

Biblical Marriage & Family Self-Assessment

This is a **self-assessment**, with the aim of helping each of us fulfill Jesus' command in **Matthew 7:3-5** that we examine ourselves carefully before we ask others to change.

So, it's important to approach these scriptures examining yourself **not for who you want to be**, but with awareness of **how you are currently experienced** by the other people in your family. This invitation to self-examination is meant to be used in your devotional times as food for thought, prayer, journaling, memorization, and guidance in Christian growth.

These passages will humble each of us if we are honest with ourselves, because Jesus is the only person who has ever fulfilled them perfectly. **God's calling in his children's lives is impossibly high: "You therefore must be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48, Jesus is speaking). This is why we need a Savior. A Christian's life is one of ongoing repentance of sin and growth in righteousness.**

Some issues, though, can make walking out biblical truth especially difficult for followers of Christ:

- 1) Unresolved trauma
- 2) Anxiety and/or depression
- 3) Unhealthy habit patterns from the past
- 4) Ignorance of what scripture teaches about relationships
- 5) Deliberate sin (which calls the person's profession of faith into question)

The first three of these issues can be successfully worked through in biblical mental health counseling. Active involvement in a healthy church can help with number four (and with number three if ongoing, frequent mentoring by biblically mature Christians is available). God alone can convict of deliberate sin. But, healthy boundary setting learned in counseling can help protect vulnerable family members.

Active abuse, whether verbal, physical, or sexual, calls for immediate intervention.

We all have learning and growing to do:

"Not that I have already obtained this (*i.e., complete oneness with Christ*) or am already perfect, but **I press on** to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own." Philippians 3:12 (Paul is speaking)

“Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.” Proverbs 9:8-9 (Solomon is speaking)

“The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge...” Proverbs 15:14a (Solomon)

“The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.” Proverbs 15:31 (Solomon)

“Whoever ignores instruction despises himself, but he who listens to reproof gains intelligence.” Proverbs 15:32 (Solomon)

“Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.” Proverbs 3:7-8 (Solomon)

“Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” Proverbs 26:12 (Solomon)

“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.” Proverbs 28:26 (Solomon)

“Never be wise in your own sight.” Romans 12:16b (Paul is speaking)

Thought Question: Why do we need multiple warnings in scripture against being wise in our own sight?

“Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.” Psalms 25:8-9 (David is speaking)


“The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor.” Proverbs 15:33 (Solomon is speaking)

“When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.” Proverbs 11:2 (Solomon)


“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.” James 3:17 (James, Jesus’ half-brother, is speaking)

Prayerfully use the following scriptures to follow Jesus' command (Matthew 7:3-5) to examine ourselves and work on our own growth before we ask others to change:

- 1) Taking a careful look at your behavior, how do your spouse, children, or other family members currently experience you in relation to these things?
- 2) Again, taking a careful look at your behavior, how are you doing in your relationship with God concerning issues that may not yet be apparent to your family members?

 **Jesus, to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7:12:**
“...whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

 **Jesus, to his disciples the night before his crucifixion, John 15:12**
“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”

 **Paul, to the Corinthian Christians, 1 Corinthians 13:1-8a**
“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
“And if I have a prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
“If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
“**Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude.**
“**It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;**
“**it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.**
“**Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.**
“**Love never ends.**”

 **Peter, to the persecuted Christians under Nero's rule, 2 Peter 1:3-9:**

“May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

“For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.”

 **Paul, to the Galatian Christians, Galatians 5:19-24**

“Now **the works of the flesh are evident:** sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

 **Jesus, to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:21-26**

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But **I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.** So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and

the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.”

 **James, to the churches scattered by persecution, James 1:19-20:**

“Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

 **David, Psalm 4:4-5**

Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.

 **Paul, to the Christians at Ephesus, Ephesians 4:29:**

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

 **Paul, to the Christians in Ephesus, Ephesians 4:31-32:**

“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

 **Jesus, to his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:27-30**

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed

adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.”

 **Paul, to the Philippian Christians, Philippians 4:8-9**

“Finally, brothers, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **just**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **commendable**, if there is **any excellence**, if there is **anything worthy of praise**, **think about these things.**

“What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

 **Paul, to the Christians in Rome, Romans 12:9-21**

“Let love be genuine.

Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

Love one another with brotherly affection.

Outdo one another in showing honor.

Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another.

Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly.

Never be wise in your own sight.

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’

To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”