

Step Ten

STEP 10: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

First Week - Introduction

My dear friends, it is my goal at this point to paint with words a picture or scenario if you will. If we will look at ourselves honestly every day, we may notice that we do not look all that good. The truth of the matter is, that left untreated, we will die! Oh! glory be to God, there is a remedy, yes, and a cure in the long run. As far as the Steps are concerned, this is Step 10. It is extremely important that we make an appointment with the doctor as soon as possible. He always has openings, but will not tolerate cancellations. We must remember this appointment is a life-and-death appointment with the healingest doctor of all time - that's right, the Great Physician, who can cure all y'all's ills. But we must keep that appointment! The diagnosis will be sure and correct, and though it may seem like a bitter pill at first, we will learn to tolerate it. We are even encouraged to look up the formula in the Great Physician's PDR, the Bible. We must trust in its formulas, because they don't change - they are the same today, yesterday, and forever. The contents are from the very One that formed us. That's right, the Creator of all things has given us 66 love letters that contain His heart and soul, that we may grow close and embrace Him with our total being. At that point we will be well and healthy, and it's at that point that we will experience the JOY that only a life totally surrendered to Christ Jesus will experience. My beloved in the Lord, is that your desire, to be all that you can be in the body of Christ? Do you want to know what spiritual gifts the God of Heaven and earth has bestowed upon you? Remember, every believer has at least one gift, and no one has them all. It would be good to keep in mind that the reason God gave us the gifts and talents is so that we would use them in service, that the whole body would be blessed! Take note - God is not looking for your abilities, but for your availability. The Lord will give you all the tools you will need to do the work He has called you to do. Remember that appointment with the doctor, it will only take about an hour a day and will yield a lifetime of JOY that only Christ can give.

In Step 10 you will need to do some logging of your time and actions during the day. It is extremely important to get started right. What I have found very helpful, is to get dressed properly for the day, first thing in the morning, by putting on the whole armor of God (Eph 6:10-18). That's right, we are referred to as soldiers for Jesus Christ, and as such we must always be ready for battle. I always ask God to help me get dressed, because He can see my back side. God has made each piece to fit you perfectly. Once you are dressed, if you haven't yet, thank Him for the rest that you have received. Ask the Lord to forgive anything that might keep you from doing all that would be pleasing in His sight. Ask God to pour out His Holy Spirit into you that you may be full to overflowing, and ask that He send His very Spirit ahead of you to all of those He would have you talk with that day. We must keep in mind that our power to do His will only comes through the Holy Spirit. It is our part to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ with a sinful and fallen world, but once they hear the Word of God from us, their salvation is up to the Holy Spirit. That's His job to work on their very soul, and bring them to a place of repentance and fellowship with the living God. Then we are to go to work again, guiding, loving, fellowshiping with them, and encouraging them in the faith. WOW, what an assignment! But that is the commission the Lord has given to us as ambassadors for Christ Jesus. Oh! my brothers and sisters in the Lord, it is my prayer that you are able to rejoice with me about the high calling God has put on your life. I know the feelings of unworthiness, and fearfulness you are experiencing. You, my beloved, must realize that it is not you that saves the soul for eternity but the very Spirit of God working through you, He will give you the words needed, the wisdom needed to win souls for the Kingdom for all eternity. Yes, He will give you power and motivation through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. So my brethren, this is where Step 10 comes in - we as a chosen people must always be ready to

stand up and stand firm in the Lord by keeping ourselves in tune with Him at all times. Step 10 daily inventories help by keeping our mind, will, and emotions surrendered to Him. He will make us strong and fit for the task He has for us. GLORY BE TO THE LORD!

