

## Preparation for Prayer and Fasting Inventory of the Heart\*

Read the following verses and answer the questions for each one, spending time preparing your heart for a season of fasting and prayer where you seek God and His activity in your life. Spend a day or two and find some time to be alone with God and take these questions and let them get into your heart. Ask God that His Holy Spirit would search you with His holiness and reveal to you any sin. Then confess and repent of it and draw near to God.

1. *Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.* (1 Thess. 5:18 NLT)

Do I worry about anything? Have I forgotten to thank God for all things, the seemingly bad as well as the good? Do I neglect to give Him thanks for my breath, my health, and for life itself?

2. *Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than I might ask or think.* (Eph. 3:20 NLT)

Do I shy away from attempting to do things in the name of my heavenly Father because I fear I am not talented enough? Do feelings of inferiority keep me from my desire to serve God? When I do accomplish something of merit, do I choose to give myself, rather than God, the glory?

3. *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* (Acts 1:8 NLT)

Have I been hesitant to thank God for the miracles He has performed in my life? Have I believed it's good enough to live my Christianity in a casual manner and that it's not all that important to share the good news of my deliverance with others? Am I sharing the gospel? Am I involved in advancing the message of Christ in my region, in America, and across the world?

4. *Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.* (Rom. 12:3 NLT)

Am I overly proud of my accomplishments, my talents, my family? Do I have difficulty putting the concerns of others first? Do I have a rebellious spirit at the thought that God may want to change me and rearrange my thinking? Do I brag or boast to others about what I have? Do I swell up with pride when I receive compliments?

5. *Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as ill as all types of evil behavior.* (Eph. 4:31 NLT)

Do I complain, find fault, argue? Do I nurse and delight in a critical spirit? Do I carry a grudge against anyone? Do I speak unkindly about people when they are not present? Do I find that I'm often angry with myself? With others? With God?

Am I in harmony in all of my relationships? Am I willing to let it go and start over again? Am I right with everyone?

(See back for more...)

6. *Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.* (1 Cor. 6:19-20 NLT)

Am I careless with my body? Do I defile my body with unholy sexual acts? Do I overeat? Do I take care of my body? Do I desire to be fit physically so that I can serve God better?

7. *Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.* (Eph. 4:29 NLT)

Do I use language that fails to edify others, tell off-color jokes or stories that demean another person's race, habits, or culture? Do I condone these comments when guests are in my home or when my colleagues share them with me at work? Do I curse?

8. *Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.* (Rom 13:7-8 NIV)

Am I chronically late in paying my debts, sometimes choosing not to pay them at all? Do I charge more on my credit cards than I can honestly afford to pay? Do I neglect to keep honest income tax records? Do I inflate my financial worth? Do I get in business partnerships with unbelievers?

9. *Dear friends, I urge you... to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.* (1 Pet. 2:11 NIV)

Am I guilty of a lustful eye toward the opposite sex? Do I fill my mind with sexually oriented Internet sites, television programs, lewd movies, unsavory books and magazines? Their covers? Centerfolds? Especially when I sense no one is watching? Do I indulge in lustful activities that God's Word condemns, such as fornication, adultery, or perversion? Do I have relationships improperly on the Internet? Do I enter "chat rooms" I do not need to be in? Am I engaged in pornography in any way?

Am I participating in gambling or betting or playing the lottery in any way?

10. *Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.* (Col. 3:13 NIV)

Have I failed to forgive those who may have said or done something to hurt me? Have I written off certain people as not worthy of my friendship?

11. *Outwardly you look like righteous people, but inwardly your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness.* (Matt. 23:28 NLT)

Do I know in my heart that I am often not what people see? Am I possibly hiding behind being active in my church as a cover for my activities away from the body of Christ? Am I mimicking the Christian faith for social status, acceptance in my church or my community? Am I real?

12. *And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.* (Phil 4:8 NLT)

Do I enjoy listening to conversations that hurt others? Do I pass them on? Do I believe rumors or partial truths, especially about an enemy or a competitor? Do I choose to spend little or no time each day allowing God to speak to me through His Word?