

Calibrate:

To carefully and precisely check, adjust, or determine a course by using a comparison with a known standard or foundational guideline.

January 7th: Introspection basics

Think about your current life...how do you choose to spend your time? Are you constantly trying to improve yourself? Do you seek out people who remind you of God and of the holy things in life? We should be conscious every day of the gifts and resources that we have been given. Occasionally it might be good to simply ask, "Lord, am I wasting my time by the choices I make?" Do you put forth an honest effort to start the morning in meditation and prayer? Do you sincerely ask God to guide your life and all of your efforts?

Everyone lives according to some kind of a standard. There is some basis that each of us uses to measure our morality, our ethics, and our successes or failures. We may compare ourselves to our parents, our circle of friends or possibly a hero of the past. We may even compare ourselves to religious leaders who we view as successful or righteous. But if we truly desire to live moral, ethical and successful lives, we must strive to live as Jesus lived.

As Christians, we can be sure of our basis of comparison. We should compare ourselves to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:6 (NIV) ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did. He is our standard. He is our measure. He is our criterion.

Philippians 4:8(NIV) ⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things

Job 13:23 (NIV)

²³ How many wrongs and sins have I committed? Show me my offense and my sin.

Prayer points:

- Ask God to reveal any areas of your life where you may need to change a thought pattern or habit.
- Pray for clarity on relationships. Ask the Lord to show you clearly any relationships that you need to separate yourself from.
- Be Still and listen, allow God to reveal to you any areas that may need to be addressed.
- Ask for wisdom and guidance in the best way to approach any area of your life that He is directing you to change.

January 8th: The Purpose of Introspection

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

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)⁵ Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

Psalms 139:23-24 (NIV)²³ Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

A primary purpose for introspection is to help us recognize sin. Self-examination is meant to make us aware of any areas in which we are failing to live in obedience to Jesus Christ. It reveals areas in which we may be withholding obedience, where we know the right thing to do yet we choose not to do it. It also reveals areas in which we are living in disobedience, where we are compromising through sinful acts, words, and desires. Finally, it will help us identify areas of complacency in which the Holy Spirit has revealed that an action or attitude is sinful, but we have put off taking action against it. This helps us see where we have not yet been fully conformed to the image of our Savior.

Christian introspection is not merely an opportunity for us to become aware of sin and compromise but it should also be an opportunity to see blessing. Self-examination is incomplete if it only helps us to see our failures and does not open our eyes to see grace and victory over sin. For just as the evidences of our disobedience may lead to sorrow and repentance, evidences of grace and victory lead to joy and worship.

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to reveal anything that he has asked you to change in your life that you have either ignored or compromised.
- Are there any thoughts or desires that resonate in your mind that you need the Lord to help you suppress? If so, pray for the Holy Spirit to break that bondage and release you from these things.
- Pray for insight into any areas of complacency where you may have put off responding to the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- Thank the Lord for His mercy and grace. Praise Him for the opportunity to turn away from anything that may be hindering your relationship with Him.

January 9th: The Methodology of Introspection

Christian introspection must be centered around the word of God. It begins with the understanding of Christ's completed work of salvation that He has made available to all of us. It is based on the knowledge that Jesus Christ has already accepted and endured God's wrath for our sin. If we understand our relationship with Jesus Christ, then we know that we do not need to spend time trying to determine if we have been good enough or if we may be righteous enough to merit the favor of God. Instead, we should be evaluating our words, thoughts, actions, and motives to determine if we are honoring God and displaying evidence of His power and presence in our lives. What we consider a self-examination is actually an examination directed by God and the standards set through His word. He is the one who shines the light of His Word into every corner of our hearts and lives to illuminate any indiscretion.

Psalm 26:2-3 (NIV)² Test me, LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind;
³ for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.

Psalm 19:14 (NIV)¹⁴ May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Ephesians 4:1-3 (NIV) As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Psalm 32:3-5 (NIV)

3 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Prayer Points:

- Pray for the Heavenly Father to put your mind at ease and allow you to be receptive to Him searching your heart.
- Ask the Lord to settle in your mind the fact that Jesus has accepted and endured God's wrath for your sin.
- Pray for insight into any patterns or habits that need to be broken which may not be perceived by others as honoring to God and your profession of Faith as a Christian.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you to a point that His light shines through your daily words and activities.

