

Preparing for the Journey to Holiness

Dear Saints,

There was a time in my life when I felt that my prayers were hitting a brick wall. I was having little or no effect on my own walk with the Lord or on the world around me. The Lord lead me to an encounter with Dr. Greg Frizzell and his book *Returning to Holiness*. This booklet is a result of that encounter.

The scriptures say that "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man will accomplish much. (James 5:16) It is incumbent on the Lord's children to stay in right relationship with Him, in order for Spiritual Revival to spring forth in the church.

It is my desire that the church be "a house of prayer for all nations". To be effective, we must be much with God, and we must be much not only with intercession, but introspection, to see if there be any hurtful way in us, and so that we can be lead in the everlasting way.

There are eight sections in this booklet, the first is a preparation for the journey, and the remaining seven are pathways to examination, cleansing and victory. I have often taken a week at a time and read one of the sections each day. It has been the source of much personal renewal and power in prayer. I challenge you to do the same, so that together we can pray for the church, the lost and the Kingdom.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He responded with the Word of God. Psalm 119 says, "I have treasured His word in my heart that I may not sin against you. The more of the Bible we treasure in our hearts, the stronger we will be to stand up against temptation and to have victory over the flesh, the world and the enemy. When you encounter an area of weakness, as revealed by the Holy Spirit, memorize appropriate scriptures that will help you have victory and to help you in your prayer life, not only for yourself, but for others also.

Together, lets seek God for what only He can do, and what He promises He will do when His people seek Him, repent, and call to Him.

Lord bless you in your journey to holiness.

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Psalm 66:18: If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear.

Isaiah 59:1-2: Behold, the LORD's hand is not so short that it cannot save; nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

2 Chronicles 7:14: And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Hosea 10:12: Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the LORD Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.

James 5:16: Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

1 John 3:3: And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Hebrews 12:14: Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

1 Peter 4:17: For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool."

1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalm 139:23-24: Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.

Romans 6:14: For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Galatians 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Colossians 2:6: Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.

Proverbs 28:13: He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:11: For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

Jeremiah 17:9: The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?

John 8:36: So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

1 Peter 5:8: Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Ephesians 6:11: Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

James 4:8: Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Jeremiah 29:13: You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.

Romans 8:29: For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

1 Thessalonians 5:23: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Promises

Psalm 119:49: Remember the word to Your servant, in which You have made me hope.

Faint and feeble

Isaiah 40:29: He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power.

Thirsting after Christ

Matthew 5:6: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Burdened with sin

Isaiah 43:25: "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."

Holding on to the end

Isaiah 54:10: "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My loving kindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken," says the LORD who has compassion on you.

Lost the sweet sense of the Savior's presence

Malachi 3:7: "Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 54:7: For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

Holiness

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

Ephesians 4:24: And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

1 Thessalonians 3:13: So that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Hebrews 12:10: For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

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Personal Reflections of Sins of Thought

Romans 12:2: And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

2 Corinthians 10:5: We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Ephesians 6:17: And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 9:14: How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Matthew 6:22: "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light."

Ephesians 4:23: And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

Colossians 3:2: Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Hebrews 10:22: Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

James 4:7: Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James 4:8: Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded.

Colossians 3:1-2: Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Matthew 22:37: And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."

John 15:7: "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

James 5:16 The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is. Sin begins in the heart and mind. We can only be as filled

with God as we are willing to be emptied of self.

Questions for reflection on Sins of Thought

- Do lustful, unclean thoughts frequently occupy your mind?
- Do you watch programs or movies that stimulate improper thoughts and feelings?
- Are you conscious of unclean thoughts or motives?
- Do you have wandering eyes?
- Do your affections and priorities often revolve around people and things more than Jesus?
- Are you more passionate about earthly things than spiritual things?
- Do you honestly get more excited about work, sports or recreation than about God's kingdom?
- To what or whom do you devote the majority of your thoughts and energy?
- Is Christ central in all your priorities, or does He occupy only a small corner of your thoughts and plans?
- Is it your habit to seriously read and study God's Word daily?
- Do you meditate on key verses or does God's Word have little place in your thoughts?
- Have you failed to write down key verses that speak to special needs in your life?
- Are you guilty of seeking God more for what He can do for you than out of genuine love for Him?
- Do you sense your thoughts are mixed with selfish desires rather than seeking God's glory?
- Are you aware of the desire to be noted and praised by people rather than mainly seeking God's pleasure?
- Are you unwilling to pray for God's will when it does not fit your plan?
- Does your love and worship decrease when things don't go your way?
- When you get disappointed, do you "cool off" toward God and church?
- In coming to worship, is your primary purpose to bow before God in utter repentance and obedience?
- Is your mind filled with holy fear and reverence for God?

