEN AND THEIR FATHER

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You guys ready to go? Alright, welcome to Real Men. We're so excited and glad to have you. We always like to welcome the new guys. New guys. First time, raise your hand. Hey, we love you. Welcome those guys. You guys made a great decision to join us for our weekly Men's Bible study and guy's night out and I wanna give a shout out to, for every guy in the room, there's a hundred thousand, a hundred thousand largely young men online. God is doing something right here and we get to be a part of it. And I think in our hearts, we all feel it, amen. Like God is activating a generation of strong spirit filled godly men to be the answer to a world that has lost its mind. And so I'm just so honored and so glad to see you guys. My name's Pastor Mark and uh, we're gonna do a talk tonight on the life of Gideon. I've got a study guide for you. Uh, how many of you, you're my nerd friends, you like footnotes, you want to go deeper? Uh, I've got a study guide for you if you want to grab that. It'll help get you ready to go deeper in your Bible study. Uh, but this talk tonight is something I've never really talked about and it's actually a new revelation for me. And it actually started this weekend. So I was teaching reading a section of judges six. We'll get it to it in a moment. And as I was reading, the word stronghold was in the text. And uh, God said that there was a stronghold in Gideon's father's house. And for him to have deliverance, he needed to go, uh, tear down that stronghold and replace it with worship of God. And I'd read the text many times and I saw the word, and then suddenly in that moment, it's like the Holy Spirit highlighted that word. And immediately I started praying for you. As I was reading the scripture, I was like, Lord, what do you want me to do with that? And he said, uh, he said, teach that to the men. I was like, okay. So I, I went home. I was like, I need to do a, a word study and a bible study on the concept of a stronghold. And that's what we're gonna talk about. But this entire concept of stronghold, again, it starts with a stronghold being in Gideon's family for generations. And ultimately this is one of the big themes of the Bible. And if you're new to Christianity, and I know some of you guys are brand new, many of you are brand new either to church or to Christianity, and some of you guys aren't even Christians yet, we're so glad to have you. But one of the storylines of the Bible is Father and Son. It's a massive mega theme. And you'll see from generation to generation in the Bible, it talks about a father and his sons and his grandsons. So the Bible is by definition in nature. It's a patriarchal book and it traces, uh, families through fathers. And just so you know, God is pro patriarchy and so are we. And anytime there aren't good strong men, that means that the worst men take over. They damage and harm women and children. We want men to be filled with the spirit. And we're here to build men up to bless women and children. And I'm just tired of the absolute BS nonsense that men are the problem. They're not weak. Men are a freaking problem and woke men are a freaking problem and God's men are the solution. And God's answer for that is men who understand what it means to be a man and understand that God is a father and they're his son. And to be a good son is to become like Jesus Christ. And the more men that we have that are like Jesus, the less problems that we have. And so ultimately this is a major theme of the Bible and it's a major passion of mine. And so as men, you need to know God made you as a man. God made you to be activated. God made you to lead. God made you to take risks. God made you to be on adventure. God made you to have conflict. God made you to get up from the battles that you lose and to keep fighting. And ultimately at the end of the day, because you are head of your household and you are, and the Bible doesn't say that you could or should be, the Bible says that the man is the head. That means that he is the primary leader and bears first responsibility for blessing upon his family, starting with his wife and kids. The question is not are men heads, the question is are they doing their job or are they not doing their job? And what happens is because you men are heads and some of you are single, but you're gonna get married. How many of you are fathers or grandfathers, right? You've also you've already got your blessing under your roof. I've got five, uh, kids and we've got grandkids and I'm now a grandpa. And, and the Bible says it. And the older I get, the more I see it, the decisions that men make, they impact and affect generations positively or negatively. The Bible calls this blessing or cursing. So if you as head of your household, if you are devoted to the Lord, there's blessing that comes generationally on your family. If you're head of your household and you're not honoring God, then there is cursing and consequence. It's the law of reaping and sowing that comes on your family. And again, we see this in judges and we see this with Gideon. We're gonna get there in a moment. But let me just set up what I want to talk about. And I ultimately, um, wanna talk about generational bondage. And so for some of us, the issues that we have didn't start with us. They started

