

***Marriage Conference 2014 – Session #2***  
***Beneath the Surface – The Battle within***

We naturally focus on the outside: relationships & circumstances but God looks at the inside, the things of the heart – 1Sam 16:7

**The battle within:** the struggle in the heart of every believer to lay aside our self-centered view of life & adopt a God-centered view of life – transformation.

**Self-Centered:**

1. Personal need/desire must be fulfilled by human relationships & means - priority
2. Personal pain must be avoided – medicated, suppressed
3. Life/circumstances going as we want is our primary source of happiness
4. Secondary blessings are made priority over First blessings - God

**God Centered:**

1. Personal need/desire is attached to God – people in second place
2. Personal pain is embraced as God's instruction & training
3. Life/circumstances are accepted with gratitude day by day.
4. God is placed as first priority over secondary blessings

**Marital Conflicts** – each partner legitimately describes how the other deprives or hurts them, believing that if this situation would change, happiness would break out all around. The real battle is that they are both committed to having what they need/want, to avoid the difficulties of human relating and for the situation to go well for them – self-centered. The goal is to accept what God allows and use it for growth and glory.

**Rebellious Child** – parents do everything they can to help and correct the child. They refuse to let go and allow the child to freely choose – Believe that if their child would straighten out, they would be happiness. The real battle is they believe that fulfillment comes from their situation – life going well.

- a. Is it wrong to want your marriage to be pleasant and your children to find a positive direction in their life?
- b. Is it wrong to devote considerable effort and resources to these areas of life?
- c. What is wrong is making these things first priority and believing them to be necessary for your happiness – belief system based on earthly agenda

**First Things** – relationship with God, submission to the divine priorities of life & aligning your desire/will with the divine purposes.

**Second Things** – relationship with people and positive circumstances of life – blessings

- a. The human soul is designed for God to be the primary source of fulfillment  
    Jn 7:37-39 *koilos* – empty place that God fills in the soul to meet our hunger/thirst
- b. Separation from God has caused us to build our beliefs apart from God – we didn't have His direct influence making Him our primary source
- c. Without God in our core, we build our beliefs with two things (blessings) as our source of happiness & fulfillment – OM belief system
- d. Pursuing gifts for happiness instead of the Giver leaves us unfulfilled & frustrated
- e. Our frustration causes us to blame our blessings for not providing us with the fulfillment & happiness we expect from them

- Marriage partner – blame them & seek to change them
- Children – fearful that they won't be/do what we think is best – pressure
- Finances – compare our stuff with other people's stuff – security

**1. The battle within is below the level of our normal awareness, is difficult to see and often we live without being aware of it.**

- We focus our energies on changing & rearranging the outside of our life
- We operate on autopilot, oblivious to what God is really doing in our life.

**2. The battle within can only be discerned through the Spirit and the word of God**

- Human view can only see the outer and at best the mental connection to it
- Only the word as revealed by the Spirit reveals the true war for our beliefs.
- We must be willing to look beyond normal life with spiritual eyes

**3. The battle is focused on what we place as our first priority for happiness.**

- Emptiness (need) causes us to hunger/thirst within and drives us to find some person or object to fill the emptiness and satisfy the hunger.
- Whatever we believe is the primary source to fulfill us is what we will consistently decide is to be our primary pursuit - Romance, love, money, career, fame, success, sex

**4. The OM (self-centered) has believed that 'blessings' equals 'happiness'**

- Believed in the past & habituated the belief through using it over and over
- Habituated ideas become unconscious automatic thinking – subconscious
- Habituated, automatic thinking must be intentionally rejected to be free of it
- World promotes & supports our continuing commitment to blessing

**5. The NM (God-centered) believes that 'relationship with God' equals 'happiness'**

- Replaces OM thinking with NM thinking as a habituated way of life
- NM is able to "count it all joy" because we believe the training program of adversity will bring us closer to God – intimacy = happiness & fulfillment
- NM embraces God's training & discipline because we have attached our hearts to relating to God above any earthly blessing.

**6. The battle within is the divine training experienced in the soul of the believer.**

- We struggle to realize that God allows adversity to expose our reactions to it
- Our sinful reaction reveals the existence of OM beliefs that need to be removed
- Only failure & suffering is able to break our committed belief that earthly blessings are able to give us what we need.