January 10th: The Christian Responsibility of Introspection

God not only expects us to evaluate our lives, but He also provides direction to guide us through self-examination. He does this for our benefit. It is through introspection that we gain an understanding of our level of obedience to Jesus Christ. It is through introspection that we have the ability to gain insight that may lead us to repent of any lack of obedience and as a result we can then recognize and rejoice in the evidence of God's good grace.

There is much wisdom in setting aside times and seasons for serious introspection. We would be wise to examine ourselves before we make major decisions, at the beginning of a new year or even as we begin a new season in life. We are specifically encouraged in His word to examine ourselves before partaking of the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:28-29 (NIV)

28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.
29 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

Haggai 1:5-7 (NIV)

5 Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. 6 You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

7 This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.

We will find that the bulk of our introspection comes through the routines of everyday life. It comes as we read God's Word on a regular basis. We also gain a basis for introspection through listening to the preaching of the Word as the text is presented by our preacher, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and applied throughout daily thoughts and routines. A brief time of introspection is a good way to start every new day.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to prepare your mind and guide you on a journey of self-evaluation.
- Pray for a yielded heart so that you will be receptive to the Lord's leading in areas of your life that He wants to re-calibrate.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to grant you clarity and discernment over the areas of your life that you feel led to change.
- Seek the Lord's direction in your daily activities. Ask Him to reveal anything that may be a stumbling block to others who may be looking at your life as an example to follow.

January 11th:The risk of improper Introspection

Just as any good gift can be misused, so can the responsibility or discipline of introspection. We have all seen the gift of money or wealth be twisted into a lifestyle of pride and greed. In the same way, the concept of introspection can become excessive and lead to loneliness, withdrawal, and endless searching. The challenge is to allow the Spirit of God to illuminate the shadows of your heart according to the Word of God. This will allow you to carry out introspection for its intended purpose. Sure, we should look within ourselves in order to see where we have sinned and fallen short of God's standard. But introspection is misused when this conviction and grief does not lead us back to the cross of Christ, where we find forgiveness, healing, and restoration. Ultimately, if we walk away from introspection with nothing but a burden of shame, then we have missed the message of the cross.

Philippians 4:6-7(NIV)

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 103:8-12 (NIV)

⁸ The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

⁹ He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;

¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Ezekiel 18:27-28 (NIV)

²⁷ But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness they have committed and does what is just and right, they will save their life. ²⁸ Because they consider all the offenses they have committed and turn away from them, that person will surely live; they will not die.

Prayer Points:

- Pray for God to give you appropriate insight and understanding as you read His word.
- Ask the Lord to guide you in your Bible study toward passages that will speak to your current season of life.
- Pray for the Lord to restore your hope as you confess and commit to work on areas of your life that need improvement.
- Seek God's guidance in recognizing his mercy and grace as you look deep into the spiritual aspects of your daily life.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to renew and encourage you in your daily walk with Him.

January 12th: Repentance, Is it necessary?

Luke 15:7 (NIV)

⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

Matthew 4:17 tells us: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus was not suggesting that repentance might be a good idea, He was giving a directive to all who desire to have eternal life. Repentance is a basic prerequisite to seeing and entering the Kingdom of God. Those who don't repent cannot be saved; they will perish in their sins:

Luke 13:3 (NIV)³ I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

The world would encourage us to accept our sin by saying we can simply repent afterwards. Unfortunately that is a false understanding of repentance. Repentance is not a self-induced punishment to resolve guilt or a quick prayer for forgiveness. Repentance is a complete surrender, a change of heart, and a turning away from sin. When repentance is real, there will be a distinct change in thoughts and behavior.

Ezekiel 18:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways," says the Lord God. "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin.

Those who choose to continue in sin, even though they know the commandments of God, put themselves at great risk of being controlled by their sin and the very real possibility that they may not be able to repent before it is too late.

Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)

¹³ Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to reveal to you any area of your life where there may be compromise.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the physical and spiritual strength to address any area of your life that needs an adjustment.
- Ask God to help you leave your transgressions at the foot of the cross once you have confessed and released them to Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to replace thoughts that could lead you back to old habits with a new focus that leads you toward the cross of Jesus.