with our fathers and our grandfathers. They started generations prior. I want you to start to think about patterns and habits in your family. And what this leads to is some men just assume because their father was a certain way that they're going to be like their father. They just assume if their father was an alcoholic, they're gonna be an alcoholic, or if their father was an adulterer, that they will be an adulterer. Or if their father tanked his life and shipwrecked his faith that they will follow in his footsteps. And that's not true. You don't have to be like your father. Now if your father loves the Lord and he's a man of God and you honor him, then absolutely you wanna learn from your father. But the truth is, most of us didn't have a father. And if we had a father, he wasn't a great father. And even if he wasn't a decent father, he wasn't a godly father. And this leads to the question, does my father's decisions cause pain and suffering in my life? And am I do or am I cursed? And so lemme just hit a few things on generational bondage, and I want us to think as patriarchs and heads and husbands and fathers think of wives and kids and grandkids and legacies and generations, and this will be deliverance for some of you, but we are not personally guilty, uh, for the sins of our fathers and families. Uh, don't raise your hand, but how many of you men you think of your father, your grandfather, your history, your legacy that preceded you and it's dark, it's discouraging, and sometimes it's just damnable. Well, here's what Ezekiel 18, one through 18 says, the word of the Lord. So God speaks. What do you mean by repeating this proverb? The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. So there was a, a popular, uh, phrase in their day and it was getting repeated, but it wasn't true. Kinda like in our day when you hear things like, well, God helps those who help themselves, God never said that, but enough people have heard it. They assume it's something that God said. So he says, this proverb shall no more be used by you. He says, stop using this statement. Behold, all souls are mine. The soul of the Father is well, of the soul, of the Son is mine. And let me say this, you have a different soul than your father. And if your father was a good man, you too could be a good man. But if your father was a bad man, you could be a new man. And God is gonna change you at the level of the soul and make your soul different than your dad. The soul, uh, who sins shall die if a man is righteous and does what is right. He shall surely live if he fathers a son who is violent, a shudder of blood, who does any of these things, though he himself did. None of these things goes on to say he shall not live. He has done these abominations. He shall surely die, his blood shall be upon himself. Now suppose this man fathers a son who sees all the sins that his father has done, he sees and does not do likewise, he shall not die for his father's iniquity. He shall surely live for as for his father, because he practiced extortion, robbed his brother, did what was not good among his people. Behold, he shall die for his iniquity. Here's what he's saying. The line to heaven is single file and the line to hell is single file. And if you are walking, you're walking in your own decision making, now your father is gonna make a decision that he's gonna walk with God into heaven or he's gonna walk away from God into hell. And now you as a man, you gotta decide where you're gonna go. You can follow him or you can carve out your own path. But what he's saying is this, just because your dad did something, even if it was evil, sinful or wrong, that is not a shadow that should loom over your identity or your life just because your dad perhaps was not a good man. That doesn't reflect on you. You're a different man. Just because your dad made some bad decisions doesn't mean that God is going to pour his a consequential wrath out upon you because of the sins of your father. Furthermore, some of you men who are older like me, you've gotten saved later in life and, and you, if you had it to do over again, you would've said, man, I wish I met Jesus was reading the Bible and praying when I was raising my kids. I would've done a lot of things differently. And you can feel like some of the difficulties on their life is because they're being cursed because you were their father. That's not true. Ultimately, you are not necessarily required to live under the curse of your father and your children are also free to walk in the grace of God. So there's liberty and there's freedom, and there's hope for every generation. And I want some of you men who had good dads to go home and honor them, say, thanks dad. And if my pops is watching, I love you dad. And for some of you guys, you have no dad or a bad dad, then God has severed any connection between you and your father. Insofar as your future goes, you are not necessarily doomed to become like him. You don't need to follow in his footsteps. Maybe the men in your family have had some really damaging patterns and precedents for generations, but it's a fresh, clean start with you. What they have done is not what you have done and who you are is not who they are. And so there's a fresh start. But in the Old Testament, one

thing did happen and that is that the people would repent of the sins of their fathers and families to break bondage by confessing sin of your family, starting with your Father. You are not taking responsibility for them, but you're agreeing with God and you're reminding yourself, I don't wanna be that guy and I'm gonna pray that the way that my father or family behaved is not the experience that my children and family have with me. Here's one of many examples, Nehemiah 1, 6, 3, 7, hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night confessing the sins of my, of the people. We together have sinned against you, even I and my father's house of sin. We've acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statues, the rules that you commanded your servant, Moses. Here's what Nehemiah says, God, I'm gonna be honest not only about my sin, but about my crazy family. And God, we have not honored you, we have not obeyed you, we have not regarded