

"Aquila and Priscilla"

CHRISTIAN LIVING

"Letter - 9"

DO I REALLY KNOW MYSELF?

Dearly Loved Friends,

This is a great time to think seriously about what kind of people we actually are. Are we satisfied concerning our spiritual condition? More importantly, is **God** pleased with us?

He tells us – various times in His *Holy Bible* – to *examine* ourselves.

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ Examine yourselves to see whether you are still in the Christian faith. Test yourselves! Don't you recognize that you are people in whom Jesus Christ lives? Could it be that you're failing the test? *GOD'S WORD to the Nations*

The Apostle Paul tells us to examine ourselves in preparation for The Lord's Supper / Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread:

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man {woman} *examine himself {herself}*, and so let him {her} eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he {she} who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself {to herself}, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. *NKJV*

Since God tells us to examine ourselves, we certainly want to do a really effective self-examination, so let's consider some ideas that can assist us. The first suggestion is to read from Psalm 51, written by King David, a man after God's own heart:

Psalm 51:1-4; 10-13

51 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

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

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight –
That You may be found just when You speak, **and** blameless when You judge.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast 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 uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. *NKJV*

Reading these verses before we begin taking our personal inventory can help us to "set the tone" in our thinking. Then we can begin to ask ourselves

some soul-searching questions, and seriously consider our answers!
Meditating concerning our thoughts about our lives up to the present time, can help us to face reality, and also help us make wise, beneficial and Godly decisions for the future – beginning today!

Some questions you may want to ask yourself:

My Walk With God

Should I honestly describe myself as:

A. A lethargic, dying Christian?

B. A passive, lukewarm Christian?

C. A fervent zealous brother/sister of Jesus, and a begotten child of our loving Father God?

Do I put God *first* in my life – *daily*? Do I revere God and walk in awe of Him?

Do I regularly ask God for wisdom in dealing with my problems – and with life itself?

Do I think about my relationship as a son or daughter of God, and do I meditate about my future in the Kingdom of God?

My Understanding of God's Word

From my Bible studies, do I see things about myself that need to be changed?

Do I *delight* in God's Word?

Do I love God now more than I did the last time I examined myself? ... and do I comprehend more about God, His ways, and His truth – including His loving wonderful happiness-producing laws and statutes?

My Living as a Christian

Am I more and more in control of what I feel, think, say and do?

Do I prayerfully ask God to help me – in love – never to offend others?

Am I able to keep my head (which has to do with real maturity), or do I often immediately retaliate?

Do I want my own *physical* rewards *now*?

My Spiritual Overcoming and Growth

Can I name three specific sins, harmful habits, and/or negative attitudes I am regularly working on overcoming?

Do I ever doubt God?

Do I compare myself with others?

Do I have true humility?

Is my environment at home prayerful and peaceful?
Do I honor my parents?
Am I a loving parent?
Do I love and honor my husband/wife?
Do I share my blessings with others?
Do I ask God daily to help me be a shining example of His Way of Life – as His representative?

Leaving Sin Behind Me

Have I increasingly given myself over to the pursuit of sensual pleasures (and the gratification of appetites) including self-indulgence in regard to reading materials, food, movies and videos, and the Internet – all things that I know are not pleasing to God?

What motivates me – vanity, jealousy, lust, and greed? Or - love from God by His Holy Spirit?

Am I still knowingly having “the works of the flesh” – “carnality” – in me?

Am I striving to have a “perfect heart” before God?

Have I lost ground in the kind of life I live? Have I fallen back into old bad habits?

Have I allowed any ungodly thing to partially crowd out God's Holy Spirit – or do I have more self-discipline now by the power of God's Holy Spirit to say “No” to myself concerning things I know are wrong?

Do I use my time wisely?

Has any grudge, resentment, or bitterness crept into me – and dug its heels into my mind?

Are there dark spots in my character?

Do I find it easy to misrepresent any truth to people because of the false idea that the end results somehow justify the means?

Am I ever guilty of spreading hurtful gossip, even if it is true?

Do I attempt to hold back others at my workplace – or otherwise – instead of helping to build them up and encourage them?

My Journey into God's Kingdom

As the weeks and months go by, am I finding it easier to *change* and *overcome* and therefore am I becoming a new creation, a new person, in Christ?

Do I often think of *God's Word*, and then apply it and benefit from it?

Do I now have more of God's Holy Spirit in me?

Can I list three “fruits of God's Holy Spirit” (Galatians 5:22-23) that are being developed in me?

Am I passing tests of faith – truly trusting God (instead of myself)?

Do I still look to God as my ultimate Healer (as is made clear by one of His Holy names)?

Is there more and more of “the mind of Christ” in me? Is Jesus actually “living in me”?

Am I practicing a "foot washing attitude" – following Jesus' example of humility and service to others?

Am I regularly asking God to give me an attitude – a spirit – of *love*?

Am I really learning to more and more love my fellow humans as I love myself? [Remember that *this* is the Second Great Commandment (Matthew 22: 36-40).]

Do I pray daily for other people?

Do I pray daily to really see myself as I actually am? (Read Psalm 139:23)

If I knew that I had only one year of human life remaining, would I put out more effort to live God's Ways?

Do I yet have any reservations about God's ways? ...and do I not yet really know that His ways are best for me – *always*?

Do I genuinely have a grateful *attitude* toward God – even when I'm having trials and sicknesses – as I understand more and more that He works *all things* together for good? (Read Romans 8:28).

Do I take the time to praise God daily several times a day?

My Repenting and Being Forgiven

Do I repent speedily on the very day I discover a new sin, or a revived sin? (Read Psalm 119:60).

Do I ask God daily to help me know continually what His will is for me, and am I consistently seeking that *His will*, not mine, be done – in *everything*?

It's important for me to gladly and joyfully remember that when I confess my sins to God, and truly and sincerely repent of them, I *WILL BE FORGIVEN!*

Lamentations 3:40-41

⁴⁰ Let us search out and *examine* our ways, and turn back to the LORD;

⁴¹ Let us lift our hearts and hands to God in heaven. NKJV

In addition, as King David did, it's vitally important to desire and to ask God to examine us!

Psalm 26:2-3

² *Examine me*, O LORD, and try me; Test my mind and my heart.

³ For Your loving-kindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth. NASU

We hope that these thoughts are useful as you examine yourself. May they help you have a much happier and productive Godly life!

In Christian love,

Aquila and Priscilla

P.S. We have found it valuable for us to think about the following scriptures – and hopefully so will you:

Psalm 139:1-6; 23-24

Psalm 119:1-8; 10-18; 33-35; 44-45; 47-48; 59-60; 65-68; 72-73; 76-77; 89-93; 97-100;
105-106; 111-112; 116-118; 124-127; 132-135; 137-138; 142; 151-152; 159-160;

162-165; 169-174.