So just what is involved in taking a daily inventory? You will need to keep "mini-accounts" by evaluating each day as you walk through it. It is a good practice to carry a little note pad with you so that you can jot down thoughts and/or feelings, so you don't forget them. Sometimes I get what I call a "God shot" - those always are worth noting. Then comes the end of the day - "It has been a long day. Oh, My! Did I forget my doctor's appointment?" (The enemy enters the picture) "Oh, you don't need to keep that appointment! You have had a hard day, and you really do need your beauty sleep! Your appointment can wait until tomorrow! If you don't get that rest, you won't be any good for God anyway!!!" BROTHER & SISTER, DON'T YOU BELIEVE THAT FOR A MINUTE! THAT IS A LIE OF THE WICKED ONE WHO WANTS NOTHING MORE THAN TO BREAK THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER. You, my beloved, must at all costs keep your appointment! You should share with your Lord just how you feel, and be specific about what your needs are, and be sure to pray for others and their needs also. When we get to Step 11, we will be working on our prayer life in depth.

APPOINTMENT TIME - ONE HOUR. You can work it any way you want to as long as you keep it. (The enemy again, "A whole hour out of your day? God only gave you 24 hours, how greedy is that guy?") What works for me is: **First 15 minutes**, pray and ask for wisdom and understanding from His Word. **Second 15 minutes**, I read from His Word as though it was a "love letter" written just for me. **Third 15 minutes** are spent meditating on what I have just read ("What are you trying to tell me, Lord?") **The last 15 minutes**, I like to go back to prayer with thanksgiving, confession of sins, along with commitment. I always ask Him to see that I get the rest I need to do His will the following day. At this point, just in case I did not make it clear, Step 10b says "when we were wrong, we **promptly admitted it**" (see I John 1:9, "If we will confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.") What a loving Heavenly Father we have! His word lets us know that if we will just confess to Him, we don't have to carry the weight of that sin until our doctor's appointment. When we confess, He immediately removes the sin and refills us with His Holy Spirit, and our power and strength are renewed that we can continue to do His will with all authority and might.

My dear brethren, if you will put these practices into your life for the next month (30 days), you will have a closer relationship with the Creator of heaven and earth, and He will give you the power, authority, and the desire to do your part as a soul winner (Proverbs 11:30, "HE WHO WINS SOULS IS WISE").

In His love and service,

Pastor Tom

First Week's Lesson - Step 10

"Taking a Daily Inventory"

There are two kinds of daily inventories which we will be looking at, "spot-check" and "end-of-the-day." Spot-check means **examining ourselves** at the moment, "whenever we find ourselves getting tangled up" during the day, and "end-of-the-day" is when we review the happenings of our day in total. The A.A. book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (pgs. 88-89) says, "When a drunk has a terrific hangover because he drank heavily yesterday, he cannot live well today. But there is another kind of hangover which we all experience, whether we are drinking or not. That is **the EMOTIONAL hangover**, the direct result of yesterday's and sometimes today's **excesses of negative emotion**-anger, fear, jealousy, and the like. If we would live serenely today and tomorrow, we certainly need to eliminate these hangovers. This doesn't mean we need to wander morbidly around in the past. It requires **an admission**

and correction of errors NOW. Our inventory enables us to settle with the past. When this is done, we are really able to leave it behind us. When our inventory is carefully taken, and we have made peace with ourselves, the conviction follows that tomorrow's challenges can be met as they come." "Aren't these practices (taking inventories) joy-killers as well as time-consumers? Must A.A.'s spend most of their waking hours drearily rehashing their sins of omission or commission? Well, hardly. The emphasis on inventory is heavy only because **a great many of us have never really acquired the habit of accurate SELF-APPRAISAL.** Once this healthy practice has become grooved, it will be so interesting and profitable that the time it takes won't be missed. These minutes and sometimes hours spent in **SELF-EXAMINATION** are bound to make all the other hours of our day better and happier. And at length our inventories become a regular part of everyday living, rather than something unusual or set apart."

