

THE WAR IN OUR MINDS

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1996, a 36-year-old preacher sat down behind a shed outside his parent's home with a gun in his hand. A multiplicity of thoughts ran through his head as he slowly put his finger on the trigger of the 9mm pistol that he had placed in his mouth. A war was raging in his mind. A war that was being fought for control of his life. A war that would eventually end in life or death. A war where one side fought to convince him that there is no hope. The other side fighting to help him believe in hope and forgiveness. The generals commanding these two armies in his mind are described in the following verses:

Gal 5:17 NLT

The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants.

And **the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires**.

These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

1Pe 5:8 NLT

Stay alert! Watch out for **your great enemy, the devil**. He prowls around like a roaring lion, **looking for someone to devour**.

John 10:9 NLT

Yes, I am the gate. Those who come in through me. *(COMMENT: THIS IS JESUS SPEAKING ABOUT HIMSELF)* will be saved. They will come and go freely and will find good pastures.

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John 10:10 NLT

The thief's purpose (*COMMENT: Satan*) is to steal and kill and destroy. **My purpose** (*COMMENT: Jesus*) is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

God and Satan battle for control of our life. Satan wants to destroy our life while God wants to give us a life that is rich and satisfying. Whomever wins the battle for our mind & emotions will control our life.

Rom 6:12 NLT

Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires.

Rom 6:13 NLT

Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, **give yourselves completely to God**, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So, use your whole body as an instrument **to do what is right** for the glory of God.

Rom 6:16 NLT

Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.

This battle rages in all of our lives every day and we have two choices, God, or Satan. Whomever we choose to obey will determine the course of our life.

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In this series of lessons, we are going to address **the fight that takes place in our mind each day**. It is the conflict that will determine the kind of life we live. We will also examine several of **the emotional battles that can take place in the human mind**. We will discover from the Bible how to surrender to God in each of these battles, so the war is won by the Spirit of God and not by Satan. In doing so, we can experience the life God intended.

During our study I will be referring to a book on Christian Counseling by the late Dr. Gary Collins.¹ This book has been a great resource to me as I seek to help people have a better understanding of the Bible in these areas of conflict.

Now, you may be wondering what happened to the 36-year-old preacher in our story. Well, he is now 63 years old and still teaching the Bible as he shares his experiences to help others. Yes, that 36-year-old preacher was ME! Thank the Lord, he helped me that day and stopped what could have been the end of my life. The journey that has followed is why I am teaching these Biblical lessons today. I know they work because they worked for me.

Let me share with you the topics we will be studying in this series:

¹ *Collins, Gary R. Christian Counseling 3rd Edition. Thomas Nelson Publishers. Kindle Edition.*

THE WAR IN OUR MINDS

THE WAR ITSELF

The War Within - Understanding the war.

Protect Yourself - How to be prepared for the war.

THE BATTLEFIELDS

Sinless Anger - How to be angry without sinning.

Controlling Anger - How to keep anger from destroying my life.

Envy & Jealousy - What is this and how to we overcome it?

Inferiority & Low Self-Esteem - How to correct this faulty thought process.

Depression - The silent killer. One of Satan's most powerful tools. How to we win this war?

Loneliness - How to get connected in life.

Anxiety - The good and the bad. How to get our focus right.

Guilt - Understanding healthy and unhealthy guilt. The role of forgiveness.

Grief - The God appointed pathway to healing after loss.

Our prayer is that through this series of lessons we will find the peace and joy that God wants us to have by trusting and obeying Him daily as we choose whom we will serve.

Joshua 24:15 NLT

*But if you refuse to serve the LORD, **then choose today whom you will serve.** Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? **But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.**"*