

LifeGroup Sermon Series Study
2022-2023
Series One

 **LIFEWATER**
COMMUNITY CHURCH


BREAKING
STRONGHOLDS

“Breaking Strongholds”



Many of us are dealing with, have dealt with, or will deal with tragedy, anxiety, discouragement, depression, death, loneliness and addiction. Our therapists' offices are filled with people who are struggling. Our pharmacies are packed with people needing chemical support to deal with tough issues. (If you are one of these people, don't stop going to therapy or taking your medication.)

But sometimes these struggles are not chemical or emotional in nature. Sometimes these difficulties are spiritual. They may be strongholds that Satan and his demonic forces have established in your life to control you, defeat you, and destroy you.

King David dealt with all these issues. Many of the situations that caused emotions to well up in David were supernatural in nature. Past experiences, disobedience (and obedience) all played into some of the emotional crises David experienced.

I love that the Bible is brutally honest in its portrayal of people. The Bible is not worried about protecting leaders, protecting reputations, or being politically correct. It simply records what happened.

King David made many mistakes, but God still described David as a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14 and Acts 13:22). David's heart was in the right place. He trusted God. He had confidence in God's power and plan. He wanted to please God. David was a musician, and he wrote about his experiences and emotions - which give us insight into dealing with attacks from Satan.

In this series, we will look at six psalms (songs) that David wrote and the backstories to those songs. May we listen and obey what God taught David so we can rebuke satanic strongholds in our lives and live victoriously each day.

Pastor Doug

Scriptures to Help

<u>Tragedy:</u>	<u>Discouragement/Depression:</u>	<u>Loneliness:</u>
John 16:33	Deuteronomy 31:8	Deuteronomy 31:6
Psalms 34:18	Philippians 4:8	Psalms 27:10
Romans 12:19	John 16:33	1 Samuel 12:22
Psalms 46:1-3	Philippians 4:13	Romans 8:31-38
Psalms 121:1-2	Jeremiah 29:11	Psalms 25:16
James 1:2-4	Matthew 11:28	Matthew 28:20
1 Peter 3:8	Proverbs 3:5-6	Isaiah 41:10
Matthew 5:4	Psalms 23:4	Psalms 68:5-6
Revelation 21:4	Matthew 6:33	Proverbs 18:24
	Psalms 9:9	1 Corinthians 10:13
<u>Anxiety:</u>	<u>Death:</u>	<u>Addiction:</u>
Psalms 94:19	John 14:1	1 Corinthians 6:9-12
Proverbs 12:25	Joshua 1:9	1 Corinthians 10:13-14
Matthew 6:34	Romans 8:28	Titus 2:12
Romans 8:38-39	Matthew 5:4	Hebrews 4:15-16
1 Corinthians 7:32	1 Thessalonians 4:13-14	James 4:7
Isaiah 35:4	Psalms 147:3	1 Peter 5:10
Matthew 6:27	Revelation 21:4	1 John 2:16
1 Peter 5:7	Psalms 34:18	
Philippians 4:6		
Psalms 34:17		

“Breaking Strongholds”

LIFEGROUP ROSTER

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PHONE #</u>	<u>E-MAIL</u>

“Breaking Strongholds” – During Tragedy

Psalm 34

Lesson 1

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand that any Christian can experience tragedy.
- B. To help us know that God is with us through every tragedy.
- C. To help us see that we can trust God.

II. Community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

David was a threat to King Saul because God had removed his blessing from Saul and appointed David to be the next king. King Saul was jealous and hunted David to kill him.

David went to Nob and met Ahimelek the Priest. This priest gave David consecrated bread (reserved for priests) because David was starving. The priest put the needs of David ahead of religious traditions. Jesus would later refer to this incident to show that God’s law should be applied with compassion for the person.

David then fled from Saul and went to Gath, but servants of the king there recognized David. So, David pretended to be insane, and the King of Gath let him live believing David was no threat. David escaped to the Cave of Adullam. There in this cave, about 400 desperate men (men who had witnessed tragedy in their own lives) joined David. They joined David, an outlaw, because they believed that he was anointed by God.

In the cave David wrote this song and sang it to his men. At one of the lowest points of his life, he worshipped God. A good reminder to all of us that when we face tragedy, we need to follow David’s example and worship God. Worshipping God in the midst of great pain is a very powerful spiritual experience.

Lesson 1 cont.

IV. Community that Learns:

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you?
- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise from the Cave (Psalm 34).