- Have you engaged in off-color jokes or conversation?
- Has the filthiness of our society crept into your speech?
- Do you ever lie?
- Do you exaggerate to make yourself look better?
- Are you guilty of any form of cheating?
- Do you mislead people or institutions?
- Are you careful to follow through with promises, vows and commitments you make to God and others?
- Is your word your bond or are you somewhat unreliable? Do you frequently fall short in things you said you would do?
- If so, this reveals an integrity problem. God hates lying and inconsistency. Fully confess and renounce any patterns of untruthfulness or unreliability.
- Do you often gripe and complain about situations in your life?
- Do you fail to give thanks in all things and at all times?
- Are you filled with an attitude of gratefulness and praise or grumbling and complaining?
- Do you make excuses for your grumbling by saying, "I have good reason to complain?"
- Are you always looking on the dark sides of things?
- Do you trust God for supernatural joy or do you give in to murmuring and complaining?
If you will praise Him, God promises to give supernatural joy in spite of difficult circumstances. Be specific about ways you need to rejoice and give thanks.
- Are you guilty of critical, angry speech?
- Do you argue and fight with others?
- Do you tend to be irritable and cranky?
- Are you quick to raise your voice?
- Does your speech reflect an underlying anger and impatience with those around you?
- Do you speak unkindly to those in your family?
- Are you guilty of any form of gossip or slander of others?
- Do you speak evil of people behind their back?

Immediately confess and forsake these serious sins of speech.

Questions for Reflection on Sins of Speech

- Are you known as a peacemaker who strengthens church unity or are you often part of some contentious argument?
- Do you act like a "self-appointed" critic and judge to set everyone else straight?
- Are you quick to talk about the shortcomings of others?
- Do you increase the faith of your church by a positive attitude or do you tear it down by focusing on its imperfections?
- Are you quick to divide up and "take sides"? Do you tend to be a part of church cliques?
- Are you known as a complainer and one who is easily upset?
- Have you been critical and condemning of those with different tastes in music and worship style?
- Have you been critical or slanderous of Christian leaders?
- Do you fail to respect and honor those called to lead the church?
- Do you undermine their authority?
- Do you tend to "pick them apart" rather than give consistent encouragement and prayer support?
- Are there leaders or other believers with whom you've parted on angry terms?
- Do you tend to slander or mock other denominational groups, ministries or leaders who may not agree with you on every point?

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Personal Reflection On Self-Rule and Self-Reliance

Galatians 5:17-20: For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

Matthew 16:24-25: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

Romans 6:3-4: Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Isaiah 55:8: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

Hebrews 12:1: Let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

John 12:24: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Proverbs 17:3: The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests hearts.

Hebrews 4:12: For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2 Corinthians 12:10: For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Philippians 3:13-14: But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 12:9: And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."

John 15:16: "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain."

1 Corinthians 1:29: So that no man may boast before God.

Questions for reflection on Self-Rule and Self-Reliance:

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

How to die to self: Have no to thoughts, attitudes or actions that you know are of the flesh. Say "yes" to

an action or spiritual service your natural flesh would reject. You deny self and receive victory by "trusting" in His death and resurrection working through you.

Romans 6:12-14: Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

- Has God told you to do something and yet you've tried to ignore Him?
- Has God told you to do something you've yet to do?
- Is God telling you to stop something you're still doing?
- Is there some point you know you are resisting God's voice?
- Have you been unwilling to fully lay family, relationships or work on the altar of surrender?
- Has God asked you to let go of something that's really not an overt sin, but it is a hindrance?

• Do you become defensive and run from God's conviction and breaking?

