

Deep Cleaning

The last couple of weeks we've had sermons on following Jesus, and follow me as I follow Jesus. And one of the key components last week was that if you are going to imitate Jesus so that others can imitate you, you have to know Him.

If you are going to imitate Him, it's not possible to do it accurately unless you know Him intimately. Do you know His heart, how He feels and thinks, and do you know what He would do and how He would do it? You'll only know those things by spending time with Him in worship, prayer, reading the bible and meditating on it....without distraction....

The church lacks this intimacy with God. Sometimes Christians say things that they don't actually mean. Like I want to know God more, yet they spend no time seeking Him. I think what often happens is that even though we would TELL someone otherwise....we really think we are good as we are....."I'm not where I should be but praise God I'm not where I used to be"

Picture your life like carpet in a high traffic area. Every time someone walks on it, it accumulates dust and dirt.....actually just being there, it accumulates dust. It may even look pretty good, but deep down, it's dirty and needs a cleaning.

You can vacuum it when it looks dirty, when people are coming over, when you want it to look good. But did you get it all? It is actually clean or did you just make it look good for a moment?

Have you ever had a demo with some high dollar vacuum cleaner? Where they vacuum your carpet with your vacuum, then in the same area, they use the one they are selling and show you how much dirt is still in the carpet? It's amazing what's still in there! Deep down it's still pretty dirty.

So is the human heart....On the surface, you might look pretty good. You know can talk the talk. You know the scriptures, you can pray, you are a nice person....but deep down you are still pretty dirty.

See any good carpet has some kind of stain resistant. It protects the carpet from major stains and visually clean. But you can't just trust the stain resistant to keep the carpet clean and never vacuum or give it a deep cleaning with a carpet scrubber. It has to be maintained.

So goes the human heart. You have a stain resistant....the blood of Jesus that was shed to cleanse your spirit. But you can't just have that protection, that assurance of salvation and then do nothing to maintain it! There's regular dust and dirt that needs vacuumed and might even need a seasonal deep cleaning!

The problem is, you probably don't want that Kirby salesman to show you how much dirt is still in the carpet.....just like you probably don't want God to show you how much dirt is still in your heart....

When is the last time you talked to God in the way David did in Psalm 139?

Psalm 139:23-24 (NKJV)

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

This is a dangerous prayer. Not dangerous as in going to cause you harm, dangerous as in it could be hazardous to your will. God will reveal things to you that maybe you don't believe are even possible. He will convict you of things that you "like" and quite frankly don't want to deal with.

It's not a "safe" prayer. We like safe prayers. "Lord, bless me....protect me.....help me....but search me? I don't know about that!"

We already know that God is all knowing, right? Even earlier in the Psalm, David tells God he has searched him and knows him. In 1 John 3:20, John says "God knows everything".

Psalm 139:23a (NKJV)

Search me, O God, and know my heart;

Why would we ask God to do something like this? He already knows what He'll find....

Because it's not for Him, it's for you. It's so He can show YOU what He finds there. No single person has a "good heart" without Jesus. It doesn't matter how much good they do or how good they seem. There's not one that is good except for God. Any and all goodness we have is from Him.

Saying someone has a "good heart" is just comfort food for the soul. It might make you feel good but that doesn't mean it's good FOR you!

Jeremiah 17:9-10 (NKJV)

9 "The heart is deceitful above all things,
And desperately wicked;
Who can know it?
10 I, the Lord, search the heart,
I test the mind,
Even to give every man according to his ways,

According to the fruit of his doings.

You see we can look at the heart, especially our own, and we can be deceived. The heart is a liar. Don't do what you feel is right in your heart, do what seems right in your spirit! Your heart will cause you to lie....you'll lie to others and lie to yourself.

If you trust your heart you'll tell yourself that your sin isn't so bad. I've it under control. It's just a little. This is the last time. Maybe God didn't see this one.....ALL LIES!

When you ask God to search you and know your heart, it's not a revelation for Him, it's for YOU. You are saying "I don't trust myself, I need You to reveal my delusions, my self-deception, my false hopes.....See all that is within me because I can't"

Have you ever seen in a movie where a parent will ask a kid if they have drugs in their room? The kid says no (even though they do and they know it). They say "go ahead and look", thinking they have it hidden where it can't be found. Then the parent finds it...every time.

