

# HOW ~~NOT~~ TO BE YOUR OWN WORST ENEMY

## Pay Attention To Your Narratives

Isn't it strange how we have conversations with ourselves? Even people who don't believe in a "self" or a "soul," somehow still find themselves engaging in a back and forth discussion in their minds about why something happened, or why they make the choices they make. Human beings attempt to make sense out of the chaos of the world by creating internal narratives, stories which help us figure out how to act and think and operate. The problem occurs when our internal narratives aren't really accurate. In that case, they can create a shortcut to becoming our own worst enemy and undermining our success in the areas of life that matter most.

### Start Talking

1. Have you ever found out that your memory of a situation, or the story you tell about something that happened in the past was totally inaccurate?
2. Who called you on it? What did you get wrong? Why?

### Looking Back

1. Did you follow up on your goal to intentionally pause and pinpoint the cause of your hesitation last week– to explore, rather than ignore, your conscience when it rings alarm bells? When and how?
2. Were you able to catch yourself giving yourself sales pitches for bad ideas last week? What happened? How did you respond?
3. What did you do to reverse course on bad habits over the past week?



### **What About You?**

1. Did you grow up with a narrative you had to correct later in life? What was it related to? Money? A class of people? Religion? Education?
2. What do you think is the problem with bad internal narratives? What slippery slopes can they create in a person's life?
3. Are there destructive narratives you catch yourself leaning into now? Where did they come from? How did you discover they were flawed?
4. What outcomes are they leading you towards?
5. What are some of the narratives you can identify that drive our culture, helpful or unhelpful?
6. What makes a person their own worst enemy? What does it mean to be your own worst enemy?

### **Look It Up**

*Read the Following Passages: 2 Corinthians 10: 1–6. Matthew 7: 24 – 29. 1 Corinthians 6: 20.*

7. Paul uses military terminology to discuss the “war” Christians find themselves in. And yet, he distinguishes this war from the kinds of conflicts the world engages in. So what is he talking about here?
8. What does he ask readers to do with the false narratives that contradict the way Jesus sees the world?
9. If our internal narratives and the narratives that drive the power struggles of this world are off base, what should we replace them with? How would you describe a better story?
10. What do you think it means to see the world as God sees it? To what extent is this possible for flawed human beings?

### **Putting It All Together**

1. What is the narrative / argument that comes to mind when confronted with an invitation to surrender your life to Jesus?
2. What can you do this week to replace your own flawed internal narratives with a vision of the world as God sees it?
3. How can you remind yourself not to default back to your own stories?
4. How can you stay “at attention” as this message fades from the top of your consciousness and the real world of work and relationships creeps back in?
5. How would your interactions be different if you adopted Jesus' view of the people you come into contact with for a week?