Many people avoid times of deep searching and cleansing before God. They had rather "coast" spiritually and assume they need little further breaking. They foolishly feel they have reached such spiritual maturity that they need not worry about deeper cleansing or holiness. The apostle Paul certainly didn't have that attitude (Philippians 3:13-14). Have you settled into a spiritual "coast" zone? Perhaps you really don't want to grow if it calls for any form of discomfort or seeking after God. Do you resent physical or emotional hardships rather than embrace them as opportunities to experience Christ more fully?

- Have you been wasting your sorrows by not seeking God's lessons within them?
- Do you rejoice in your sufferings as commanded in James 1:2, which says: "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."

Immediately confess any tendency to complain and resist the breaking God allows in your life.

- Have you actually placed greater focus on your training or natural abilities than deep daily cleansing and fullness of the Holy Spirit?
- Are you often guilty of being prepared mentally but not spiritually?
- By comparison, does your church put more focus on strate-

gies, methods and programs than fervent prayer and deep repentance?

• In what new ways are you willing to take up your cross and follow Jesus?

• Are there areas in which you've resisted God's methods of bringing you to brokenness and humility?

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Personal Reflections Sins of Relationships

Matthew 5:23-24: "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."

Matthew 6:14-15: "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

Matthew 18:35: "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

Matthew 5:28: "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Hebrews 10:25: Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Ephesians 5:23: For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

Ephesians 5:25: Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

1 Peter 3:7: You husbands, in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will be heard.

Ephesians 6:4: Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Matthew 18:6: "But whoever causes one of these little one| who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to drowned in the depth of the sea."

Proverbs 5:18: Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth.

Proverbs 5:15-17: Drink water from your own cistern fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone and not for strangers with you.

Questions for Reflection on Sins of Relationships

• Is there anyone or any situation about which you harbor the slightest bitterness or resentment?

- Have you secretly resented God for allowing some painful situation in your life?
- Have you “cooled off toward God because He disappointed you in some manner?

Make a definite decision to harbor no bitterness against anyone. Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling.

Are you involved in any improper relationships? Improper relationships involve many things besides physical immorality. Ask God to reveal any relationship that is improper or out of balance.

- Do you neglect regular fellowship and meaningful service through your church?
- Are you a spectator rather than a participant in God's work?
- Do you consistently receive, but seldom give?
- Have you become a permanent visitor who never seems to plug in and serve God?
- Are your family relationships consistent with God's Word?

Husbands

- Have you taken responsibility to lead your family in devotions and prayer?
- Do you set a loving atmosphere of spiritual nurture and training?
- Do you discipline your children with consistency and love?
- Do you consistently talk to your children about spiritual values?

Wives

- Do you ever treat your husband with dishonor and disrespect?
- Do you often point out his weaknesses and faults?
- Do you patiently forgive and treat him kindly in spite of his shortcomings?
- Do you ignore his needs and desires? Have you grown careless with your health and appearance?
- Do you have a rebellious spirit toward him?
- Have you done all you can do to bring your attitude in line with the pattern God has set for you in Scripture?
- Is your attitude one of thanksgiving and love or complaining and anger?

Parent

- Do you model excitement and joy about worshiping God?
- Do you consistently express love for Christ's Church or a negative complaining attitude? Do you lovingly and consistently communicate with each other? Do you consistently take time to talk to your children?
- Do you really listen when your children talk to you? Do you respond with love and understanding or quickly become angry?
- Do you model moral purity by the things you talk about?

- Have you demonstrated holiness by the things you watch or read?
- Have you consistently communicated God's standards concerning sex and marriage to your children?
- Do you communicate in a way that reveals understanding about their temptations and struggles? Have you been approachable and loving? Do you consistently model honesty and respect for others?
- Do you break speed laws or cheat on taxes? Have you demonstrated the ability to readily admit your own sins and failures? Do you readily admit your sins or do you make excuses?

Children or Teenagers

- Do you disobey your parents?
 - Do you often ignore their guidance?
 - Have you treated your parents with disrespect or anger?
- Disrespect toward parents is a very serious sin before God. You cannot be right with God if you consistently disrespect your parents.**

Adults

We too must ask whether we are honoring our elderly parents:

- Do you neglect to call and visit your aged parents?
- Do you neglect your mother or father by failing to give them consistent time and attention?
- Are you neglecting them emotionally or financially?
- Do you fail to help them with needs around their home?
- Are there unresolved harsh words or feelings between you and your parents?
- Have you truly sought to make it right?