you. And as a result, I am telling you I agree with you and I love my family, but I am repenting of the lifestyle of my family. And what you're doing there, you're starting to break a generational pattern. You're starting to decide that you are going to differentiate from your mother and father and that your future is going to be different than your family's past. This is massive. And many men tend to think of themselves just in isolation, but think in terms of your family. So for example, uh, I verbal process a lot at these. So here's just something that comes to mind. Um, my extended family, uh, Irish Catholic, alcoholic, blue collar guys, lots of alcoholism in my family. And it just seemed like every generation, right? You just drink and you're mean to your wife, and then you raise your sons to drink and be mean to their wives. And then, and then it just goes for generations. And so when I first met Jesus and I got saved, I was like, God, I'm sorry that the last name Driscoll has been, you know, sort of associated with drunkenness and brawling and not being too nice to your wife. Uh, but God, I confess that as sin and I'm asking for the grace to do things differently. Like one of my first requests as a brand new Christian was literally, I don't want my wife to ever see me use my hands in a violent way. And I don't want my children to be scared of my hands. I want, every time my wife sees my hands and my kids see my hands, they're used to being hugged and kissed and blessed and prayed over and wrestled with. And there's no fear here. 'cause I'm, I'm, I'm a I'm a lion for them, but I'm a lamb with them. I'm the safest person in the world for them. That's who I want to be. And for some of us, it's not just, um, repenting of your sin, but it's recognizing some of those patterns you've inherited from your family, especially from your father. And not in a bitter way, but in an earnest way, just acknowledging that God, here's some things in our family that I'm ashamed of, and I'm asking for the grace that it would stop in this generation and that it would not continue into the future generations. How many of you men right now it's making sense. You got stuff in your family, you're like, I don't wanna put that on my kids. I don't wanna put that on my wife. I don't wanna put that on my grandkids, that part of our family. It's gotta get buried and it can't get risen. It just needs to stay dead. Those are the things that he's confessing. And here's the good news. Jesus saves us from sinful fathers and family into the father's family. I love this line one Peter one 14 through 18 as obedient children. So you are the sons of God. Do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance. Before you met God, you're an idiot, right? And we all made dumb decisions, but he who called you as holy. So he's without sin, pure set apart. You also be holy in all your conduct since it is written, you shall be holy. For I am holy like Father and son. If God is a holy Father, we want to be his holy sons. And if you call on him his father, here's what you need to know. You were ransom from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. Some of you men don't know that because you have the same last name as your dad because you're still part of the same extended family. Uh, your brothers are in a place that you're worried about them. The men in your family, they carry on certain characteristics and foolish rebellions and self-destructive decisions. And you just need to know right now, and this is a word for you from God, you've been adopted by a father, you are a new man, you now have a new father, you have a new heart, you have a new spirit, you have a new mind, you have a new destiny. And he has rescued you from what would've otherwise been as he calls it, a hollow and empty way of life. See, that's why we're here. We're here so that you men would awaken to the reality that what God saved you from was not just for yourself, but it was for your children and your children's children. It was for for legacy, and it was for future and for genealogy. How many guys in the house had a godly dad that they respect? Okay, praise God. Okay? But if you look around, that's probably 5% of the men. So you men need to know that you are, you are a

miracle. You had a godly dad. Okay? Now, for the rest of you men, you've been rescued from a hollow and empty way of life handed to you by your fathers, okay? That's the reality. We don't wanna embrace this for bitterness, but we wanna understand this because as we become husbands and fathers, we wanna make clean breaks from the past so that our family can have better life in the future. And the reason why it's so important that we acknowledge the failure and sins of our parents and our fathers and our families is because then that allows us to be honest in the raising of our own children. And here's the truth, when kids are growing up, they assume two things. Number one, they assume that adults know what they're talking about. Okay? As soon as you become an adult, you find that not to be true, okay? And so in addition, children assume that the home that they're growing up in, number two, they assume that it's normal. How many of you, you didn't know your family was crazy until you got to know some other people and grew up right? How many of you, you didn't know that your house was a circus until you got to go to somebody else's house, okay? And so whatever environment you and I create as head of household, we're discipling. We're bringing up the next generation, our kids and grandkids. And if we don't break some of those patterns and habits that preceded us, then those things will pass through us onto the next generation. Now, all have we done? We've created generational curses for our children and grandchildren. And so