

December 27

## WHERE THE BATTLE IS WON OR LOST

'If you will return, O Israel,' says the Lord . . . —Jeremiah 4:1

Our battles are first won or lost in the secret places of our will in God's presence, never in full view of the world. The Spirit of God seizes me and I am compelled to get alone with God and fight the battle before Him. Until I do this, I will lose every time. The battle may take one minute or one year, but that will depend on me, not God. However long it takes, I must wrestle with it alone before God, and I must resolve to go through the hell of renunciation or rejection before Him. Nothing has any power over someone who has fought the battle before God and won there.

I should never say, "I will wait until I get into difficult circumstances and then I'll put God to the test." Trying to do that will not work. I must first get the issue settled between God and myself in the secret places of my soul, where no one else can interfere. Then I can go ahead, knowing with certainty that the battle is won. Lose it there, and calamity, disaster, and defeat before the world are as sure as the laws of God. The reason the battle is lost is that I fight it first in the external world. Get alone with God, do battle before Him, and settle the matter once and for all.

In dealing with other people, our stance should always be to drive them toward making a decision of their will. That is how surrendering to God begins. Not often, but every once in a while, God brings us to a major turning point—a great crossroads in our life. From that point we either go toward a more and more slow, lazy, and useless Christian life, or we become more and more on fire, giving our utmost for His highest—our best for His glory.

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