

That Sneaky Inner Vow: Part 2

If you have not read Part 1 then Part 2 will not make much sense. You can catch up by going to www.thepoolministries.org, clicking on teachings in the upper right hand corner and reading the first part of this insight into how inner vows work.

I have found that inner vows tend to be organized in clusters. So when I discovered that I had taken an inner vow to "not be loved because being loved meant being molested," it wasn't long before related vows floated to the surface. These vows were all about control and divided into two categories. (Can you tell I'm left-brained?)

The first set helped me avoid intimacy with "the man." I have done much work in the area of "the father" beliefs, but not much in the area of "the man". I don't know how I missed that, but I did. As you recall from my teaching on the heart (see the website), when we are very young, our hearts develop a belief system based upon our experiences. So if my father is cruel, then my heart will believe that "the father" is dangerous. That is my reality. From then on I will believe with my heart that all fathers are dangerous. This is because the heart thinks in icons. There is only one father to the heart, only one mother, only one man and only one woman, and so on. Every man I encounter (including God) who is in the place of father will appear to be dangerous, regardless of the truth of the matter. This belief system will run under the surface of my rational mind, flavoring all my relationships with father figures.

With that said, let's take a look at the inner vows lurking underneath the biggie: "I will not be loved because being loved means being molested."

Anti-intimacy vows

1. I will not let the man find me. Fruit in adult life: Restless around my husband. Eager to go do my own thing.
2. I will not let the man see me. Fruit in adult life: Uncomfortable in any state of undress around my husband.
3. I will not let the man touch me. Fruit in adult life: Husband never gets it right.
4. I will not let the man help me. Fruit in adult life: Hyper-independence.
5. I will not let the man love me. Fruit in adult life: Solitary, distant, going through the motions.

When I was younger, biology drove marital intimacy, but now ... only obedience to the scripture has enabled any marital intimacy with my husband. Guess what! Breaking these vows, sending any evil enforcers away and spending time honestly discussing with the Lord how I really feel about "the man" has made Sam very happy.

Anti-nurture Vows

Please recall that my big inner vow to not be loved affected any effort on my part to exercise and diet. This was because I believed that my mother's love was only given to fit, thin girls. I also believed that being loved meant I would be molested, so I could not be loved because it wasn't safe. If being thin and fit garnered love, then I would not be thin and fit. Thus, I sabotaged all efforts to eat right and exercise responsibility.

After identifying the "love" vow and cleaning it up, I immediately began exercising very consistently (just not with the Wii ... yet). But I still overate. Here's what happened that outed the vows affecting my eating behaviors. Sam invited me out to dinner. As I was gazing at my juicy prime rib, the Lord spoke to me in that matter-of-fact voice He uses

sometimes, saying, "Overeating is a sin."

Do you know that I have never ever thought of overeating as a sin? I was scared of it because of the consequences to my appearance and health, but I never really got it that it is a sin.

So here I am in Outback Steak House with a beautiful cut of meat on my plate and I don't know how to respond to the Lord. He didn't sound upset with me. I didn't feel like I was in trouble. It was like He had just calmly stated a fact. So I asked Him what to do. The scripture in 1 John 5:18 floated into my brain.

We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

So the promise here is that I will not continue to sin, because I am born of God. That sounded hopeful to me. So I asked the Lord why overeating is a sin. He revealed that in order to overeat, I have to override the guidance of my human spirit. So I asked this: Why am I overriding my human spirit? And over the course of days, I began to get understanding.

*Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom.
Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
Proverbs 4:7*

The first memory to surface was this: My mother was a great cook. She used to cook the best fried chicken in the world. I loved that stuff and I believed that she cooked fried chicken just for me. One night after a wonderful meal, I wandered into the kitchen in search of the one drumstick that was left over. My mom was silently sitting at the breakfast bar. I opened the fridge and the chicken was gone. I was upset and angry that my chicken was gone. My mother laughed and said meanly that my brother had gotten the last piece already. I was devastated. There wasn't much love in my house, so the fried chicken just for me was a big deal. From then on, I believed that there was no nurture for me. As I reviewed this memory, the Lord revealed that my spirit (in particular my mercy portion, for those of you who are familiar with Arthur Burke's teachings), had led me to the kitchen for a little love and nurture in the form of a fried chicken drumstick. Because I believed that there was no nurture for me, and at this point believed that my mother did not love me at all, I shut down any expectation of receiving nurture from a loving person. As a matter of fact desiring to be nurtured had gotten me hurt! So I stopped listening to my human spirit in the area of nurture.

Vows:

I will not need or expect nurture.

I will not listen to my human spirit when it talks to me about nurture, food and eating.