The Bible has a lot to say about self-examination and confession of our sins. We need to examine ourselves, for instance, because God wants us to have a healthy self-esteem, but not to be puffed up with pride and conceit. He tells us that if we are angry, we must not SIN in our anger by reacting wrongly, or turning it into bitterness. Our motives, even in doing something good, may be warped by self-centeredness. We may need to ask ourselves, "Why am I helping this person? Do I hope to get something out of it? Does it make ME feel better to be "fixing" someone else?" God tells us that **if we will JUDGE or EXAMINE ourselves**, we will not be judged in the sense of being corrected and disciplined by Him. Many times we need a REALITY CHECK, because we don't think we have a problem with pride, or anger, or envy, or any other "negative emotion" or sin. Pride can be thinking you are better than others, but it can also be just **holding onto your own will - YOUR right to make YOUR OWN decisions**, instead of turning your will over to God completely.

- **I Corinthians 11:28 & 31-32** "But let a man _____ himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." "For if we would _____ ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened (disciplined) by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."
- **Ephesians 4:26-27** "Be _____ and do not _____; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil."
- **James 1:19-20** "Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be _____ to _____, slow to _____, slow to wrath (SLOW to GET ANGRY); for the _____ of man does _____ produce the _____ of God."
- **Mark 11:25** "And whenever you stand praying, if you have _____ against anyone, _____ him, that your Father in heaven may also _____ you your trespasses."
- **Mark 3:5** "So when He (Jesus) had looked around them with _____, being grieved by the _____ of their _____, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other."

NOTE: Jesus could be **ANGRY and not sin**, because his anger was towards those who were corrupting God's message and hindering people from coming to God. We, on the other hand, usually get angry because someone has done something that HURTS US, or INCONVENIENCES US, or for some other SELFISH reason. Then, we tend to HOLD ONTO that anger, and it turns into bitterness and resentment. God allows us to be ANGRY at sin and injustice, but He tells us we MUST forgive the one who has committed that sin or injustice AGAINST US. We must "hate the sin, but love the sinner."

Definition: "Do not let the sun go down on your wrath" - This means to **LET GO of all anger**, and **FORGIVE before the end of the day**, or as soon as possible. This is why DAILY inventories are necessary. If your anger is **not** against a PERSON, but

rather against CIRCUMSTANCES, the Lord COMMANDS us in His word to "REJOICE always and give THANKS in everything" (in all circumstances) I Thess. 5:16-18.

Definition: "GIVE PLACE TO THE DEVIL" - This means DON'T give the devil an **opportunity or a doorway** to cause trouble in your life. Holding onto anger and resentment, and letting it turn into BITTERNESS and UNFORGIVENESS is a sure way to ALLOW Satan to MESS UP your life.

- **I Peter 5:8-9** "Be _____, be vigilant; because your adversary (enemy) the _____ walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom (looking for someone) he may devour. _____ him, steadfast in the faith..."
- **James 4:7** "Therefore _____ to God. _____ the devil and he will _____ from you."

Jesus showed us the necessity of confessing our sins to God on a daily basis, when He washed the disciples' feet. Just as Jesus and His disciples needed to wash their feet because they had walked on dusty dirt roads in open sandals, **we walk through a dirty world**, and become **contaminated with the filth of this world**. Daily or even moment-by-moment confession to God CLEANSSES US from ALL unrighteousness and filthiness.

- **John 13:6-11** "Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not _____ you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is _____ needs only to wash his _____, but is _____ clean; and you are _____, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not ALL clean.'"
- **John 15:3** "You are already _____ because of the _____ which I have spoken to you."

Definition: "He who is BATHED needs only to wash his FEET" - What does Jesus mean, then, by needing "only to wash his feet?" He is teaching by parable again, **by acting out a truth** - that of daily confession of sins for the Believer. Peter had picked up dirt on his feet through his open sandals, and needed his feet to be washed, just as we must **CONFESS our sins to God DAILY**, because we have "picked up sins" along the way, in our daily walk. And just as Jesus said Peter didn't need to be bathed all over again (Jesus said Peter was "completely clean"), we don't need to GET SAVED all over again every time we sin! We just need to repent, confess our sins, and BELIEVE that He has cleansed us from ALL unrighteousness, so that we can be USEFUL to the Master for whatever work He has for us to do!