ultimately, um, what these, uh, generational bondages lead to is generational strongholds strong. And this is what we want to deal with as men. And let me say this, because we're men, we can deal with this because we have delegated authority from the father as his sons to exercise our headship and make decisions over our households. This brings me to judges chapter six, and we're looking at the life of Gideon on the weekends, and I wanna revisit this one moment in his life. So he started off, we looked at as a cowardly, timid, fearful, hiding, withdrawn man. And then Jesus shows up to him and he starts to speak to him. And then he responds by building an altar and worshiping Jesus. And we talked about this weekend, how important it is to have an altar at your house and to have an altar in your life, a sacred place, a thin space where you meet with God. And then God tells him, okay, now that you're worshiping me, you need to stop worshiping demons. And the point is this, if you were doing something that was against God, you need to not only start walking with God, you need to start tearing down those things that you were committed to prior to your commitment to God. So God gives him a massive assignment. And I wanna read it to you that night, judges 6 25 through 27, the Lord said to get in, take your father's bull. And the second bull, seven years old. So these bulls were for sacrifice to Baal, an astro the demon gods. We'll talk about them in a moment. This means a few things in this day. There was starvation, depression, economic downturn. This means number one, his dad is wealthy. Number two, his dad is spending a lot of his money worshiping false gods. So his dad is very devoted to this demonic religion. And pull down the altar of Baal that your father has and cut down the asra that is beside it, and instead, build an altar to the Lord your God. And there's the word that jumped out on me this weekend, and the sermon, what's the word, gentlemen? On top of the stronghold. That's what we're gonna talk about. See, Gideon's father had a stronghold in his house, and Gideon's father had a stronghold in his family here with the stones laid into order, then take the second bowl and offered as a burn offering in the wood of the Asher that you shall cut down. So Gideon took 10 men of his servants and did his, the Lord had told him, but because he was too afraid of his family. And let me say this man, sometimes, sometimes the hardest thing for a man to do is confront the reality of his father and his family. Sometimes you love your dad, you love your family, but sometimes being honest is the most difficult honesty that a man enters into. But because he was too afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by night. Here's what I wanna talk to you about stronghold. Any military guys in the house, okay? Can we just thank them? Thank you gentlemen for serving. Okay, Gideon here is a soldier and he's headed off to war. We'll hit it this weekend in judges chapter seven. And God anoints certain men for war. He does it with Gideon, uh, he's gonna do it later with Samson. He did it with Joshua. We just live in this weird world where men of God are just told to be passive and not active. And the truth is that God anoints some men to be warriors and to get in harm's way to defend women and children. Gideon is one of those men, for those of you men who are in, uh, in the military, we're in the military. Lemme just ask you a question. What's a stronghold? What's a strong base? It's a base of operations. Uh, usually how secure is it? Very the most secure. Okay? So the stronghold is the most secure base of operations. That's exactly

what this word means in the text. And what do you do? For those of you who are or were soldiers? What do you do in and from the base of operations? You plan and strategize and then you attack. And then after you attack, you return to your safe fortified compound so that then you could plan your next attack. What happens if an enemy combatant or an invading military force does not have a stronghold? They're vulnerable and they're doomed. So the difference between winning and failing in a war is whether or not you have a stronghold. And so what the Bible says is that our war is not just against flesh and blood, but powers, principalities and spirits. And so what we're seeing here is spiritual warfare. And what we're seeing is we're seeing that Gideon's father allowed a demonic stronghold in his house. What this means is that now Satan, he has a base of operations in the family. That means that he can make plans and then come out to attack members of the family. And once he does damage, then he and his minions the demons, they then can retreat back to their secure fortress, their bunker, their stronghold, and then they can plot to do more damage and harm. How many of you men at night you do a perimeter check on your house, you double check all the doors. Okay? Okay, that, and if you don't do okay, like don't tell your fourth grade daughter, babe, could you go check the doors? Uh, so as men, how, how committed are most of us to securing the physical proximity of our family and defending them from intruders, invaders and harm? Is that a big deal? Do you mean? Yes. Secure perimeter security system? I won't even ask how many of you guys are carrying, right? We're those guys okay? But what happens is men tend to be very tuned into physical danger and not spiritual. And all of a sudden they think, man, I have got this house secure and locked down. We've got entrance exits, security checkpoints, I've got good doors and locks, I've got maybe a dog, I've got security system, I do perimeter checks. Um, in addition, you know, I sleep with a, a firearm right under my bedside. I open carry, my family is safe spiritually. Are they