

Have You Performed a Spiritual Self-Examination?

Examine yourselves, seeing whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified. Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do that which is honorable, whether or not we may seem disqualified. For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth. For we are glad when we are weak, and you are strong. We wish even your perfection. (2 Cor. 13:5-9 MEV).

When Jesus said to love God and others with “all your heart,” it shows that we need to pay attention to and work on our hearts continually.

In life, the “want to” precedes the “how to.” Good advice on *how* to do something serves no purpose unless we *want* to do it. This is the heart of Christian living. Only after we want to do what is right are we then ready to learn how to do that very thing.

Be honest, how is your heart toward God? If you could pick one word (e.g., tender or hard, loving or angry, obedient or defiant, etc.) to describe your heart toward God what would it be?

Grace and I have been together since March 12, 1988. Then one day I asked, “How are we doing in our relationship?”

I was expecting her to tell me that she felt like she was married to Jesus. Much to my surprise, she took that opportunity to gently let me know that I had a lot of room for improvement.

I got a bit defensive. I asked why she had not told me these things before. She kindly reminded me that she had on various occasions and that I was not really listening or acting upon what she was saying. She was right.

I took the words of my wife to heart and scheduled a day alone with the Lord. My goals were to (1) pray to the Lord, asking Him how I could love better in my relationship with my wife, (2) listen, (3) journal out my thoughts with the Lord, and (4) study scriptures that pertained to what He would say to me.

But before God talked to me about my relationship with Grace, He spoke with me about my relationship with Him. The Lord convicted me that if I loved Him better first, then I would love Grace better, so I needed to start working on my relationship with Him first.

I believe that much of the time, God feels like my wife did. God loves you, and He wants a loving relationship with you. He has spoken to you through Scripture, your conscience, and the wise counsel of godly people about some areas you need to improve in order to nurture a loving relationship with Him and others. Have you been listening? {eo}

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