So what was left? I no longer expected anyone to care about me. But God had designed me to be nurtured. No matter how many inner vows I made to not need nurture, I still needed it. And longed for it. It was a simple matter for my heart to release its hold on mother and shift to food.

My heart remembered how good it felt when I believed that my mother made fried chicken just for me. In my home, there was so little undefiled love, my heart desperately clung to those memories. Time and again, my simple child's heart returned to food, seeking

the love and nurture that I require to survive. Before long food became my source and I began to believe that food has power.

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Genesis 3:6

As the Lord revealed this to me, grief bubbled up. Not because I wasn't loved as a child, but because He expected me to give up the food and turn to Him for my nurture. You know what that means. I was going to have to be vulnerable again to a person. Persons can hurt me when I am open and tender. Whereas food just lays there. To be honest, I'm still working through this, because I'm not sure if God will come through for me. Will He nurture me, making me feel special and loved? Will he do special things just for me?

Will you, Lord? Will you nurture me in a special way, unique to my design, my likes and desires? Is it safe to release the promises I made to not need anyone, to not need nurture? Would You prove Yourself to me? Would You win my heart in this area?

Repentance Prayer

Creator God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Maker of my need to be nurtured, forgive me for believing the lie that food has power beyond its God-given design to provide healthy sustenance. Food is not a source of power. Forgive me for turning to food for nurture, for wisdom, for life. You are my life and my source. Forgive me for judging Eve for falling into this trap. Forgive me for blaming my human spirit for causing me pain.

I understand now that my human spirit did not know that my brother had swiped the last piece of my chicken. And I apologized to my spirit for shutting it down and invited it to begin nurturing me and advising me in the area of food.

Here's the second memory: I am having dinner at the family table. This is never a good thing, because the only time we ate together is when my father was drunk. He would insist that we all "dress" for dinner and then would verbally abuse us during the meal. Thankfully this didn't happen very often. On this night my mother served sweet potatoes for the first time. Now, I'm a kid. Potatoes are supposed to be white, not orange. No food is supposed to be orange except oranges. My father insisted that I eat the thing. I refused. He insisted and pressured, promising that if I didn't like it, I wouldn't have to eat it. So finally I took a bite and spit it out. Wooh boy, was he mad! I was outraged. He had promised I wouldn't have to eat it if I didn't like it!

Vows:

I will not eat what I don't want to eat.
No one will tell me what to eat.

As a child, I had thought that, at least in this area of my life, I had some control. Apparently not, but I wasn't willing to surrender control and thus I vowed not to. Of course, the enemy attached to my vows and the very thing happened that I desperately tried to prevent. I lost control of my eating. I could only berate myself for overeating.

I verbally broke the vows I had made, sent all evil helpers to the feet of Jesus. (Let Him handle them.) I asked my spirit to resume it's role in the area of my eating.

There was a surprise heart belief lurking under all of this.

A heart belief resulted from the sweet potato incident. You might think that it would already be in place since my father was molesting me by this time. So I was surprised at the connection. Losing control over what I ate was apparently the straw that broke the camel's back.

Surprise Heart Belief:

He (the man) will make me do what I don't want to do.

I own a children's entertainment business. We provide entertainers and characters for parties. About a year ago, I purchased a large foam costume that resembles a cartoon character. I never had any intention of performing the character myself, but as things worked out, I did have to perform inside this costume. Turns out I am very uncomfortable, actually miserable, inside the thing and I don't want to do it. But I'm having trouble finding reliable people to do this very popular character, so I've been doing it myself (y'all can stop laughing now).

As I worked through the sweet potato incident, I realized that I was very angry about having to do this character. I was even angry at God for not providing me with a suitable person. It felt like God was "making" me do this character. As I worked through the sweet potato incident, I realized that I believed in my heart that "the man" would make me do what I don't want to do. And that I was applying this belief to God.

I repented by simply apologizing to God for lumping Him into the same category as my father. As a matter of fact, I apologized for believing that "all men" would make me do what I don't want to do.

Vows:

I will not do what the man wants me to do.

I will resign myself and do what the man wants me to do.

I will hate the man.

The first two vows conflict. Conflicting vows are not unusual and result in lots of confusion and rationalization. The last "hate" vow was buried inside a child part who required some attention from me and eventually the Lord. I broke all the vows by verbally renouncing them. I sent all evil "helpers" to the feet of Jesus and invited the Lord to give me truth about "the man."

Shortly thereafter I hired two enthusiastic girls to play the cartoon character. They just can't wait to get inside that giant pillow! I'm so happy.

Blessings to you all and smiles,

Sue Bowman

The Pool Ministries

Please visit our website at www.thepoolministries.org

For prayer ministry, call 205.535.6064