- **I John 1:9** "If we _____ our _____, He is faithful and just to _____ us our sins and to _____ us from all unrighteousness."
- **II Corinthians 7:1** "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us _____ ourselves from all _____ of the _____ and _____, perfecting _____ in the fear of God."
- **II Timothy 2:19 & 21** "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His,' and 'Let everyone who _____ the name of _____ depart from _____. Therefore if anyone _____ himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for _____, sanctified (holy) and _____ for the Master, _____ for every good work.'"
- **Ephesians 5:3-5** "But _____ and all _____ or _____, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for

- **I Thessalonians 4:3-7** "For this is the _____ of _____, your _____: that you should abstain (keep away) from _____ immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel (body) in _____ and _____, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take _____ of and defraud his brother (or sister) in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to _____, but in _____."
- **Colossians 3:2 & 5** "Set your _____ on things above, not on things on the _____." "Therefore put to _____ your members which are on the earth; _____, uncleanness, _____, _____, and _____ which is idolatry."
- **I Corinthians 6:18-20** "Flee (run away from) sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is _____ the _____, but he who commits _____ immorality sins against his own _____. Or do you not know that your _____ is the _____ of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were _____ with a _____; therefore glorify God in your _____ and in your _____, which are God's."
- **Ephesians 5:17-18** "Therefore do not be _____, but understand what the _____ of the Lord is. And do not be _____ with wine, in which is dissipation (wastefulness); but be _____ with the _____."

Definition: "Filled with the Spirit" - Paul contrasts BEING DRUNK with BEING FILLED with the Spirit. INSTEAD of being drunk, which is to be "UNDER the INFLUENCE" of alcohol, we are to be "UNDER the INFLUENCE", or CONTROLLED BY the **Holy Spirit**. In other places in scripture, it is also called "abiding in Christ", "walking in the Spirit", "letting the word of Christ dwell in you", and "putting on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is NOT a ONE-TIME experience, but a continuous YIELDING of ourselves to the Holy Spirit's control in our lives. The literal translation of the Greek is "keep being filled" with the Spirit.

IN SUMMARY: Ultimately, as Christians, the GOAL of our SELF-EXAMINATION in the daily inventory is to see where we still have areas in our lives that are not under the CONTROL of the Holy Spirit. It is to identify actions, attitudes, and thoughts that are NOT conducive to our sanctification, or being SET APART for God's special use. God does **NOT** want us to confess our sins to Him **so that we will feel GUILTY** about what we have done, but so that we can be CLEANSED and made USEFUL to Him!

Second Week's Lesson - Step 10

"The Daily Inventory-Checking the Condition of Your Heart"

Read the parable of the Sower - **Matt. 13:3-23; Mark 4:2-20; Luke 8:4-15**. "But the ones that fell on the **good ground** are those who, **having heard the word with a noble and good heart**, keep it and bear fruit with patience" (Luke 8:15). The Bible compares our hearts to either good or bad ground, in which the seed of God's word will be planted (sowed). Obviously, this parable is talking about when the gospel is preached to the unsaved, and how the word of God will be received and bring forth fruit in some lives and not in others, but it also has a lesson for us as Christians. I believe the Bible teaches that **WE are responsible for the CONDITION of our own hearts**, or "**ground**" in which the word of God is planted as we grow and mature in our Christian walk. So, another way to look at the daily inventory is to compare it to a farmer checking on his crop and on the condition of the ground into which he would plant his seeds. Our HEARTS are the GROUND into which God will plant His seed - the word of God. Doing a daily inventory is checking on the condition of your ground!

