

Celebrate Recovery

Spiritual inventory part Lesson 10

Principle 4: Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

“Happy are the pure in heart.” (Matthew 5:8)

Step 4: We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord.” (Lamentations 3:40)



Let us Pray

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test my thoughts. Point out anything you find in me that makes you sad, and lead me along the path of everlasting life” Give me courage to confront my past, knowing that this is Your will, and an important step for me to take. I place my trust in You Lord’ In the name of Jesus Christ I pray. AMEN

Introduction

Tonight, we begin the first of two lessons in which we will look at our spiritual inventory, using the “Spiritual Evaluation” Pastor Rick Warren developed for this step.⁶

Principle 4 begins the process of coming clean, where you **openly examine and confess your faults to yourself, to God, and to another person you trust.**

Most of us don't like to look within ourselves for the same reason we don't like to open a letter that we know has bad news. But remember what we talked about in Lesson 9: **You need to keep your evaluation, your inventory, balanced.** It needs to include both the good and the bad within you. Let's look at what a spiritual inventory, or evaluation, is all about!

God's Word tells us, *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test my thoughts. Point out anything you find in me that makes you sad, and lead me along the path of everlasting life” (Psalm 139:23 –24, TLB).*

Do you know everyone has three different “characters”?

- 1. The character we exhibit.**
- 2. The character we think we have.**
- 3. The character we truly have.**

No doubt each one has good qualities and bad. Tonight we are going to look at some of the **bad**, some of our character shortcomings and sins that can block us from receiving all the joy that God has intended. **We will work on four areas of our character tonight and four more at our next session.** This exercise will help you get started on your inventory as you search your heart!

Relationships with Others

In Matthew 6:12 –14 (TLB) Jesus tells us to pray, “Forgive us our sins, just as we have forgiven those who have sinned against us. Don't bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.”

Ask yourself the following questions regarding your relationships with others:

1. **Who has hurt you?**
2. **Against whom have you been holding a grudge?**

It doesn't take a doctor to tell you that it is better to remove a grudge than to nurse it. No matter how long you nurse a grudge, it won't get better. Writing the grudge down on your inventory is the first step in getting rid of it.

3. **Against whom are you still seeking revenge?**

Did you know that seeking revenge is like biting a dog just because the dog bit you? It really doesn't help you or the dog!

4. **Are you jealous of someone?**

In Song of *Songs 8:6 jealousy is said to be as unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire!*

5. **Have you tried to justify your bad attitude by saying it is "their fault"?**

I have found that when I'm searching for someone to blame, it's better for me to look in the mirror rather than through binoculars. *Hosea 4:4 (NLT) tells us, "Don't point your finger at someone else and try to pass the blame."*

The people that you name in these areas will go in column 1 of your "Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 Inventory Worksheet" in Participant's Guide 2.

6. **Who have you hurt?**

How did you hurt them? You may have hurt them unintentionally. Maybe it was intentional.

7. **Who have you been critical of or gossiped about?**

It isn't that difficult to make a mountain out of a mole hill. Just add a little dirt on it. That's what gossip is —just a little dirt!

I find it amazing that a tongue four inches long can destroy a man six feet tall. That's *why James 1:26 tells us to "keep a tight rein on [our] tongues."*

The people that you name in these areas will go in column 5 of your "Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 Inventory Worksheet."

Next, let's look at what's important to you.

Priorities in Your Life

We do what is important to us. Others see our priorities by our actions, not our words.

What are the priorities in your life?

Matthew 6:33 (TLB) tells us what will happen if we make God our number-one priority: "He will give . . . to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to."

1. **After making the decision to turn your life and your will over to God, in what areas of your life are you still not putting God first?**

What closet are you not letting Him enter and clean out?

2. What in your past is interfering with your doing God's will?

Your ambition? Is it driven by serving God or is it driven by envy?

Your pleasures? If your pleasure has been found in the world, *Proverbs 21:17* warns, *"He who loves pleasure will become poor."* *Is your pleasure now found in Jesus Christ? Psalm 16:11 (NCV) tells us, "You will teach me how to live a holy life. Being with you will fill me with joy; at your right hand I will find pleasure forever."*

3. What have been your priorities in your job?

Friendships?

Personal goals?

Were they just self-centered, self-serving? Selfishness turns life into a burden. Unselfishness turns burdens into life.

4. Who did your priorities affect?

You know, you will never get so rich that you can afford to lose a true friend.

1. What was good about your priorities?
2. What was wrong about them?

The next area of our spiritual inventory is to examine our attitudes.

Your Attitude

Ephesians 4:31 (GNT) says, "Get rid of all bitterness, passion, and anger. No more shouting or insults, no more hateful feelings of any sort."