Four ways to deal with tragedy:

- 1. Praise the Lord _____ and _____. Verses 1-2
- 2. _____ seek the Lord. Verse 4
- 3. _____ the Lord. Verses 11-14
- 4. Cry _____ to the Lord. Verses 17-22

V. Community that Applies:

- A. Do you remember 9/11? What were you doing? What were you thinking? What were you feeling?
- B. In what way is your reaction to 9/11 similar to how David and his followers were feeling in the cave?
- C. What is the first thing you do when you experience tragedy?
- D. What are the long-term consequences that tragedy can have in your life?

Lesson 1 cont.

- E. What does it take to praise the Lord over and over when you are in the midst of tragedy?
- F. How do people seek the Lord in the midst of tragedy?
- G. Why is it difficult to obey the Lord in the midst of tragedy?
- H. How is the supernatural involved in our tragedies?
- I. Have you cried out to the Lord when you faced tragedy? How did the Lord respond? What did you learn about God because of that experience?

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with his tragedies?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Psalm 56.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

“Breaking Strongholds” – In Anxiety

Psalm 56

Lesson 2

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand that any Christian can experience anxiety.
- B. To help us know that God is with us while we are stressed.
- C. To help us see that we can trust God.

II. A community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

Psalm 56 was written by David at the same time that Psalm 34 was written (but the focus is more on when David was in Gad).

David was running for his life because Saul wanted to kill him. Unfortunately, he went from one threat to another. In Gad, the servants began to say to the king, “Isn’t he the one they sing about in their dances: Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands?” In 1 Samuel, it says David was very much afraid. He was terrified. The Philistines and the Jews were bitter enemies and David was a rival king to the king in Gad. He could have been killed right there.

Fear is what Psalm 56 is about. David wrote a song about the fear he felt that day when he was confronted with the possibility of being killed. He was so desperate he acted like a madman to get away. The King of Gad was no longer threatened because he thought David had lost his mind and all credibility. The king of Gad bought David’s acting job and David was able to escape.

David was filled with anxiety and worry but he knew he could trust God and that God would protect him. He knew that God would be there with him. So, he wrote a song about trusting God and how God delivers. Even though the threat was always there, David

Lesson 2 cont.

could find peace in the fact that God was also always there. Psalm 56 teaches us how to deal with our fear and anxiety (whether it is real or not).

IV. **Community that Learns:**

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you in these points?

- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise in Anxiety (Psalm 56).

Three ways to deal with anxiety:

- 1. _____ your trust in God. Verses 1-3

- 2. _____ the Lord. Verses 10-13

- 3. _____ for protection. Verses 5-9.

V. **Community that Applies:**

- A. Do you think David was struggling with anxiety like we struggle with anxiety today? How is it similar? How is it different?

- B. Was David's anxiety real or fabricated?

- C. How much time do you spend feeling anxious?

- D. How difficult is it to trust God in the midst of anxiety?

- E. Why was it important to David that he trust God in the midst of his anxiety?

Lesson 2 cont.

- F. How difficult is it to worship and give praise to God in the midst of anxiety? Why?
- G. How do you think David praised God in the midst of his anxiety?
- H. Do you usually pray first for protection when you feel anxiety coming on?
- I. How do you think the supernatural plays into anxiety?
- J. How has God come through for you in the past when you were filled with anxiety?

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with his anxiety?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes in praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Psalm 40.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

“Breaking Strongholds” – When Discouraged or Depressed

Psalm 40

Lesson 3

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand that any Christian can experience discouragement and depression.
- B. To help us know that God has an answer for discouragement and depression.
- C. To help us see that discouragement and depression have a supernatural component.

II. Community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

David’s life was characterized by “ups” and “downs” – great victories and great defeats! David heroically defeated Goliath with a stone and slingshot, saving his country. But he also had an affair with Bathsheba, and had her husband killed to cover up his sin. He suffered intense loss because of this sin.

King Saul hated David and tried to kill him because David had been chosen by God to be the next king; and Saul knew it. The Jewish people loved David, and a growing displeasure for Saul by the people was evident.

David’s circumstances were very discouraging. He was constantly threatened and running for his life. When he did become king, he sinned against God and had to suffer the consequences of that sin. We must remember that sin takes a toll on our emotional stability. But we must also remember that success can also take an emotional toll on us. The prophet Elijah had great success defeating 450 prophets of Baal but then ran in fear of the queen who threatened him. Following that failure, Elijah went into the wilderness, so discouraged that he asked God to take his life.

Lesson 3 cont.

Sometimes after our greatest victories we can experience our worst depression.

Looking back at these times of discouragement and depression, David understands that God was there the whole time. Psalm 40 offers insight and advice for those who are struggling with discouragement and depression.

IV. **Community that Learns:**

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you in these points?
- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise in the Pit (Psalm 40).

