Lesson 10

Spiritual Inventory Part 1

**Principle 4**: Openly examine and confess my hurts, hang-ups, and habits to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

*“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (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)*

**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 openly examining and confessing your hurts, hang-ups, and habits 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, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23 –24).

Did you know everyone has three different “characters”? The character we exhibit, the character we think we have, and the character we truly have. No doubt each one has good qualities and bad. 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 –13 Jesus tells us to pray, “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not 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 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!

*NOTE: The people you name in these areas we just covered will go in column 1 of your “Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 Inventory Worksheet.”*

1. **Who have you hurt?** How did you hurt them? You may have hurt them unintentionally. Maybe it was intentional.
2. **Have you tried to justify your bad attitude by saying it is “their fault”?**
3. **Who have you been critical of or gossiped about?** It isn’t that difficult to make a mountain out of a molehill. 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.”

*NOTE: The people you name in these areas we just covered 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. Personally, I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day.

What are the priorities in your life? Matthew 6:33 tells us what will happen if we make God our number-one priority: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Ask yourself the following questions regarding the priorities in your life:

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? Your pleasures?** Is it driven by serving God or is it driven by envy? If your pleasure has been found in the world, Proverbs 21:17 warns, “He who loves pleasure will become poor, whoever loves wine and olive oil will never be rich.” Is your pleasure now found in Jesus Christ? Psalm 16:11 tells us, “You make known to me the path of life, you will fill me with joy in your presence with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”
3. **What have been your priorities in your job? Friendships? Personal goals?** Were they just self-centered, self-serving?
4. **Who did your priorities affect?**
5. **What was good about your priorities?**
6. **What was wrong about them?**

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

**Your Attitude**

Ephesians 4:31 says, “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

Ask yourself the following questions regarding your attitude:

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.”
3. **Have you gotten angry and easily blown up at people?**
4. **Have you been sarcastic?** 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 tells us, “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with it’s practices.”

Ask yourself the following questions regarding your integrity:

1. **In what past dealings 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?

**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 God says, “Come now, let us settle the matter, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are crimson, they shall be like wool.” 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.*