January 13th: Understanding True Repentance

To engage in true repentance, we must reach a point where we realize that our sin grieves our Lord and Savior. We must accept the fact that Jesus suffered and died on the cross because of our sin. The Bible refers to this as Godly sorrow which leads to salvation.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV) Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Without repentance we can never be free from the condemnation that sin naturally brings into our lives. Without repentance our conscience will continue to remind us that we have unresolved sin that is hindering our relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Acts 3:19 (NIV)

¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord

God is constantly calling believers as well as non-believers to repentance. It is his desire that everyone would turn from their sin and seek a relationship with Him so that they may experience the riches of His goodness and mercy.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Romans 2:4-6 (NIV)

⁴ Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

⁵ But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. ⁶ God "will repay each person according to what they have done."

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to position your heart and mind for a journey of repentance and cleansing over the next few days.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind any areas of your life that may need true repentance in order to remove any roadblocks that may be hindering your relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Ask the lord to give you a clean break from anything that He may reveal over the next few days that you need to turn away from.
- Pray for the Lord to suppress memories of past habits so that you are free to move forward in your walk with Him.

A Guide for Repentance

January 14th – 18th (from *Praying God's Heart* by Gregory Frizzell)

January 14th

Pure Thoughts and Attitudes

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23-24)

“For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7a)

“Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’” (Matthew 22:37)

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matthew 6:33)

“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:28)

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.” (Psalm 19:14)

“Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5)

“God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5b)

Prayerfully work through the following reflective questions. Fully confess and forsake whatever God brings to mind. Trust God to fill and empower you with His Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Do I tend to think more about worldly things than spiritual?
- (b) Do I spend more time on hobbies, sports or recreation than God's word and prayer?
- (c) Do I have any patterns of unclean or lustful thoughts?
- (d) Have I opened the door to impurity by anything I view on-line or in other media?
- (e) Do I frequently have thoughts that are envious or jealous?
- (f) Do I often have thoughts that are angry or resentful?
- (g) Am I frequently dominated by thoughts of doubt instead of trust?
- (h) Do I consistently harbor thoughts of bitterness and unforgiveness?
- (i) Do I frequently brood about harsh things I would like to say to certain people or groups?

Please confess and forsake whatever God has revealed. Surrender your thoughts and yield them to Jesus. Remember, you are fully accepted and forgiven in Christ! Believe Christ to live through you by the Holy Spirit. Place strong focus on identifying the specific righteous thoughts that will replace those that are wrong. Pause in prayer and trust Jesus to empower you with the Holy Spirit. Believe Him to fill you with His thoughts.

January 15th

Holy Speech and Godly Communications

“A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart....A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back” (Proverbs 18:2, 29:11)

“But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, They will give account of it in the day of judgment.” (Matthew 12:36)

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers...Neither filthiness nor foolish talking, nor jesting which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks.” (Ephesians 4:29; 5:4)

“Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.” (Colossians 3:9)

“In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” (James 1:19)

As seldom seen in history, sins of speech (and emails) are epidemic among believers. The current generation has witnessed a virtual explosion in everything from gossip and slander to angry outbursts and ungodly emailing. Little affects fellowship and spiritual power like unyielded tongues and reckless keypads. Fully confess and forsake all sins of speech or email. Trust God to fill and empower you by His Spirit. After each of the following questions, pause and give God time to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Have I uttered any inappropriate or slang speech?
- (b) Do I have patterns of cursing or off-color words?
- (c) Am I prone to exaggeration or lying?
- (d) Do I have patterns of complaining and griping?
- (e) Am I guilty of any form of divisive speech?
- (f) Have I in any way spread criticism or lack of support for my spiritual leaders?
- (g) Do I have any patterns of critical, judgmental speech?
- (h) Have I blogged, emailed or forwarded anything that violated Scripture or grieved God’s Spirit?
- (i) Have I blogged or forwarded material when I was not entirely sure of its accuracy or appropriateness?
- (j) Do I have a tendency to hurt and offend others?
- (k) Have I said things when alone that would cause great shame if made public?

Remember, *all* will be revealed (Romans 6:11)! Claim God’s grace and trust Christ’s indwelling Spirit for your victory.

Be very specific in your prayer of confession and repentance. Resolve now to put off all ungodly speech and wholly yield your tongue to Christ’s Lordship. Be very specific in your confession and repentance. Trust Jesus to fill your heart and empower your speech. Believe Him for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit.