vulnerable? Most men are far more aware of physical than spiritual danger. And, and so here's the way that it works. In a war, in a war, both sides wanna set up a stronghold, a base of operations, a secure headquarters in the same place, and the fight is usually over. Who gets to set up camp? Who gets to secure that locale and the base? Here's what you need to know, your family, your legacy, and your house are under attack. Here's what you need to know. Satan and God both wanna set up a stronghold in your house. This make sense? They both want a base of operations at your house. Here's my question, man. Who decides whether God or Satan set up sets up the stronghold in your house? Do you do because you are the head of household, you are the patriarch, you are the husband and father, and it's your decision. It's your decision where whether Satan sets up a stronghold in your house or our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ sets up a stronghold in your house. There are two ways that men allow or cause strongholds to be created in their household. Number one, some men just work with Satan to build that stronghold in their house. Other men are a little more passive. They have a little boy bit more of the Ahab spirit. They don't like conflict. And so they'll allow other people to decide what stronghold gets to be established in their household. And here's what you know, need to know. If you tolerate evil, evil will dominate you. Evil never stops itself. That's why God made men to stop evil. And so think of your home as a place of war and battle. Think of competing forces wanting to set up a stronghold and think of whether it's God and the angels or Satan and the demons. They are living in your house, they have a stronghold. And ultimately from there they are planning either to bless or to curse, to either help or to harm your family. And you and I as men, we are responsible in the sight of God for who sets up the stronghold in our house. Question, um, did Gideon have to stare? Lemme ask it this way. Did Gideon have to tear down his father's alter or stronghold? Yes. Yes. Because you can't worship God and Satan, you can't do good and evil. You can't be walking in light and darkness. And so what ultimately he needs to decide is I need to remove that which is evil and replace that which is godly. So here's the big idea. Too. Many of you guys, you've tried to, you've tried to add bible study, prayer, worship, real men, church, we love you. We're so glad to have you. But the reason that things are not going well is because you haven't tore down the stronghold Until you tear down the stronghold. Then someone else is still running point on your home, your life and your family. And so you need to tear down whatever stronghold the enemy has in your household and then replace that with an altar, the worship of God, okay? And here what happens is, uh, there are demons that are living at Gideon's dad's house. Let me ask you this. How many of you guys, if a bad guy, evil guy showed up, knocked on the door, you answered the door, how can I help you? He is like, yeah, I'd like to move in. No, not only do

people wanna move in, so do spirits. You understand how to protect your family physically. Do you understand how to protect them spiritually? What happened in Gideon's father's house? He, he allowed, um, he actually caused a stronghold to be built in his house. And with that stronghold came demons. Baal and Asra, uh, Baal was the chief Canaanite deity. He is the antigo. When God's people turn away from God, they turn to him. So Baal is about some very basic things that most men really like. Power, money, success and status. Do any men live for those things? If so, they're Baal worshipers. I told you back when we were in the Deborah series, we even denote this, uh, with a bull market, A bull is a bail. We're even talking about success and power and money in the current stock market. In addition, there was Asra. Asra was considered the female counterpart of bail. And uh, she was sexual, hot, perverted, nasty, and she would do anything, okay? Any men you've ever met that what they live for is money, power, status, and sex, Right? Right. All. There's only a few men that don't live for those things. Dead men and liars, okay? Those are the only men that don't live for those things. Most men, if you walk up to 'em, you're like, how would you like more power, more money, more success, and more sex with hotter chicks? Those twos are like, uh, where do I join? You know, these are a few of my favorite things, right? So, So what his father is struggling with, can we just be honest? It's the same thing that all the men struggle with. And so what has happened is, um, these demonic spirits have moved into his house. Let me ask this. This is a, I just kind of verbal process every week on Tuesday. How many of you let me ask, let me, can I do this? Uh, I feel inclined to do something. Um, close your eyes just for a minute. This is what I feel like I'm supposed to do. Holy Spirit, we thank you that you reveal truth and Holy Spirit. We confess, we don't want, uh, bitterness, we don't want to be, um, ungracious or um, unrighteous as we consider our fathers and families. God, we know as men, we've got our own false flaws and failures. But Holy Spirit, I would just intercede now as, uh, as the Bible teaching pastor here right now. And Holy Spirit, I just would ask you a favor. In Jesus' name. I would ask Holy Spirit right now in Jesus' name, that for the men who are hearing this in the room or online, if there was any stronghold in their family or their home growing up, holy Spirit, I pray right now for divine revelation in Jesus' name. Would you show that to them? Would you let them see where the altar was? Would you give them spiritual eyes to discern