

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 13: Win the Battle for the Heart

INTRO: I’ve wrestled from the start when to teach on this issue of the “heart” since the problem of the heart is the heart of the problem – both, then with the self-righteous extremely focused, reputation-driven Pharisees, and now with us. Our heart has always been the issue with God. It drives all we do (good and not so good). See 5:27; 6:21; 15:8, 18-19. Since conversion, a battle has been waged for control of our hearts and minds.

THE INTERNAL BATTLE (Rom. 7:14-25)

- Our Position in Christ - “spiritual man” (1 Cor. 2:10-16)
- We have the mind of Christ (positionally, not practically). That’s why we don’t do what we should and do things we shouldn’t? These are stubborn habits, demonic strongholds, besetting sins, hypocrisy, etc.?
- Our Problem with Satan (Our enemy) – Because we are all “in Adam” we are born with a sinful nature that is selfish and proud. Satan has squatting rights (depravity). He is reluctant to relinquish his control. He has plans to keep it (2 Cor. 2:10-11; 11:3; Eph. 4:27; 6:12).
- DEFINITION of HEART/MIND – includes all our faculties working together to choose good or evil (obey or disobey God).
 1. Emotional (desires, feelings, affections)
 2. Intellectual (understandings, reasonings, etc.)
 3. Volitional (will, choice) – Our will is the ultimate determinant of our choices.
- PRINCIPLE – Every motivating influence that impacts our will comes through our mind and its thoughts. What enters the mind controls what we think. Satan strategy is to blind us to the truth (2 Cor. 11:3; 4:4-6). “How remove his blinders?”

Ezek. 36:25-27 Cleansing (v.25), Transplant (v.26), New life (v.27).

2 Cor. 10:3-5 is a descriptive passage using a military battlefield picture. But, in Paul’s words the battlefield is our mind (and for control of it).

Read for context (Swindoll p. 23) . . . Explain some terms: “to destroy strongholds” are walled fortresses that guard our fallen minds (hold on to old habits). The phrases “destroy arguments and every lofty opinion

raised against the knowledge of God” (v. 5). The arguments (speculations . . . opinions) are our proud reasonings and flawed thoughts that enable the strongholds to thrive and remain. These walled fortresses must be scaled and towers invaded to let in the truth of God to turn our minds and hearts toward Him.

“How does this happen?” (v. 5b). How win battle? God has a part (mostly providing resources) and we have a part to apply all He has richly provided (2 Pet. 1:3). “Every thought must be taken captive to obey Christ.” “We” must do our part. Winning the war over our mind (heart) is a *cooperative venture* between God (HS) and me (Phil. 2:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:3-5; Tit. 2:11-15; Rom. 6, 7, 8; Col. 3:5, 8)

Divine Enablement + Human Responsibility = Mind of Christ

GOD’S PART (Divine Enablement): His death and resurrection, forgiveness, Word, Holy Spirit, etc. (2 Pet. 1:3).

MY PART (Human Responsibility)? v. 5b “We . . . take every thought captive to obey Christ, ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.” How? “make every effort” to (2 Pet. 1:5) to:

- Guard the entry gates to the mind – take every thought captive (Phil. 4:8)
- Embrace God’s goodness – Satan lies to us that God is not good
- Walk in confession and forgiveness – leave the enemy no ground (Eph. 4:27)
- Let Holy Spirit control (Rom. 8:5-14; Eph. 5:18)
- Stay accountable – disclose your area(s) of struggle to a friend
- Read Bible (replace old with new) and Pray for help – Renew your mind (Rom. 12:1-2; Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16).

WE HAVE A NEW OWNER (Rom. 6:15-19)

We have been *changed*. We are still a slave, but we have a new owner – and He is greater than self or Satan.

CONC: We are new in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). We can enjoy victory (Rom. 7:24-8:4).