- **Read Luke 8:4-15** "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold....." (Verses 12-15)
"Now the parable is this: **The SEED is the WORD of GOD**. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation FALL AWAY. And the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the **good ground** are those who, **having HEARD the WORD** with **a noble and good HEART**, keep it and bear fruit with patience."

Several areas are mentioned in this parable that would be things for us to look for in our inventories. Check your heart to see if it is hardened (rocky soil), and check to see if the thorns of cares and worries, riches, or worldly pleasures are choking out the seed of God's word.

1. **HARDENED, ROCKY SOIL** - Hardness of heart in the Bible usually means the inability to discern spiritual things, and can also have the idea of lack of feeling or lack of compassion. We will look for the most part at the meaning of "**inability to discern and understand the things of God**", but realize that some hardness, like scar tissue, is also lacking in ability to FEEL! The person with the hardened heart, or rocky soil, is often unable to FEEL the compassion that God would have them feel over lost souls going to hell, or FEEL the sorrow of God over the sin in their own lives, and their need for repentance. This hardening is a PROCESS. Just as water does not harden into ice in a moment, and soft clay does not harden into a piece of ceramics instantly, our hearts can **become hardened over time** if we NEGLECT to take inventory of the condition of our ground. When we hear God's word, but disregard or disobey what it says, and by doing that **we resist or grieve the Holy Spirit**, we gradually HARDEN our HEARTS.

- **Psalms 95:7b-10** "...Today, if you will _____ His voice: 'Do not _____ your _____, as in the rebellion, and as in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me; they proved Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, 'It is a people who go astray in their _____, and they do not _____ My _____.'"
- **Exodus 8:15** "But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he _____ his _____ and did not _____ to them, as the Lord had said."
- **Mark 8:17** "And Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, 'Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor _____? Is your _____ still _____?'"
- **Acts 7:51** "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in _____ and _____! You always _____ the _____; as your fathers did, so do you."
- **Acts 5:3-4** "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has _____ filled your _____ to _____ to the _____Why have _____ conceived this thing in your _____? You have not lied to men but to _____.'"
- **Ephesians 4:30** "And do not _____ the _____ of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
- **Hebrews 3:12-13** "Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil _____ of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today,' lest any of you be _____ through the _____ of _____."

2. **CARES & WORRIES** - The time and energy you spend worrying about things that have not even happened yet, is time and energy you do NOT have to spend in reading and studying God's word. Therefore, Jesus says they are like thorns or weeds that "choke" out the word of God and any fruit you might bear for God.
- **John 15:4-5 & 8** "_____ in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear _____ of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who _____ in Me, and I in him, bears much _____; for without Me you can do _____. By this My Father is glorified, that you _____ much _____; so you will be My disciples."
 - **Phil. 4:6-7 & 19** "Be _____ for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your _____ be made known to God. And the _____ of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your _____ and your minds in Christ Jesus." "But my God shall _____ ALL your _____ according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
 - **Romans 8:28** "And we know that _____ things work together for _____ to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."
 - **I Peter 5:5-7** "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time (in due time), casting _____ your _____ (worry, anxiety, fear) upon Him, because He cares for you."
 - **Matthew 6:31-33** "Therefore, do NOT _____, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves? For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But _____ FIRST the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and _____ these _____ shall be added unto you."
3. **RICHES** - God promises to meet and supply all of our needs, but we are warned not to seek after riches, or covet (desire) material things to the point of their becoming idols in our lives. "Idols" are anything that take away our time, love and devotion that should go to God, and "idolatry" is any time we worship the CREATION more than the CREATOR.
- **I Timothy 6:6-10** "But godliness with _____ is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing let us be content with that. But those who want to be _____ fall into _____ and a _____, and into many _____ and _____ lusts, which drown men in _____ and perdition. For the _____ of _____ is the root of all evil; which while some _____ after, they have gone astray from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
 - **Matt. 13:22** "Now he who received seed among the _____ is he who hears the word, and the _____ of _____ choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful."
 - **Acts 8:20-23** "But Peter said to him, 'Your _____ perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be _____ with _____! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your _____ is not _____ in the sight of god. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your _____ may be forgiven you. For I see that you are _____ by _____ and bound by iniquity (sin).'"
4. **PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD** - Hebrews 11:25 tells us that the "pleasures of sin" are but "for a season," meaning that they may be fun for a while, but the consequences will eventually catch up with you. Even the things that do not have actual "bad" consequences may still be time-stealers that rob you of rewards that you could have received.