what the stronghold was? And I thank you for doing that Holy Spirit in Jesus' name. Amen. Um, so, um, if you saw something or you heard something or you sense something that was the Lord revealing to you in your own father's household where there was a stronghold, and from there harm came, uh, to your family, the question is, once you're aware of that, what do you do with that? Okay, that, well, we do the same thing that Gideon did. We tear it down and we replace it with an altar where we worship God. Here's what it says in two Corinthians 10, three through five, we're not waging war according to the flesh. What he's talking about is the fights that we're having tend to be spiritual more than physical for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but they have divine power to destroy what? Strongholds. Okay? Do you know what we need to do with strongholds? We need to destroy them before they destroy us. We destroy arguments in every lofty opinion that raises, uh, opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ. That language there of taking captive, it's still military language in a, in a, in a battle. Let's say you take someone prisoner of war from the opposing forces, and then in the ancient world, you'd put a spear under their throat and you would walk them up to your commanding general and you would threaten to destroy them and they would have to tell the truth. Okay? And what he's saying is when you hear something, when you see something, when you believe something, you need to put a proverbial spear to its throat. And you need to bring it to Jesus Christ, our great king and judge. And you need to make sure that whatever is being said, or you are believing that ultimately it is the truth and not a lie. And if it's a lie, you've gotta slit its throat and you've gotta tear it down. Okay? Okay? And this is very practical. So these, let me give you some practical ways. Lemme take some big ideas and try to make it super practical. Here's how strongholds get into families. Um, some of you, it was overtly demonic. Some of your families were just evil. Some of your families had secret societies. They were in the masons, they were in the Shriners. These are all demonic groups. Some of you just grew up in families that they were spiritual. But it was a dark, demonic, despicable damnable spirituality. Some of you as well, the stronghold was a cult. It was an offshoot of Christianity, but it was antichrist. If you were raised in a Mormon home, you had a demonic stronghold in your family. If you were raised in a Jehovah's Witness

home, you were raised with a demonic stronghold in your family. Uh, furthermore, if you were in some crazy pseudo Christian offshoot cult that denied essentials of the faith and was high control or perverted, uh, simultaneously, uh, you were experiencing, uh, the work of the enemy in your household and Satan had a stronghold in your house. For some of you it was just the a cult. Uh, this could be serious drug addiction. This could be oc cultic activity. This could be witchcraft and dark spirituality. This can even be some of the ancient pagan uh, religions, worship of gods and goddesses in nature that are making a rebound in the days of technology. For some of you, it was a non-Christian religion was the demonic stronghold in your family. If you grew up in a Hindu family or you grew up in a Muslim family, there was a demonic stronghold in your family. Guaranteed. Uh, in addition, uh, some of you, the stronghold in your family were demonic soul ties. A soul tie is where two people are committed to one another. There can be godly soul ties where you build one another up and godliness. There're also ungodly soul ties where you conspire together to do evil. Some of you, the stronghold in your family was the people that your family was in relationship with. This is where we get crime families. This is where we get cartels. Uh, this is where we get entire families that are committed to criminal activity. And some of you that was in fact the stronghold in your family, for some of you, the stronghold in your family was addiction. All of a sudden it's not being filled with the spirit of God. It's being filled with alcoholic or substance spirits. For some of you, um, it was addiction that was the stronghold in your family. And, and whether it was drugs or it was alcohol or whatever it might have been, that stronghold was a place of breaking for your family and a source of devastation. In addition, for some of you, and for many of us, it's the same thing as Gideon's household. The stronghold in the family was sexual perversion. Um, if your family line has men who committed adultery, there was a, there was a stronghold. If the men in your family are all perverted and the way they speak of women, even in the presence of their daughters is just sort of crass and gross, that's a stronghold. And when they speak it over you, if you accept it, you are now coming under a generational curse and you're going to extend the sin of your fathers. And in some families, the fathers are so perverted, they encourage their sons to be sexually active before marriage and then they celebrate the body count and how many chicks they can bag and tag. And all of a sudden your dad is like, I'm proud of you son. And, and your dad is, he's encouraging evil and he's encouraging you to view and treat women in a way that is going to break the way you treat your wife. And it is gonna destroy the way you raise your daughters. And that becomes a generational pattern because of a stronghold. And, um, I just feel inclined in the spirit to say this. Um, see porn today is the issue. It's a stronghold. Um, it re hardwires the neural pathways in a man's brain. He becomes as addicted to pornography as he would heroin because it affects the same