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Personal Reflection on Sins of Commission

Transgression is any act of breaking Gods' law or doing something God forbids.

Ephesians 5:5: For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Ephesians 5:12: For it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17: Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

Exodus 20:2-3: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me."

Matthew 7:24: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

Proverbs 13:11: Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles, but the one who gathers by labor increases it.

Romans 14:23: But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

Romans 7:18: For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Isaiah 30:21: Your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

Psalms 56:4: In God, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?

Questions for Reflection on Sins of Commission

- Have you committed any form of sexual immorality, uncleanness or perversion?
- Do you ever watch television or movies that feature immorality and violence?
- Do you make excuses by saying, "There's nothing else to watch?"
- Do you dress in ways designed to incite lust from the opposite sex?

- Are you in the habit of reading things that are suggestive or unclean?
- Do you watch today's filthy talk shows that regularly joke about immorality and perversion?
- Do you fund Hollywood's poison by going to questionable movies or purchasing videos?
- Have you abused your body through any form of immorality or excess?
- Do you sin against God's temple by harmful habits such as alcohol, smoking or overeating?
- Is any form of drug abuse a part of your life?
- Have you been so enslaved to food that fasting is something you make excuses to avoid?
- Have you transgressed God's first commandment by placing other things ahead of God?
- Have other things or people crowded out your worship and service of God?
- Do you worship and serve God only if everything else is done first?
- Has your work and financial gain actually become your god?
- Have you voted for politicians who promote ungodly principles just because they're in your political party? If so, you have placed human politics over God and Scripture.
- Do you spend far more time on the Internet or watching television than in Bible-reading and prayer?
- Have you placed your family ahead of God?
- Does recreation or some hobby take precedence over God's service?
- If all church members followed your example of service, how strong would be the ministry of your church?
- Would there be a Sunday or Wednesday evening service if everyone attended like you? Would there be an outreach or prayer ministry?
- Who or what is really number one in your life?
- Have you been honest to fully tithe your time and talents to God?
- Have you been honest in calculating your tithe or have you tithed from the leftovers rather than the first fruits of your income?

◦ Jesus Christ cannot be Lord of your life if He is not Lord of your finances. Have you figured the tithe to the penny but been stingy with any offerings beyond the tithe?

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◦ Would you be willing to give far more than the tithe if God leads you?

◦ If gambling is a good personal investment, why are the casinos getting rich?

◦ If gambling is a healthy practice, why do countless thousands become addicted to it?

◦ Have you been deceived into thinking gambling is just a harmless recreational activity? Remember friend, your money is not your own, it is God's. If you have engaged in any form of gambling, immediately confess and forsake this serious misuse of God's money.

◦ Do you ever consult horoscopes, psychics or any other form of occult guidance?

◦ Have you allowed new-age philosophy to slip into your mind by reading self-help books that exalt self rather than Christ?

◦ Do you read materials that promote self-exaltation rather than humble surrender to Jesus Christ?

◦ Do you have books in your home that promote humanism or new age philosophy?

◦ Do you allow your children to watch programs that promote new-age ideas?

Compromise is just another form of idolatry. Especially in coming days, believers will be put to severe tests by an ever more perverse society.

◦ Are you prepared to stand for God's truth no matter what the cost?

◦ Do you rationalize and make excuses for rejecting biblical standards?

◦ When the pressure is on, do you ignore Scripture and go with the crowd?

◦ If God convicts you of compromise, please ask for His supernatural power to stand strong.

◦ Is there something in your life about which you have to constantly work to convince yourself it's right?

◦ Is there something about which you know you don't have peace, yet you still haven't made any changes?

◦ Do you lack perfect peace about the amount of time and energy you are giving to work or recreation? To financial gain? To personal appearance? To the opinions of others? Though these things are not technically wrong, you sense your level of emphasis is wrong.

Personal Reflection of Sins of Attitude

Ezekiel 36:26: "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

2 Chronicles 7:14: "And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Proverbs 8:13: "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate."

1 Peter 5:5: **And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**

James 4:11: Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.