It's kind of how it is with God. You have junk hidden in your heart. Some you know is there and some you don't. But you KNOW that if He looks, He'll find some junk. Ask Him to search you and reveal these things to you. This gives God the opportunity to show you some things about yourself which can bring you into a more intimate relationship with Him.

Psalm 139:23b (NKJV)

Try me, and know my anxieties;

Remember, this is a deep cleaning....God, search me, know my heart. Then TRY ME? This would be the result of that heart inspection. Testing....Don't we hate trials and testing?

This is a critical step in the deep cleaning process. I think we believe that "Try me" means "cause me trouble". But the purpose of a trial is to prove something. Remember your deceitful heart....you know the one that God has to search because it's a liar? If He was to just simply tell you what He found, you wouldn't believe Him.

Try me..... this is where God proves to you, what He found in your heart....words aren't enough, we've got to see it. If God found gossip in your heart, the next thing coming your way is a big fat juicy secret. If He found lust in your heart, get ready for an attractive woman to cross your path. If He found rage, get ready to have something happen that will make want to flip out!

Try me means prove it! Show me that these things are in my heart! And He will....(probably already has) then once you experience it, and recognize it, you hit your knees and repent, ask God to forgive you and help you through it. Get with someone that will pray with you!

Search me, try me, and know my anxieties. These are your thoughts. The uneasiness of your mind. Make known to me my worries and fears. Make known to me what I think about, what passes through my mind, what occupies my imagination and memory.

What are your anxious thoughts? What makes you uneasy? What makes you worry?

The things we are most anxious about just might reveal where we trust God the least!

- If you're anxious about your job or finances, you might not be trusting God to be your provider
- If you're anxious about your health, you might not be trusting God to be your healer
- If you're anxious about messing up too much, you might not be trusting God to show you grace
- If you're anxious about your future, you might not be trusting God to lead you where you should go

I told you this was a dangerous prayer, it will cause you to deal with stuff that you probably don't want to deal with. But it will bring you to a place of increased intimacy with Jesus!

Psalm 139:24a (NKJV)

And see if there is any wicked way in me,

Some translations say see if there is any offensive way in me. Oh boy, now we've gotta bring that into the picture. We've let God dig around in our hearts, try us, show us our thoughts where we don't trust Him, now I can't even be offensive!

Here when David speaks of any wicked/offensive way it's not are we being offensive to people. I think that would be covered in the heart scan. This is speaking more of are we being offensive to God. It's referring to idol worship.

See, inspect me, are there idols in my life? Are there things that I worship in place of You? Are there things that are more important to me than You? Are there things I am more devoted to than You?

Idols get deeply rooted down in the carpet. Idols can soak through the carpet, the pad, and the subfloor. It can take a construction crew to rip it all up and get to the bare frame.

Idols prevent you from truly worshiping Jesus. They alienate you from God.

So what has your affection? What is the #1 thing in your life. What are the things that are more important to you than God. Again, you will likely deceive yourself. You need a God revelation of what these things are.

Understand, God will point out some things in your life which need to be worked on. God will point some things out you're trying to deny, things you become defensive about. Don't deny the truth. Submit yourself to what God is trying to show you, and then have the courage to make the changes you need to make.

Psalm 139:24b (NKJV)

And lead me in the way everlasting.

Lead me, guide me, bring me....in the way everlasting.

God never wants to just show us our wickedness and leave us there. His conviction is all about leading us in the way everlasting. He wants us to see where we are but also to know where we should be going.

When God shows you what you don't know about yourself, and show you what needs to be changed.....then He shows you His way. God's way is always the everlasting way! His power, His strength, His courage, His hope, His grace . . . which will endure forever!? His way is the everlasting way!

When you pray this prayer, it will show you your need, and you take that need directly to Jesus, and you let Christ meet that need and conform you to His image. It's dangerous! It's not safe! But this prayer can transform your life.

If you're serious, then I would tell you to pray this prayer. If you want to draw closer to Jesus, pray this prayer.

Ask God to search your heart, and prove it to you, to examine and know your anxious thoughts, and to show you if you put things before Him in your life. This will help you better understand yourself and know what God wants from you.

Remember, what you are most anxious about reveals where you trust God the least.

Maybe you recognize a sin issue which is holding you back. Something you've been able to rationalize to yourself and with others. Maybe it has to do with home life, or work, or with a relationship. Maybe it's something about church. You're not attending like you should, you're not serving, you're withholding your money. I'm not sure what it is, but God is faithful and He will reveal it to you . . . and He will help you grow.

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