neural pathways and releases some of the same pleasure center, um, biological response systems as heroin. Um, if you're a guy opening porn at your house, you're opening not just porn, but a stronghold. If you're getting drunk at your house and there's no, i alcohol's not a sin. It's not a sin. But if, if, if, if you are, if you're liquor consumption in your house is over consumption, then your liquor cabinet is your altar, you're sacrificing your body as a living sacrifice and you are now welcoming that stronghold into your family. Um, I'm old enough that I grew up before the internet and the older guys like me will remember that many dads had a stack of what hidden somewhere in the house. Porn magazines. You had Playboy and then you had hustler, and then things got grosser and grosser. But wherever your dad's porn stash was, lemme give you a brand new word. Can I give you a brand new word? Stronghold. Stronghold, okay. And dad hiding those in the house. Well, eventually his son finds him and now it's a stronghold in the son's life. And then the son grows up to repeat the pattern and it becomes a stronghold in his son's life. Now we're dealing with generations that have the same stronghold. So what's the answer? Tear down the stronghold. See, because sometimes what men don't understand, you're not just inviting things into your home and into your life and into your marriage and into your family, but spirits. So I'll ask you a couple questions too. Um, growing up, was there anywhere in your house for bad reasons you just weren't allowed to go? Like I know whole families are like, that's dad's man cave. Nobody's allowed to go in there and dad's in there probably smoking, watching porn, you know, drinking. And so dad gets to go in there and do evil and it's cut off and none of us are allowed to be there because it's a stronghold. Um, as I was praying for you this week, I felt inclined to say something to dads of teenagers. Um, as kids become teenagers, they need to be able to differentiate, have their privacy,

live their life. But if your teenager comes home, locks their door, and you don't have any access or right to that part of your house, you have a stronghold, okay? It's fine for children to have privacy as they become teenagers, that's fine. But if you're like, you know what? I don't know what they're watching in there. I don't know who they're talking to. I don't know what they're smoking, eating, or drinking. I don't know what they're doing and I'm not allowed to. It's your household, your head of home, you're the father over the family. And if you tolerate evil, evil will dominate you. And if there is a part of your house that you as head of household are not allowed into, I guarantee you that's a stronghold. That's a stronghold. Does this make sense? Okay. Um, let me ask you one more. Were there any issues in your family growing up? You're like, we just don't talk about that. Uh, we don't talk about sex. We don't talk about that. That means it's a stronghold. Uh, what about dad getting drunk and breaking stuff? We're ever gonna talk about that? Nope. We don't get to say anything about dad. Okay? Then there's a stronghold. You know, there's a stronghold when there are places that you're not allowed to be and there are things you're not allowed to talk about in a, in a honest, godly family, you should be able to go through the house and as things come up, you should be able to talk about them. And if you can't, you know you got a stronghold. Does this make sense? So what does it look like to tear down those strongholds? What does it look like to say, um, you know, I need to do the same thing that Gideon did. I need to chop that down. I need to burn it. It needs to be destroyed. It needs to be gone. And then what we do, we replace it, um, with God as our stronghold. Um, I'll show it to you. The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed. A stronghold in times of trouble. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliver, my God, my rock and whom I take refuge, my shield and my horn of my salvation, my stronghold, the salvation of the righteousness from the Lord. He is their stronghold in times of trouble. But the Lord has become my stronghold. He is my steadfast love and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliver my shield in him. I take refuge. Here's the big idea. Every man needs a stronghold. Every marriage needs a stronghold. Every family needs a stronghold. God would happily set up a stronghold at your house. God would love to be the stronghold for your marriage, for your children, for your grandchildren, for your life. God would love to move into your house and set up a secure base of operations. And then he and those angelic forces that are working with him would be making plans to then bless and help and love and serve everybody in your family. But if you don't intentionally demolish the strongholds that are in your household and replace them with God as your stronghold, then Satan will be doing the exact opposite. He'll be making plans to attack you and your wife. He'll be making plans to destroy your children. He'll be making plans to then get your grandchildren. And I'm just telling you this man, um, you decide which stronghold is in your house. But let me say this. The question is not, will there be a stronghold in your house? The question is, whose stronghold will be in your house? And as men, we make these decisions 'cause we're head of household, we're the patriarchs, we're the husbands and the fathers. Am I making sense? Okay, without encouraging bitterness toward your father or your family, how many of you right now you're just seeing some things through this lens of the Bible saying that was a stronghold at our house, that was a stronghold that was wrong and we allowed it