January 16th

Right Relationships and Biblical Reconciliation

“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.....For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:14-15)

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.....And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:25-26, 6:4)

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.... Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise.” (Ephesians 5:22, 6:1-2)

“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

With God, everything is about relationship! At its heart, spirituality is about loving God and one another. (Matthew 22:37-39, 5:23-24, 6:14-15) Virtually nothing grieves God’s Spirit or blocks prayers like ignoring broken or damaged relationships. For this reason, it is vital that believers continually confess and forsake all relationship sins. Take your time and be very thorough. After each of the following questions, pause and allow God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Is there anyone (past or present) that I have offended but have not asked forgiveness?
- (b) Have I failed to seek full reconciliation and make restitution to anyone I have offended or in some way harmed?
- (c) Do I harbor the slightest unforgiveness and anger toward anyone?
- (d) Do I privately rehearse angry things I would like to say to certain people?
- (e) As a father, am I leading and training my family spiritually?
- (f) As a mother, am I sacrificially and joyfully serving my family and guiding them spiritually?
- (g) Have I in any way failed to honor, respect or give adequate attention and time to my parents?
- (h) Have I spoken or emailed negatively about anyone?
- (i) Have I publicly criticized a fellow believer without first talking to them about the issue?
- (j) Have I forwarded items when I was not certain of their source?
- (k) Am I involved in any form of gossip or negative, critical speech?
- (l) Do I tend to hurt and offend people with my words or emails?
- (m) Is there any pattern of failing to respect and support my spiritual leaders?

All sins of relationships are very serious with God. Confession must be specific and repentance complete. Ask God for clear revelation of specific steps you may need to take. Resolve to be utterly honest with yourself and resist the human tendency to rationalize our sin.

Determine now to put off sins of relationship and let Jesus be the Lord of all. Are there indeed certain people from whom I need to ask forgiveness? Do I need to take specific steps of restitution? Is there some offense or bitterness I need to finally release?

Be completely honest with God and yourself. (If people are coming to mind with whom you need to make a contact for reconciliation that is very likely God speaking to your heart.)

Pause for prayer and believe Christ to fill you with His love and power.

January 17th

Victory Over Sins of Commission

“For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.” (Psalms 51:3)

“Therefore having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)

Put simply, sins of commission are doing, saying or thinking anything God has forbidden. These can be anything from actions and words to thoughts or relationships. Fully confess and forsake all sins of commission.

After each of the following questions, pause for God to speak.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Am I engaged in any form of physical, mental, on-line or phone immorality?
- (b) Have I compromised by viewing anything unclean via movies, TV or Internet?
- (c) Do I have habits that abuse or neglect my body?
- (d) Do I commit idolatry by placing anyone or anything over loving and serving God?
- (e) Have I dabbled in any form of gambling or new ageism?
- (f) Am I doing anything about which I do not have perfect peace?
- (g) Am I in any way harsh or unkind to others?
- (h) Do I often confess the same sins but fail to fully forsake them?
- (i) Have I abused God’s grace by taking sin lightly?

Resolve now to put off disobedience and put on full surrender to Christ.

Be very specific in your confession and repentance. Be specific about your actual steps for making the changes. Pray now and trust Jesus to fill you with His Spirit and power for full repentance. Claim the glorious victory described in Romans 6:6-14. Ask for the fire and passion of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13) Don’t stop asking, believing and repenting until He powerfully touches your heart!

Romans 6:6-14 (NKJV)

⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

January 18th

Overcoming Sins of Omission

“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17)

“He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses **and forsakes** them will have mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13, emphasis added)

“And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.” (Luke 12:47)

Sins of omission are those areas in which we consistently fail to do things God has commanded. In short, it is not doing or being what God tells us to do and be. Fully confess and forsake any patterns of omission.

After each of the following questions, pause and listen for God’s impressions.

Questions for Reflection

- (a) Am I failing to abide in Jesus by neglecting regular time in His word and prayer?
- (b) Do I neglect consistent times of deep Scripture-based examination and confession?
- (c) Have I confessed certain sins but failed to fully repent and make restitution?
- (d) Do I neglect to be a daily witness and fail to generously support evangelism and missions?
- (e) Have I neglected to discern and use my spiritual gifts?
- (f) Am I allowing any point of spiritual bondage to remain in my life?
- (g) Have I failed to support and respect my spiritual leaders?
- (h) Am I failing to daily pursue holiness?
- (i) Am I robbing God by failing to tithe and give generous offerings beyond the tithe?
- (j) Have I neglected to work at improving my marriage and family life?
- (k) Do I fail to regularly pray with and disciple my family?

