

Establishing Trust

Step Ten - Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

In some ways step Ten is a continuation of Step Four. As we take continuing inventory, we're looking for any resurgence or even a hint of the old character defects or relationship dysfunctions. However, inventory taking is not always done in red ink as The 12 by 12 reminds us. Waking hours are usually well filled with things that are constructive - good intentions, good thoughts, and good acts are there for us to see. A gratitude list can be an effective part of your inventory. Four main areas for reflection in an inventory include **physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual.**

What is the current condition? What am I feeling? What have I been given today? What unmet needs do I have? How am I living within boundaries that protect both others and me? How am I welcoming God's guidance rather than living as my own God? What's right? What's wrong? What's helpful? What's harmful? How can we know? God has given us a lot of help in this regard in the Bible.

God has a plan for our life that is meant for satisfaction, meaning, and joy. God has provided safe and sure ways to proceed towards the goal, and live enriched by goodness and love through each step of the journey.

"Trust in the Lord and do good; live in the land and be safe. Seek your happiness in the Lord, and God will give you your heart's desire. Give yourself to the Lord; trust in God and God will help you." (From Psalm 37)

Throughout his life Jesus met and interacted with people who thought they knew God. They thought they were living their lives for God and yet they were the people Jesus denounced most strongly and acted against most severely. Jesus was angry with those who turned the Temple courts into a marketplace of unjust profit. People were forced to buy "approved" sacrificial animals at exorbitant prices. They also were required to exchange their currency for Temple currency at inflated rates. Jesus cleared the temple with a whip to demonstrate God's anger at those who abused the public trust and mocked holy worship.

Anger that is measured and authorized by God's purposes is justified. Sometimes this kind of anger can play an important role in our spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery. We may need to stand up to the abusive forces in our life and make changes that will set us free from their grip. We may need to stand in solidarity with brothers and sisters, acting on their behalf, at personal risk. Jesus gave himself to teaching God's values of honor, respect and honest dealings. He demonstrated this repeatedly through both action and word. As we give ourselves to the habits of life that demonstrate God's revealed values, God will stand by us. God will stand with us to clear those forces from our lives that held us down. Who do we stand with today? Those who seek profit, success and control on their own terms, or those who seek to live the values of their Creator?

My History As A Victim:

1. Where in my life does Jesus seem to be focusing my attention in order to help me clear ongoing wreckage I've taken on from people, places, or things?
2. In what specific areas is Jesus standing up for me and naming new value for me today?
3. What have I taken on from my past that I am now willing to allow God to clear out in order to live with dignity and respect as God intended me to live?

My Story of Victimizing:

4. What might Jesus be noticing in my life today that triggers his anger?
5. Jesus knows us to the core. What can he trust in us? What can he not trust?
6. When the chips are down can Jesus trust us to be: truthful? Kind? See things his way? Work hard? Take responsibility for our actions and attitudes? Give back to society? Try to learn first what God wants and then make our plans? Forgive when wronged? Lay down our lives for our friends? Keep commitments even when we don't feel like it? Admit and learn from our mistakes? Stick up for truth telling even if it costs?

My Life As One Who Lives For Justice:

7. What kinds of things concern God in life?
8. Am I concerned about the things that concern God? How would someone know I was concerned?
9. Jesus took a huge risk and stood up to the public authorities by doing an act that outraged them. What issues in my family, neighborhood, community or society might be those that are in need of my efforts?