to just continue to be in the center of our family. Um, so here's what we're gonna do. Um, we're gonna exercise the God-given authority that has delegated us from our father as his sons. The Bible says in Ephesians that we are seated with Christ in the heavenlies. What that means is that he, he has all authority and as his sons, we, we sit with the Son of God and then we have a measure of God's delegated authority. And if we will exercise that authority, then God will enforce that authority and he will bring it to pass. So what I wanna do, um, in closing, and I've got a prayer I wanna read together. Um, if you are a man who either presently in your family, your marriage, your home has a stronghold, and right now the Holy Spirit is telling you, you're tearing that down tonight, that's gone. That's out for some of you guys. You're gonna go home, liquor's gone. Some of you guys clicking on porn, it's over. Some of you guys just eating all the time and self-medicating and self-loathing, it's over, right? You're gonna start praying, you're gonna start repenting. You're gonna start worshiping at home, and you're gonna turn your home into an altar and you're gonna invite the Lord to be your stronghold. If there's anything in your life that's a stronghold that the Holy Spirit is telling you needs to be torn down, we're gonna deal with that in a moment. Number two, if as we hear this like Gideon, you come to the conclusion, the stronghold started with my dad, started with my parents, it started with my upbringing. That strongholds been in our family

for generations. Our family really loves that stronghold. And in fact, for years maybe I enjoyed that stronghold, but now I love the Lord. And so I hate that stronghold. Whether it is you and the decision you've made as a man in your own life, as a husband, the decision that you have made in your marriage as a father, the decision that you've made with your children as a grandfather, the decision you've made for your grandchildren, or it's a decision that your father or grandfather made. If there is a stronghold that the Holy Spirit is revealing to you tonight, then we're gonna pray together and we're gonna, we're gonna tear that down. Amen. If you're a man who is acknowledging that, yeah, this is for me and I need to have the courage amongst the men of God, I'm gonna ask you to stand and I'm gonna ask the men around you to lay a hand on you to support you as brothers. And we're gonna pray together. And I've got a prayer that I've written for you, but I'm gonna ask you right now, if there's a stronghold you need to have torn down, I just ask you to stand wherever you're at. And, uh, we just want to honor you. We love you, right? Okay? Any other men that there is a stronghold that the Holy Spirit is burdening you for, and right now that just needs to get torn down once and for all. I encourage you to stand, and this will be my last invitation. Please stand if you would like to tear down a stronghold. And for those men who are around the men that stood, just lay a hand on them. And I'm gonna ask you men to pray this with me together. I put together a prayer for us. There's nothing magical in the prayer, but it's just agreeing. And the reason we're gonna pray it together men, is because we're going to stand together and we're gonna support one another. So please read this with me. Father. Father, I renounce my sins, renounce my sins and the sins of my family, sins of my, to those unclean spirits, who, those unclean who have a stronghold in our family, who have a stronghold in our family. I say, I say as head of my household, head of my household, the Lord rebuke you. The Lord rebuke you. In Jesus' name. Jesus name. And my household belongs to you. Lord, my household belongs to you. And we will serve you alone. We'll serve you alone. In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name. You are commanded. You are commanded to leave our family. To leave our family. And never return. Never return. Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, I welcome you to fill me, fill me, fill our family. Fill our family, and fill our home. Fill our home as our stronghold, as strong stronghold. As head of Household. As head of household. I commit. I commit to submit to your leadership, to submit to your leadership. As I lead my family, I lead my family. I pray all of this. I pray all of this in Jesus' name. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Nice. Feel free to take a seat. I'm telling you, man, some things are going to break. Some things are going to change. The, the past is not the future. You are not your father. There is hope for you. There is a future for you. There is deliverance for you. There is life for you. There is forgiveness for you. There is the father's heart for you. And you don't need to be ashamed of where you've been. You just need to move on, tear down, which has been holding you back, surrender, submit whatever has been the stronghold, give it to the Lord, tear it down, invite the Holy Spirit, take a deep breath, go to bed, wake up tomorrow and start a brand new life and see God start to heal your marriage. Start to heal your children, start to heal your grandchildren. And I'm just telling you, man, something very significant happened and it's an honor to be with you. We've got a few questions for the tables and we'll spend more time together. What in the talk to the Holy Spirit highlight for you? What is God asking you to do differently starting today? And how can we pray for you? I, I love you. I absolutely love you. And you guys mean the world to me and you matter. And I'm sorry for what's been done to you. I'm sorry for the dishonor and disrespect that has been poured upon you, but I'm telling you, things are changing and God's not done. Amen. Thank you.