Three ways to deal with discouragement and depression:

1. Remember God can _____ you and lift you up. Verses 1-5.
2. Don't be _____, be spiritually focused. Verses 6-10.
3. Ask God not to _____ His saving hand. Verses 11-17

V. **Community that Applies:**

- A. In what ways can you relate to David's discouragement and depression?
- B. What do you find the most interesting about the way David dealt with his discouragement and depression?
- C. Can you remember times in your past when God delivered you from depression and lifted you up?

Lesson 3 cont.

- D. How easily are you distracted from spiritual things? Why?
- E. What is your biggest distraction today from spiritual things?
- F. How do you think the supernatural impacts depression?
- G. Is it hard to remember that God can save you from discouraging situations? Why or why not?

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with his discouragement and depression?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Psalm 23.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

“Breaking Strongholds” – Facing Death

Psalm 23

Lesson 4

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand that Christians will experience death in their lifetimes.
- B. To help us know that God can help us deal with death.
- C. To help us see that death has a supernatural component.

II. Community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

David was constantly reminded of the reality of death. While Saul was pursuing him, David understood that life was temporary. Death to David was a stressful and painful reality. But it was not just his own death that David had to deal with.

In 2 Samuel 12, Nathan the prophet confronted David about his adultery with Bathsheba. Part of David's consequence was that the child (conceived because of this sin) was going to die. David begged God over and over to spare the child's life. He fasted, he mourned, and he pleaded with God. After seven days, David's son died.

Psalm 23 was written well before his experience with Bathsheba and the death of his son. Most likely the 23rd Psalm ministered to David during this time of loss. Death is a result of sin and the fall of mankind in the garden.

Lesson 4 cont.

David looked to the day when there would be no more death, no more pain, no more loss. We can do the same today because of the hope we have in Christ Jesus. Praise the Lord for that day.

IV. **Community that Learns:**

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you in these points?

- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise at the Grave (Psalm 23).

Three ways to deal with death:

1. We do not _____. Verse 4

2. We _____. Verse 5

3. We have a _____. Verse 6

V. **Community that Applies:**

- A. David dealt with death often in his life. Was he effective in dealing with it? Why or why not?

- B. What is the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word "death"?

- C. In what ways do Christians and non-Christians face death differently?

Lesson 4 cont.

- D. What do you think it looks like to be fearless when facing or dealing with death.

- E. What to you is the significance of God preparing a feast for us to partake? How does that relate to death?

- F. What do you think heaven will be like?

- G. Do you think about heaven often? Why or why not?

- H. In what ways does knowing you are going to heaven impact the way you live and face death today?

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with death?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Psalm 142.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

“Breaking Strongholds” – Of Loneliness

Psalm 142

Lesson 5

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand that many Christians can experience loneliness.
- B. To help us know that God can help us with our loneliness.
- C. To help us see that loneliness can have a supernatural component.

II. Community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

David once again is in a cave. There are two recorded times when David was in a cave in the Old Testament. The first we already discussed when David escaped the king of Gath by acting like he was insane (1 Samuel 21). The second time is recorded in 1 Samuel 24.

Saul was still pursuing David. Saul took 3,000 men to look for David. David and his 600 men were hiding in a cave. King Saul went into the cave to go to the bathroom and David, unnoticed, cut a corner of Saul's robe off to prove that he could have killed him but didn't.

Psalm 142 is once again a song David wrote in a cave. He was experiencing great loneliness. He felt abandoned by his king, his country, and his God. He was at the bottom emotionally because he felt utterly alone. It is interesting that despite his loneliness, David never gave up on his God. Psalm 142 is a prayer to God for deliverance from not only David's physical situation but his emotional situation.

Lesson 5 cont.

When we experience loneliness, we need to respond like David did. We need to pray to God. Often, we miss the idea that loneliness can be an attack from Satan who is trying to defeat us, discourage us, and destroy us. David understood this and called out to God for help. May we do the same thing.

IV. **Community that Learns:**

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you in these points?

- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise in the Cave (Psalm 142).

Three ways to deal with loneliness:

1. _____ out to the Lord. Verses 1-2

2. Remember God _____ for you. Verses 3-5

3. Trust God to _____ you. Verses 6-7

V. **Community that Applies:**

- A. David was a very lonely person. What amazes you the most about how David dealt with loneliness?

- B. How much of the time do you feel lonely?

- C. Have you cried out to God in your loneliness? What was the impact?

Lesson 5 cont.

- D. Why do you think it is important to cry out to God?
- E. How has or can Satan use loneliness to attack you in your faith?
- F. David was very specific about his emotional state. Why is that important?
- G. Why do you think it is important to remember God cares about you when you are lonely?
- H. What are some practical ways for you to trust God to cover you when you are lonely?

