

# MIND FIELD

## *Navigating the Battlefield Within*

*Proverbs 23:7 (nlt) "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."*

No matter how amazing your outer world may seem to others, it is only ever as strong and stable as the foundation you build in your inner world.

*James 4:1 (nlt) What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you?*

By contemplating, struggling and wrestling with our faith and with God's word, God **develops within us the ability to both conquer the battlefield of our mind as well as ultimately empower us** to live the life He has called us to live.

The scriptures are full of truths and principles that help us conquer our mind.

## Principle # 1: **FOCUS**

We can often be oblivious to the chaos in our lives because we have chosen to focus on the wrong things.

It's only with proper focus that we can see clearly what we need to address in our lives and what direction we need to take to reach our God given purpose.

**Only 2 things will ever want to compete for our focus and attention:**

1. The World
2. God

*James 1:8 (nlt) "Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do."*

**Our ability to focus on God alone and not mix it up with worldly desires or values is the key to a balanced and stable life.**

When we live a life out of focus our vision gets blurry and we will find it difficult to navigate anything in life in a real and meaningful way.

*Matthew 22:37 (nlt) "Jesus replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.'"*

**To be focused on God means that it involves our everything.**

Being focused on God is to remove any obstacle that would muddy your perspective of who God is and what He has done for us.

***Philippians 4:8** (nlt) "And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. 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."*

In some sense, to fix means to attach something in a **permanent way**. So we should fix to our mind, what is true and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable.

***Proverbs 4:23** (nlt) "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life."*

Guarding our hearts means to put ourselves in a ready position that can protect and defend from things that could affect our emotions, our thoughts and our desires negatively. For Solomon, his encouragement is that this should be our top priority.

***Colossians 3:2** (nlt) "Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth."*

When was the last time that we let the peace waiting for us in eternity dictate our thinking and our perspective, rather than let the worries of this finite life rule how we feel and how we act.

## Principle # 2: **FORTIFY**

We need to fortify our defenses and protection from any kind of attack, so that our focus can be sustained for the long run.

**For us to fortify our minds from the wrong thoughts, the wrong emotions and wrong desires, we must make space for the Holy Spirit to outwork His will within us.**

*Ephesians 4:17-23 (nlt) With the Lord's authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. 18: 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. 19: They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity. 20: But that isn't what you learned about Christ. 21: Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, 22: throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. 23: Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.*

By adopting a heart of humility and submission, where we give the Holy Spirit permission to change us, we find protection from confusion, a mind covered in darkness, hard heartedness, a loss of shame and a life of hedonism.

*Philippians 4:6-7 (nlt) "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7: 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."*

Prayer is one of the greatest things we can do to fortify our minds. When we pray, we take away the power that 'worrying' has in letting unwanted thoughts, emotions and desires, to sneak through the back door of our mind.

*Psalms 119:11 (nlt) "I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you."*

When we hide His word in our heart, it will transform how we feel, what we think and what we desire.

Our ability to focus and fortify our mind will determine the success we have in navigating the battlefield within.

## Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever felt that you have prioritized building how you looked to others on the outside rather than prioritize how you are with God on the inside?
- What obstacles can you identify in your life/thinking that do/can take your focus from God?
- Describe what you would consider to be true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and admirable.
- What are some ways you can think of that can help you fix your thoughts on what is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and admirable?
- What does it mean to you to let the Holy Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes?
- Discuss your prayer life and how you can utilize it to relinquish your worries. Do you have times of request and thankfulness in your prayer life?
- In what ways can you most effectively hide God's word in your heart?