- **Luke 21:34-36** "But take heed to yourselves, lest your _____ be weighed down with carousing (partying), _____, and _____ of this _____, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. _____, therefore, and _____ always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."
- **Galatians 6:7-8** "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man _____, that will he also _____. For he who _____ to his _____ will of the flesh reap corruption (sickness and death); but he who _____ to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap everlasting life (the blessings of God)."
- **I Peter 4:3** "For we have spent enough of our past _____ in doing the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, and abominable (horrible) _____."

What if you find, in doing your inventory, that your heart is already showing signs of being hardened, or you find thorns growing up and choking God's word in your life? What can you do to CHANGE the condition of your ground? **Step 10 tells us what to do: "When we were wrong promptly admitted it." God's word tells us what to do: Confess and turn away from sin, with a BROKEN and contrite HEART (break up the old ground).**

- **Jeremiah 4:3-4** "For thus says the Lord.....' **Break up** your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns....." (Verse 14) "**Wash your HEART** from wickedness..."
- **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 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."
- **Psalms 51:3 & 10** "For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Create in me a CLEAN HEART, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Vs. 17 "...a **broken** and a contrite HEART, O God, you will not despise."
- **II Chronicles 30:18-19** "...but Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, 'May the good Lord provide atonement for everyone who **PREPARES his HEART to seek God....**'"
- **Proverbs 20:9** "Who can say, 'I have **made my HEART clean**, I am pure from my sin?'"
- **I John 1:7-9** "...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and **to CLEANSE us** from all UNRIGHTEOUSNESS."
- **Acts 15:7-9** ".....So **God, who knows the HEART**, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit..... **PURIFYING their HEARTS by faith.**"
- **Psalms 139:23-24** "Search me, O God, and KNOW my HEART; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."
- **Jeremiah 17:9-10** "The HEART is DECEITFUL above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord SEARCH the HEART....."

Definition: Fallow Ground - A field plowed up and left for seeding, particularly a field left to rest for a year or more. Our hearts, if left to themselves (lying fallow) will become hardened. We must PLOW UP the ground, PULL UP the weeds, and PLUCK OUT the thorns.

IN SUMMARY: Make a Decision to be Good Ground & Establish Your Heart in God's Word (allow the seed of God's word to be planted in your heart) .

- **Exodus 35:5, 21, 29 & 36:2** "Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of a **WILLING HEART**, let him bring it....." "And they came, everyone **whose HEART STIRRED HIM UP**, and every one **whom his (own) spirit made willing**, and brought the Lord's offering..." "Every man and woman **whose heart made them willing....**" "....every one **whose heart stirred him up** to come unto the work to do it."
- **Acts 17:11** "These were more noble (fair-minded) than those in Thessalonica, in that **they RECEIVED the WORD with all readiness**, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."
- **Psalms 112:1 & 7-8** "....Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, that delights greatly in His commandments (word). He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his HEART is FIXED, trusting in the Lord. **His HEART is ESTABLISHED**, he shall not be afraid..."
- **Hebrews 13:9** "Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the HEART to be ESTABLISHED with [God's] grace."
- **Proverbs 4:4, 20-21 & 2** "...**let your HEART retain My WORDS.....**" "My son, give attention to My words;....do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them **in the MIDST of your HEART.**" "**Keep (guard, watch over) your HEART** with all diligence....."
- **Psalms 119:11** "Your word have I **hidden in my HEART** that I might not sin against You."