

The Battle for Our Minds

Lesson 03 of the series, "Spiritual Warfare"

A. We are involved in a spiritual battle for control of our minds.

"Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm." Ephesians 6:10-13 (NLT)

"Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ." Romans 8:5-9 (NIV)

B. We must fight the battle for our minds God's way.

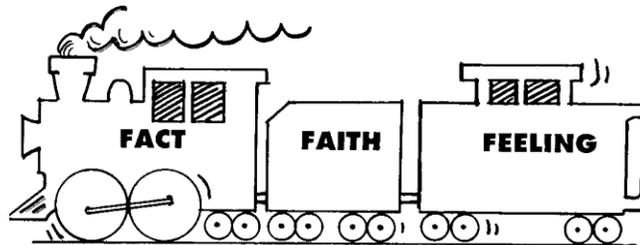
"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle (imagination and every high thing) that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NLT)

1. We must place our faith in God and the truth of the Bible NOT in our feelings.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." Colossians 3:1-3 (NIV)

"Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth." John 17:17 (NLT)

"Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Philippians 4:8 (NLT)



"We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us."

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 (NLT)

2. We must help each other grow and mature spiritually.

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church." Ephesians 4:11-15 (NLT)

3. We must NOT copy the behaviors and customs of our culture.

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:2 (NLT)

“With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity. But that isn’t what you learned about Christ. Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.” Ephesians 4:17-24 (NLT)

4. We must pray.

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

5. We must prepare.

“Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.” 1 Peter 1:13 (NIV)

“Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.” 2 Timothy 4:2-5 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Describe a time in your life when you felt that there was a battle going on for control of your mind.
2. Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. Then discuss the following lies of the devil that cause us to doubt God and the truth of His Word:
 - Did God really say that?
 - Does that seem fair?
 - Is that really wrong?
 - Isn't God too loving and merciful to allow those consequences?
 - Is God the only source of truth about this?
 - Doesn't that only apply to certain situations?

Have you had to deal with any of these questions in your life? If so, how did you overcome doubt and find peace?

3. Read 1 Peter 1:13 & 2 Timothy 4:2-5. How well prepared are you for attacks on your faith? How can you get more prepared?
4. What statement does our disobedience make about our relationship with God?
5. Read Romans 12:2 & Ephesians 4:17-24. Why do you think the Apostle Paul strongly warned early Christians to avoid copying the customs and behaviors of their culture? What customs and behaviors should we avoid?
6. Read Philippians 4:8. Why is it important to put our faith in facts rather than feelings?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"People who are lazy, careless, doubtful-minded or arrogant need not expect God to reveal His secret or covenant to them." Watchman Nee

"Don't bother to give God instructions; just report for duty." Corrie Ten Boom

"You have to expect spiritual warfare whenever you stand up for righteousness or call attention to basic values. It's just a matter of light battling the darkness. But the light wins every time. You can't throw enough darkness on the light to put it out." Thomas Kinkade