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with loneliness?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Psalm 51.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

“Breaking Strongholds” – Addiction

Psalm 51

Lesson 6

I. Purpose:

- A. To help us understand what addiction is.
- B. To help us know that there can be victory.
- C. To help us see the way we can defeat addiction.

II. Community that Cares:

- A. What is your next step and how are you doing with taking that step?
- B. How are you doing with your 5-5-5 this week?

III. Community that Understands the Background:

David was a hero of the faith. Samuel said that David was a man after God’s own heart. But David had a dark side. David had an affair with another man’s wife, Bathsheba. Then to cover it up, he had her husband killed. Then he married Bathsheba to make it look alright. But that wasn’t the only thing David did. David grew in his selfish ambition and pride. He was overrun by his sin nature rooted in his core belief that he was entitled as King. David had an addiction — an addiction to self. What were some of David’s addictions: sexual temptation, lust, power, greed, money, possessions, alcohol, “herbs,” anger, rage, resentment, revenge, lying, deceit, self-preservation at all costs, and co-dependency. The list could go on and on.

The goal here is not to destroy David’s reputation but to reveal what the scriptures reveal. We see one of the triggers for David’s addiction was boredom. When David should have been on the battlefield he was in his palace watching Bathsheba bathe. It was a common practice for women to bathe in a pool or something adjacent to the living quarters. David was in his palace which had a plain view of the rooftops of many houses. It was understood in that culture that the rooftops were private. David was not where he should have been and he became bored. David had five wives which was a common practice for kings and wealthy men in

David's day, but this was never sanctioned by God. Abraham had one wife, Isaac had one wife, and Jacob, after his conversion, had one wife. David also was sexually active with his servants called "concubines." A number of them would even produce children from him.

David's offspring continued this addictive behavior with David's son Amnon raping Tamar. David's son, Solomon, had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Solomon was only king for 40 years which meant he had a new wife every two weeks. David's offspring followed in their father's footsteps taking whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted.

What is interesting is that this same addictive behavior was an accusation against both Mary and then Joseph. The rumor was that they had sex before marriage and Mary got pregnant. Joseph believed that Mary had been unfaithful to him. But we see that both Mary and Joseph had broken the generational sin of addiction as they were described as being "faithful to the law" and "highly favored and the Lord was with her." Addiction is an ugly and devastating thing but there is hope. There can be victory, there can be repentance, and there can be freedom. David is an excellent example of this. Psalm 51 is proof of this with his confession and repentance of his addictive behavior.

IV. **Community that Learns:**

- A. Review the points of the Pastor's message. What spoke to you, challenged you, or encouraged you in these points?

- B. Sermon outline: "Breaking Strongholds" – Praise from Despair (Psalm 51).

Four ways to deal with addiction:

1. _____ your sin that you have _____ and plead for mercy. Verses 1-6

2. _____ for _____. Verse 7-9

Lesson 6 cont.

3. _____ God to _____ a pure heart in you. Verses 10-15
4. _____ God to _____ your heart. Verses 16-19

V. **Community that Applies:**

- A. Why was it so hard for David to give in to his addiction?
- B. What mistakes did David make in dealing with his addiction?
- C. What types of spiritual forces do you think were involved in David's failures?
- D. How would you define what an addiction is?
- E. Have you ever struggled with addiction in your life?
- F. What were your triggers to failing in having victory over your addiction?
- G. What spiritual elements were involved in your addiction?
- H. How are you doing in overcoming that stronghold in your life?

Lesson 6 cont.

VI. **Community that is Accountable:**

Is there something you need to start or stop doing because of what you learned about the way David dealt with his addiction?

VII. **Community that Prays:**

Spend a few minutes praying about your next step.

VIII. **Community that Looks Ahead:**

- A. The scriptures next week are Job 1.
- B. If you missed Sunday's sermon, watch online at www.lifewatercc.org before the next Life Group.
- C. Reflect on next week's questions during your five minutes of daily silence.

Notes: _____

Fill in the Blanks

Lesson 1

1. over over
2. Openly
3. Obey
4. out

Lesson 2

1. Put
2. Praise
3. Pray

Lesson 3

1. deliver
2. distracted
3. delay

Lesson 4

1. fear
2. feast
3. future

Lesson 5

1. Cry
2. cares
3. cover

Lesson 6

1. Admit committed
2. Ask cleansing
3. Allow create
4. Ask crush

Prayer Requests

DATE	PRAYER REQUEST	ANSWER

Prayer Requests

DATE	PRAYER REQUEST	ANSWER

Prayer Requests

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