

# THE BULWARK

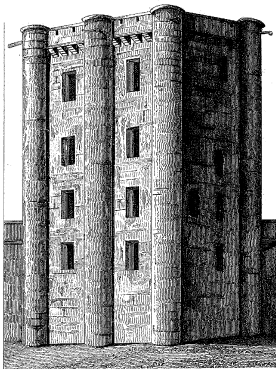
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*“Mark well her bulwarks,  
consider her palaces, that  
you may tell it to the  
generation following”*  
Psalms 48:13

## A HARD HABIT TO BREAK

The etymology of a word oft times proves to be eye opening. Take for example the word “habit”, it comes to us from the Middle English and carried the meaning of “clothing”; and then from the Old French where it meant, “custom”. Today the most widely used definition of “habit” is “a continual, often involuntary or unconscious inclination to perform an activity, acquired through frequent repetition; and established disposition of the mind or character.” (Webster’s II Dictionary) In other words a habit is something we choose to clothe ourselves with and find it quite comforting to remain therein. Kind of brings to mind the old adage, “bad habits are like comfortable beds, easy to get into and hard to get out of.”



*“Not forsaking our assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.”* (Hebrews 10:25) In place of the word “habit”, the King James translation uses the word “manner”, which is the Greek word “ethos” and means “custom, practice or habit”, according to Thayer.

A habit doesn’t develop overnight, it is brought about by a process of repetition as noted earlier. A cycle that can be broken. But the individual must have the desire to do so; inasmuch as it demands a concentrated effort. Effort that is exerted mentally as well as in some instances physically. Likewise the implementation

of a support network of friends and loved ones such as described in Hebrews 10:24, *“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”* It is easy to slip into the habit of not gathering together on the first day of the week, but with a change of perspective it can be overcome.

Is it not generally understood that physical habits are difficult to break? The same carries over with respect to negative spiritual habits.. Some get into the habit of deflecting responsibility, by letting others do their work for them. It gets easier and easier day after day to kick back and let others bear the burden. *“For each one shall bear his own load.”* (Galatians 6:5) Seems pretty straightforward, doesn’t it?

Then there are those who have got caught up in the habit of nit-picking and fault finding. Nothing that is done seems to be right for them. Just like any other habit, it can be broken, provided there is willingness to bring about the change. First off, there must be a different thought process brought in. One that calls for a renewing of the mind, even as Paul writes to the Ephesians in chapter four and verse twenty-three, *“and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.”* The process hearkens back to learning from Christ (see Matthew 11:28ff). Which then would build to the point of embracing the mind set of *“anything worthy of praise let your mind dwell on these things.”* (Philippians 4:8) Habits can be broken. (wbe)