1. Do you always try to have an "attitude of gratitude" or do you find yourself always complaining about your circumstances?

When you feel dog tired at night, do you ever think that it might be because you growled all day?

2. In what areas of your life are you ungrateful?

If we can't be grateful for the bad things in our lives that we have received, we can at least be thankful for what we have escaped.

And the one thing we can all be grateful for is found in *1 Corinthians 15:57: "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

1. Have you gotten angry and easily blown up at people?
2. Have you been sarcastic?
3. Do you know that sarcasm can be a form of verbal abuse?

5. What in your past is still causing you fear or anxiety?

As we have said before, your fear imprisons you; your faith liberates you. Fear paralyzes; faith empowers! Fear disheartens; faith encourages! Fear sickens; faith heals! Faith in Jesus Christ will allow you to face your past fears, and with faith you can be free of fear's chains. First *John 4:18 says, "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*

The last area we are going to talk about tonight is your integrity.

Your Integrity

Colossians 3:9 (NCV) tells us, "Do not lie to each other. You have left your old sinful life and the things you did before."

1. In what past dealing were you dishonest?

An honest man alters his ideas to fit the truth. A dishonest man alters the truth to fit his ideas.

2. Have you stolen things?

I told you that your inventory wasn't going to be easy.

3. Have you exaggerated yourself to make yourself look better?

Did you know that there are no degrees of "honest"? Either you are or you aren't!

4. In what areas of your past have you used false humility?

Did you know that humility is never gained by seeking it? To think we have it is sure proof that we don't.

5. Have you pretended to live one way in front of your Christian friends and another way at home or at work?

Are you a "Sunday Christian" or a seven-day, full-time follower of Jesus Christ? Do you try to practice the eight principles seven days a week or just here at Celebrate Recovery on Friday nights? PARABLE OF THE SOWER *Luke 8:4-15*

Wrap-Up

Well, that's enough to work on for one week, but next week we'll dig in again and look at part two of our spiritual inventory. We'll explore our old ways of thinking —our minds; the ways we have treated or mistreated God's temple — our bodies; how we did or didn't walk by faith in the past; our important past relations with our family and church.

As you start to work on your spiritual inventory, remember two things. First, in Isaiah 1:18 (TLB) God says, "No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow." Second —I can't say it enough —keep your inventory balanced. List the positive new relationships that you have, the areas of your life that you have been able to turn over to God, how your attitude has improved since you have been in recovery, the ways you have been able to step out of your denial into God's truth.

Let's close in prayer.

Father God, thank You for each person here tonight. Thank You for giving them the courage to begin this difficult step of making an inventory. Give them the desire and strength they need to proceed. Encourage them and light their way with Your truth. In the strong name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

Think/write/discuss

Relationships with Others

Who has hurt you? (Go back as far as you can.) How did they hurt you specifically? (column 1 of inv. Sheet)

Against whom are you holding a grudge? (column 1 of inv. Sheet)

Who are you Seeking revenge against?) (column 1 of inv. Sheet)

Of whom are you jealous? (Past and present.) Why? (column 1 of inv. Sheet)

Have you tried to justify your bad attitude by saying it is their Fault (column 1 of inv. Sheet)

Who have you hurt?

How did you hurt them? (column 5 of inv. Sheet)

About whom have you been critical or gossiped? Why? (column 5 of inv. Sheet)

How have you attempted to place the blame on someone else? Be specific. (column 5 of inv. Sheet)

Priorities in Life

After having made a decision to turn your life and your will over to God, in what areas of your life are you still not putting God First?

Why not

What in your past is keeping you from seeking and following God's will for your life?

What have been your priorities in your job?

Who did your priorities affect?

What was good about your job priorities?

What was bad about your job priorities?

What are your personal goals for the next ninety days? Keep it simple.

Career _____ Family _____ Church _____ Christ _____ Friendships _____ Money _____ Ministry _____

Attitude

Do you always try to have an “attitude of gratitude” or do you find yourself always complaining about your circumstances?

In what areas of your life are you ungrateful?

Have you gotten angry and easily blown up at people?

Have you been sarcastic?

Do you know that sarcasm can be a form of verbal abuse?

What in your past is still causing you fear or anxiety?

Integrity

“Do not lie to each other. You have left your old sinful life and the things you did before” (Colossians 3:9, NCV).

- In what past dealing were you dishonest?
- Have you stolen things?
- Have you exaggerated yourself to make yourself look better?
- In what areas of your past have you used false humility?
- Have you lived one way in front of your Christian friends and another way at home or at work?

Have you memorized

Isaiah 1:18 yet?

“Come, let’s talk this over! Says the Lord; no matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you white as wool” (Isaiah 1:18, TLB).