Resolve now to put off your specific sins of neglect and put on full obedience. Be very specific in identifying your areas for repentance. Plan your actual steps for making the changes. Pray now and believe Christ to fill you with a spirit of total obedience. Ask in faith for the fullness of Christ in you by the Holy Spirit.

January 19th: Jesus Cleanses and Calls

Isaiah 6:5–8 NIV

“‘Woe to me!’ I cried. ‘I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips ... and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.’ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal ... which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, ‘See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.’ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”

One of the most effective tools the enemy will use to discourage you from serving God is by convincing you that you have either failed too often or that you will have to clean up your life before you can expect to hear from God.

God’s intention when he convicts us of our sins is not to condemn us but to encourage us to seek forgiveness and cleansing.

Isaiah tells us that God’s fire is a cleansing fire that is intended to burn guilt away and purify us from sin. The passage listed above in Isaiah 6 shows God’s purpose for cleansing in this instance was to prepare Isaiah for a mission: “Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” (Isaiah 6:8 NIV)

God has provided every believer of Jesus Christ with everything needed to fulfill whatever task he will place before us.

Titus 2:14(NIV)

14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NIV)

7 Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Prayer Points:

- Pray for the Lord to reveal to you any task He may have been calling you to that you have dismissed because you did not feel worthy.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you suppress the deceptive thoughts and discouragement from the enemy that are intended to keep you from following the call of the Lord.
- Thank the Lord for His complete and thorough cleansing through the shed blood of His son Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to empower you through the presence of the Holy Spirit to have confidence in the fact that He has equipped you to take on any task He places before you.

January 20th:Cleansed by His word

God's Word is the most powerful cleansing agent available and it is free to anyone who chooses to accept it.

John 15:3(NIV)

³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

God does not work apart from His word. As Believers we are cleansed by the Word of God as we apply it in our lives. As we study, our mind is renewed which enables to know the very will of God for our lives. As our mind is renewed we are now able to effectively do the work that the Lord has called us to do. If we choose to trivialize our study of His Word, our spiritual life will suffer, and we basically choose to struggle through life controlled by our sinful nature. Without His word in our Heart we can never grow to the fullness that Christ desires. If it is our desire to effectively obey God's call to any area of service, we must be committed to sanctification through the cleansing of His Word.

Psalm 119:9 (NIV)

9 How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.

Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Titus 3:5-7(NIV)

5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Prayer Points:

- Thank the Lord for providing His Word as a tool for the cleansing and renewal of your mind.
- Ask the Lord to give you a hunger and determination to study His Word daily.
- Pray for wisdom and discernment as you study to help you make application of His truths to your everyday life.
- Ask God to set you apart through the study and sanctifying power of His Word so that you can be used for His Kingdom purposes.

January 21st: Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

Psalm 51:1-12 (NIV)¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

⁶ You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

¹¹ Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

God is simply waiting for us to ask for his cleansing. Even though we may not feel clean, His cleansing is thorough. It may take some time for us to accept His forgiveness, but it was complete the first time we asked in sincerity with a repentant heart. The enemy will try to remind us of our past and he will try to well up shame and memories to keep us from believing that our sins are gone.

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

The Bible says He will purify us from “All Unrighteousness” not some, not most, not everything except, but “All”. Even if others have not forgiven us, or even if we are still struggling to forgive ourselves, God's forgiveness is thorough and complete. Jesus Christ and His death on the cross paid the entire price for our sin.

Prayer Points:

- Pray for the Lord to reveal to you any area of your life where there may be something you need to surrender for cleansing by His Word.
- Ask God to give you peace in knowing that anything you bring before Him with a truly repentant heart is forgiven and removed.
- Pray for understanding of the best way to work through the issues of any consequences that remain or people who choose not to forgive you for past transgressions.

January 22nd: Cleansing requires Jesus

It is not difficult for us to be aware of our sin and the need for cleansing.... Human nature would generally tell us that if we have a problem we need to fix it. This natural tendency to be independent and take care of things ourselves can easily carry over to our relationship with Christ. The enemy will often deceive us into thinking that we can cleanse ourselves from wrongdoing by making restitution, performing a good deed, or maybe by volunteering for charity work. While that is not a bad thing to do, it does not complete the work of cleansing. We must come to Jesus in complete surrender and obedience, seeking His forgiveness for our sins.

Just as a parent must teach a child to put their hands under running water to rinse them clean, we must remember to put our life under the Blood of Jesus Christ. Only the resurrected Christ can cleanse us from sin.