Matthew 13:58: And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

Isaiah 26:3: "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in You."

1 Peter 3:4: But let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

Romans 5:5: And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearing through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Proverbs 3:27: Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.

Hebrews 13:5: Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU."

1 John 2:15: Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2:16: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Questions for Reflection on Sins of Attitude

God is deeply focused on the attitude of our hearts.

The root of all sin is a lack of fervent love for Christ. The very root of sin is the love and worship of self over God.

Psalms 51:17: "A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

- Do you think of yourself as quite spiritual?
- Do you often criticize and judge others?
- Are you frequently trying to set others straight?

• Do you spend daily time allowing God to deeply search your life or do you feel you need little cleansing?

• Are you truly broken and contrite over your shortcomings or do you think, "Oh well, no one is perfect?" Are you desperately hungry to see a mighty move of God or are you somewhat complacent? Do you come across as having a "holier-than-thou" attitude?

If you feel that you have nearly "arrived" and need little growth, you are guilty of the worst form of spiritual pride. God hates self-righteousness and spiritual complacency. Immediately confess and forsake the sin of pride. Believe Christ for a spirit of genuine humility and contriteness of heart.

Philippians 2:3-4: Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

• Do you tend to draw attention to yourself? Do you often promote yourself and put others down? Are you highly competitive and desire to win and be number one at all costs?

• Do you seek to be the center of attention?

• Do you usually think mostly in terms of your own needs and desires?

• Is your attitude such that you feel you are better and smarter than others?

• Do you have an inordinate need to be noticed and praised by people?

• Do you tend to surround yourself with "status symbols" that flaunt wealth or appearance?

James 2:1, 4: My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism ... have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

It is extremely important to reject sins of prejudice and partiality. It is profoundly wrong to pre-judge and de-value other persons.

• Do you associate only with those very similar to yourself?

• Do you tend to look down on people who are not as financially affluent?

• Conversely, do you resent those who have more money?

• Do you closely associate only with your own race or culture?

• Are you suspicious of those from a different race, culture or background?

• Do you think you are too good to befriend someone who is physically unattractive? Do you tend to resent people more physically attractive or gifted than yourself?

• Have you sought to reach out to other culture groups or have you settled into a social "comfort zone"? Has your church placed too high a premium on reaching certain classes of people? Though we can disguise it with rationalizations,

we must reject any tendency to avoid certain segments of society. Have you placed an inordinate emphasis on reaching the more affluent?

Hebrews 11:6: But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Unbelief is one of the most deadly sins a believer can commit. Unbelief immediately short-circuits God's power in the believer's life.

- Are you often filled with more doubt than faith? Do you tend to worry and fret rather than trust God? Are you fully resting in God's promises or are you frequently anxious?
- Have you excused the sin of unbelief by claiming to be a born worrier?
- Do you excuse your doubt by saying, "I have good reason to worry?"
- Have you let disappointments weaken your faith and prayer life?

A pattern of worry is not just a weakness, it is a willful sin against God. God promises perfect peace to those who choose to trust rather than fear (Isaiah 26:3).

Ephesians 4:2: With all lowliness and kindness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.

The primary mark of a Spirit-filled believer is a kind, loving spirit. The primary mark of a carnal believer is a critical, angry attitude.

- Do you have a kind, gentle spirit or are you argumentative and contentious?
- Are you often critical and harsh with people?
- Are you often insensitive to the feelings and needs of others?
- Do you tend to look for reasons to pick people apart? Are you quick to get angry and speak your mind?
- Do others characterize you as having a gentle and quiet spirit?
- * Are you quick to point out the weaknesses of others? Do you make excuses by saying, "I can't help it, that's just my personality?"

1 Corinthians 13:4a,7: Love suffers long and is kind, it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

A forgiving attitude is a primary mark of someone right with God. However, it is all too common for people to be highly religious, yet possess a judgmental, unloving spirit.

- Do you respond with forgiveness and love when someone hurts you?
- Do you make a point of actively doing good to those who have done you evil?
- Are you carrying an internal catalogue of grievances against friends or family members?
- Do you brood on the ways a spouse or child has disappointed you?
- Do you withhold your kindness because they don't deserve it?
- Do you give loved ones the "silent treatment?"

