



How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

Oh, that You would slay the wicked, O God! Depart from me, therefore, you bloodthirsty men. For they speak against You wickedly; Your enemies take Your name in vain. Do I not hate them, O LORD, who hate You? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

- Psalm 139:17-24

Assemblies

Sunday Morning 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

Elders

Tom Brown 502-921-2778
Laymon Byers 502-957-3627
John Smith 502-231-5341

Evangelists

Ron Halbrook 502-955-1748
halbrook@insightbb.com

Steven F. Deaton 502-543-9686
sfdeaton@insightbb.com

Phone: 502-957-5115

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Like Me?

The Bible tells us to examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5). We must take a look at ourselves to see if we are serving God or not. We do this by looking at the “perfect law of liberty” (Jas. 1:25). If we are falling short, a correction needs to be made. If we are doing well, we must guard against being complacent about it. The following questions will be asked to help us examine ourselves.

What if everyone studied like me? Do I study the Bible? How often? We know Bible study is needed to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:18). We are to desire the Word as a newborn babe desires milk (1 Pet. 2:2). So, if everyone studied like me, how strong would the church be?

What if everyone prayed like me? We are to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thes. 5:17). It helps relieve us of anxiety (Phil. 4:6, 7). Prayer is a means of strength, wisdom, and forgiveness (Heb. 4:16; Jas. 1:5; Acts 8:22). How often do I pray? If others were as prayerful as me, would they be closer or further away from God?

What if everyone attended services like me? Gathering for worship stirs us up to love and good works (Heb. 10:24, 25). It gives us the opportunity to commune with God in a special way (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 10:16). If others attend as often as I do, would there be a worship service every Sunday? Would there be a need for Bible classes on Wednesday?

What if everyone had the same desire to go to heaven like me? Our overriding concern in life is to be to go to heaven when we die (Phil. 3:14). Our sights are to be set on heavenly things (Col. 3:1, 2). What is my level of determination? If others are like me, will they go to heaven?

What if everyone was as concerned with righteous living like me? Jesus said to

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hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5:6). We are to cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light (Rom. 13:11-14). If everyone was just as moral as I am, would they walk in fellowship with God (1 Jn. 1:5-7)?

What if everyone was concerned with souls like me? Jesus told His disciples to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). Christians “went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4). If others took as many opportunities to teach people as I do, would there be a congregation? Would souls be added to the Lord?

What if everyone had faith in God and Christ like me? Without faith, it is impossible to please Him (Heb. 11:6). Without faith, we will die in our sins (Jn. 8:24). If everyone believed in God and trusted in Christ like me, would there been men and women of faith? Could Hebrews 11 be written today?

What if everyone was convicted of truth like me? The Word of God is the truth (Jn. 17:17). That truth is what saves us and gives us strength to face temptation (Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:22, 23). If others were convicted just like me, would anyone resist temptation? Would they be saved and have the hope of heaven? Or, would the world be filled with doubters?

Men are not the standard either collectively or individually. However, there is a principle of following those who follow Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). The way we live will have an impact on others around us. If I am not living right, I will not be an influence for good, but for evil. In other words, we are working everyday on influencing others to be like us. So, we need to examine ourselves and make it our goal to persuade, by word and deed, as many people as we can to go to heaven. And, thus, living a life of faith, you can say you hope others are “like me.”

- Steven F. Deaton

“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?
It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify
your Father in heaven.”

- Matt. 5:14, 16

“But I Want You To Know”

Paul wrote, “But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel” (Phil. 1:12). At this time Paul was in prison for preaching the faith. He had done no wrong, robbed no man, or rebelled against any government. He simply strove to save men’s souls through preaching the gospel. Still, he was jailed.

In such circumstances, many men would not care about the souls of those around them. They would write letters complaining about the conditions of their captivity, restrictions on freedom, or plans for revenge on their enemies. But, unlike others, Paul continued to do the Lord’s will. He taught as many as he could.

We need to be like Paul when we find ourselves in similar situations. Bad things happen to us all. Rather, than being filled with bitterness and resentment, let us be determined to maintain our faith in God and help others obey Jesus.

Joseph is another good example. He was betrayed by his own brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused by his master’s wife, and jailed (Gen. 37, 39). Every time things seemed to be going his way—favor of his father, rule in his master’s house—life seemingly turned against him. Yet, Joseph kept serving God and man. In the end, he was abundantly blessed.

We may be attacked by our enemies or betrayed by our friends. At such times it is easy to give up and turn from serving God. The danger of being angry at the world is high. However, we need to see that something good can come of it all: an opportunity to teach the lost; an elevation in life; a chance to help the unfortunate.

Everyone faces adversity. We need to make a decision how we are going to handle it. Will we grow weary or press on? The answer will determine our happiness in this life, and at least in part, our destiny in the next.

- Steven F. Deaton

A man’s pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

- Prov. 29:23