1 Peter 1:3-5 (NIV)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Isaiah 1:16-18 (NIV)

¹⁶ Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong.
¹⁷ Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.
¹⁸ "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

Leviticus 16:30 (NIV)

³⁰ because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins.

Philippians 2:13 (NIV)

¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Prayer Points:

- Thank God for providing everything we need to be set free from the bondage of our sin through the cleansing blood of His son Jesus Christ
- Praise the Lord that we can rest assured of Salvation through His grace and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Pray for the Lords help in suppressing the Human tendency to handle everything yourself; ask Him for guidance in surrendering to His cleansing blood.

January 23rd: Daily Cleansing

Do you feel the need or take the time to go through a cleansing routine daily?

Many Christians are losing the battle because they're not being washed by the Word on a regular basis. It is only natural to feel condemned when we are not consistently living according to His Word as described in Romans 8:1.

Romans 8:1-2(NIV)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

Unfortunately many Christians have impure and immoral thoughts because they have allowed themselves to become conformed to this world instead of being transformed by the renewing of their minds as directed in Romans 12:2

Romans 12:2(NIV)

² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

There are simple things we can do that will help us renew our mind and live without condemnation. Reading a chapter or two in the Bible daily is a good start. Pick a verse to meditate on throughout the day and by the end of the day you will probably have that scripture memorized. Writing His word in our heart is a good first step toward transformation.

Deuteronomy 11:18 (NIV)¹⁸ Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NIV)

²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

Prayer Points:

- Ask God to place a burden in your heart to find time every day for Bible study and reflection.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to renew your mind through His Word as you meditate on the scriptures.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you keep your thoughts focused on things that are pleasing in His sight.
- Pray for the Lord to literally transform you through reading scripture as a part of your daily routine.

January 24th: Continuous Cleansing

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Throughout any given day, we may hear the enemy telling us that we will never make it into God's presence. We will hear that we are not good enough, or we don't read our Bible enough or we are not as involved in our church as we need to be. Often Satan will try to convince you that because of the sin that you have recently committed you will never measure up to God's expectation or have any value in His kingdom.

The devil works hard to make us feel that we are not qualified or clean enough to even pray to God. But the truth is, regardless of how you feel and what you have done, the blood of Jesus Christ is available to cleanse anyone from all sin.

Many Christians are constantly living in a cloud of guilt because the consciousness of their sins condemns them. Although the blood of Jesus is available to continuously cleanse them, they allow the enemy to remind and convict them of their past mistakes.

Jeremiah 33:8 (NIV) I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me.

The Bible says that we overcome the devil, the accuser of our brethren, by the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 12:11) Therefore we must remind ourselves that Jesus' blood is available to cleanse us from every sin. The devil cannot win when our faith is in the blood that cleanses us continuously.

Revelation 12:10-11 (NASB)¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. ¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

Prayer Points:

- Praise God that you can find peace, knowing that you are always forgiven in the continuous cleansing cycle of the blood of Jesus.
- Ask God to help you accept the fact that the payment of His blood for all that have sinned is the final, perfect, and only sacrifice you will ever need.
- Pray for the Lord to remind you of the cleansing sacrifice of His Son every time the devil tries to convict you of your past.
- Ask God daily to reveal anything you need to surrender to Him. If He brings anything to your mind, surrender it and move forward knowing that you are cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

January 25th:Renewal Basics

Do you give much consideration to the things you choose to think about as you go through the day? Every moment of every day we have the freedom to think about whatever we want. The thoughts that we choose to dwell on play a very important role in how we feel and what we say and do. Ultimately, our thinking determines the kind of person we become.

Proverbs 23:7a (NKJV)“For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.”

Real, lasting change is always a process that works from the inside out and it begins with our thoughts, then flows down into our heart and body, and finally shows outwardly in our behavior and relationships.

Stress has a tendency to cause us to react in negative ways; we may react with anger, or simply impatience. We don't have to give in to these and other pressures of life. We can choose to focus on Christ's love for us and we can choose to show His love to others.

Galatians 5:25(NASB)²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

In order to renew our Mind, Body and Spirit, we need to tap into God's power. We need to be prepared before we get into the trials and temptations that may be overwhelming. The best training program for a spirit filled lifestyle begins with renewing your mind regularly through God's Word.