- Have you determined to love family and friends with Christ's unconditional love?

1 Timothy 6:6: But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment.

- Do you barely tithe and yet pay enormous interest to creditors?
- In purchases, have you been motivated more by greed than seeking God's direction?
- Does your financial history reflect Biblical principles of low debt and modest living?
- Has your debt caused you to miss payments and thus damage your witness?
- Do you lust for things?
- Would you be willing to live with less in order to embrace more God-centered patterns for your money?
- Have you fervently prayed about financial decisions or simply gone with the materialism of the world?
- Can you truly say "Jesus Christ is in control of my desires and finances?"

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Personal Reflection on Sins of Omission

James 4:17: Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Remember, you will never be spiritually stronger than the strength and quality of your personal time with God.

Acts 1:8: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.

Ezekiel 3:18: "When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die, and you do not warn him ... his blood I will require at your hand.'"

1 Peter 3:15: But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

Mark 8:38: "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father."

Romans 6:14: For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

James 4:6-8: But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Luke 12:48: From everyone who has been given much, much will be required.

2 Timothy 1:6: For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

Jeremiah 29:13: "You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

James 5:16: Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Philippians 2:13: For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Questions for Reflection on Sins of Omission

John 15:4-5: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

- Do you spend significant time in daily Bible reading and prayer?
- Have you been too busy to give God significant time?
- Have you neglected to abide in a close relationship with Christ?

- Have you made a prayer list of people you consistently encounter in your daily course of life?
- Do you pray for them on a regular basis?
- Do you seek to show them kindness?
- Do you witness to them about Christ?
- Do you leave Gospel tracts in places you frequent?

- Have you failed to enroll in one of today's excellent witness-training programs?

Ephesians 4:8: Wherefore he says, when he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.

- Do you continually look for ways to serve God or are you content to sit and be served?

- Do you make excuses why you cannot serve God through your church?

- Do you refuse to serve unless it is a high profile job?
- Have you been willing for everyone else to do the work while you remain a spectator and receive the ministry of others?

- Are you lazy and irresponsible in the jobs you have taken?

- Have you failed to exercise your gift with all diligence?

- Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace.

- Hebrews 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

- Have you identified your spiritual strongholds and claimed God's full victory?

- Have you determined to overcome the sins that keep cropping up or do you put up with them?

- Do you make excuses for sin by calling it a "weakness" or a "personality trait?"

- Has Satan deceived you to believe you cannot be free?

- Have you failed to fully resist Satan until you experience complete spiritual victory?

- Are you too complacent and spiritually lazy to push forward into full victory?

Luke 12:48: To whom much is given, much is required

James 3:1: Let not many of you become teachers, my brothers, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment.

- Have you grown lax in the exercise of your responsibility in Christian service?

- Do you preach and teach the whole counsel of God or focus only in a narrow range?
- Have you preached boldly against all sin or become timid through fear of men?
- Are you afraid to preach about controversial issues such as abortion, divorce and homosexuality?
- Are you doing your very best or have you begun to cut corners?
- Have you harbored any competition or jealousy toward other pastors?
- Have you harbored any bitterness or resentment toward your church members?
- Do you resent low pay or lack of appreciation?
- Do you consistently practice what you preach or teach?
- Was there a time you were more dedicated and zealous in your calling than now?
- Are you steadfast and immovable or do you tend to be inconsistent?
- Are you constant "in and out of season" or do you become easily discouraged?
- Have you failed to lead your church in aggressive soul winning and missions involvement?
- Do you fail to serve with diligence because your position is not as glamorous as the position of others?
- Have you in any way viewed your church as a stepping stone to a "better position"?
- Are you a true shepherd or are you a hireling?
- Are you fervently seeking God for more of His daily presence and power?
- Have you failed to embrace deepening levels of prayer and fasting?
- Do you resist the idea of any type of prayer that is costly or protracted?
- James 1:23-24:** For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholds himself, and goes his way and straightway forgets what manner of man he was.
- Do you often sense God speaking, yet you tend to delay obedience? You don't actually tell God no, but you put off your obedience.
- Do you consistently fail God in the same old ways?

- Are there specific areas in which you never seem to make any progress?

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