Hebrews 4:12(NIV)¹² For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Matthew 4:4(NIV)⁴ Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

God's Word is powerful and very effective in renewing our minds and ultimately our whole being when we meditate on it, study it, memorize it, and pray through it with a receptive heart. This process equips us to apply His Truth specifically to our needs and struggles.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Lord to help you focus your thoughts on things that are pleasing in His sight.
- Pray for wisdom to dismiss thoughts that are not healthy before they impact your day.
- Ask God to help you deal with any stress that comes your way in a Christlike manner so that your lifestyle reflects the presence of Christ.
- Pray that the Heavenly Father would renew your mind each day with His wisdom and discernment.

January 26th: Renewal of your heart

God can take a heart that is broken, impure, or failed and turn it into a heart that is whole, pure, and hopeful. God wants to see us pure, so he wants to have an active role in renewing our heart and bringing order to the chaos of our life. All He asks of us is to submit to his sovereignty, humble ourselves before Him, and ask for His help.

The Lord wants to renew in us a steadfast spirit that is no longer chaotic or controlled by events, circumstances, or feelings. He desires to give us lives that are shaped by Him and by His Spirit flowing through us.

Psalm 51:10(NASB)

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

1 Corinthians 1:30(NASB)

³⁰ But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption

Philippians 2:13 (NASB)

¹³ for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

Do you need to renew your covenant with the Lord to seek Him with all your heart and soul?

Work through the questions that follow and honestly ask yourself if you exhibit these signs of a spiritually unhealthy heart.

- Do you have little hunger for the glory of God and true righteousness?
- Have you allowed idols of self, reputation, success, money, comfort, security, recreation, or image to take priority in your life?
- Do you feel you have nothing to repent from?
- Do you take pride in your religious accomplishments or those of your church?
- Are you no longer sensitive to God's still, small voice?
- Have you noticed that your heart has grown cold toward the salvation of the lost?
- Have you become complacent in your effort to make Christ known as the basis of your lifestyle?
- Do you at times rationalize areas of personal sin while maintaining the outward image of faithfulness?
- Can you think of some of your relationships that are characterized by hostility, unresolved differences, or coldness?
- Do you find that you spend a significant amount of your discretionary time watching television or participating in other activities of no eternal value?
- Would others say that you are more concerned with what you want than what God wants?
- Is your giving just a routine, a business transaction, or a box you need to check off every week?

Prayer Points:

- Ask the Heavenly Father to speak into your life, ask Him to create a new beginning, a new hope, and a renewed desire to live for Him.
- Ask God to make clear any areas of your life where He desires to work. Let Him know that you are willing to wait patiently for Him to show you His desires.
- Tell the Lord that it is your Heart's desire to come before Him in complete repentance in order that your Heart would be completely committed to Him.
- Pray that God would renew your heart and make a fresh start in your life and your relationship with Him.

January 27th: Renewal of the Body, Mind, and Spirit

In the often-fast pace of life, it is easy to get off balance trying to maintain a healthy and holy lifestyle. We will often find ourselves in situations where we do not feel like we have time or opportunity for a much-needed break. Finding time for renewal of the body, mind, and spirit will help us keep ourselves healthy both physically and spiritually.

The Apostle Paul prayed for the church at Thessalonica:

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NIV)²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God desires that we grow in our relationship with Him continually—to love Him with our whole body, soul, mind, and strength:

Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.

Perhaps it is time to take a spiritual inventory of your life:

- Does the time you spend in praise, intercession, and the study of God's Word lead others to know that He is your first and highest priority?
- Do you strive to have an ever-greater understanding of the character and work of the Lord?
- Do your daily activities and food choices reflect decisions that are pleasing to the Holy Spirit?
- Are you striving to live at peace with those around you?
- Do you create problems for yourself by taking on more than you can reasonably manage?
- Do you find that you are dealing with excess baggage and unproductive tasks that you cannot seem to let go of?
- Do you find that you hear God's voice less frequently or less clearly than you did in the past?
- Are you at peace with your relationship with Jesus Christ?

We find this reminder in the letter to the Romans, that when we spend time in renewal, we can be in touch with God's will for our lives:

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Prayer Points:

- Give your daily schedule to the Lord and pray that He will show you what your priorities should be.
- Ask for clarity in the things that He wants you to let go of that are part of your daily routine.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to refresh your mind, body, and spirit daily as you study and meditate on His Word.
- Ask the lord to adjust your desires so that your lifestyle reflects His perfect plan for your life.
- Pray for the Lord to make his voice clear to you each day as you strive to be transformed into His likeness.