

I look at the disciples shortly after Jesus went into his glory in heaven, just after they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and I am fascinated by how clear they are about who they are and what their mission is. They have it grasped not only intellectually, not only biblically; they are fully in it by their activity, by their obedience! Yet, it doesn't seem to be some crazy burden of obligation for them. On the contrary, we see great joy in them, enthusiasm! Even in the midst of extremely strong opposition and physical suffering.

Now and then I catch the struggle of a contemporary Christian that he would even quite like to go out to his unbelieving friends, but he feels weak. It's not that he is unable to learn any „techniques“; he is paralyzed by fear of how people will react to him! And this fear completely paralyzes him in sharing Jesus. For many years he is left with only regrets that he „should“ and that he is not doing anything about it...

In such cases, I have some very important questions. Can I ask you now? I call it: „spiritual inventory“.

1) I would be very interested to know what really happened when you first accepted Jesus. I would like to know approximately what you said to Jesus at that time, and especially what it meant in the spiritual realm. Here I usually hear the key elements of a personal story (a „testimony“).

2) „And do you think your sins have been forgiven?“, I ask about the implications of the conversion. Sometimes the answer is quick and convincing: „Sure, Jesus died for them all.“ Quite often, however, a great deal of doubt shows up with some of the answers; even from long-time Christian leaders. Then there is no choice but to properly ground the absolute foundation of our spiritual existence biblically. Now I will just give you a very brief reminder of the basics, and I hope you will study them for yourself from many other biblical passages. 1 John 1:7 and 9: *but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

After reading this passage, my next questions follow: would you say you have confessed your wrongs - your sins - to Jesus? And have you thanked Him for His forgiveness? In the meantime, do you have anything new that you think you should confess to the Lord right now, and give yourself to Him wholeheartedly again? If there is anything missing from your

awareness of forgiveness, do it right now.

Feel free to start all over again, as if you wanted to convert now, again! Say maybe, “ Jesus, I am exposing myself to Your light“ (1 John 1:7) Please show me the bad things that keep me from perceiving Your forgiveness.“ Listen for a moment and then tell Him, „I confess to You all the bad things I am currently aware of - actions, words, thoughts.“ (1 John 1:9) Be as specific and personal as possible about what you perceive as unhealthy or just incomplete about yourself. Confess it all to Jesus and at the same time remind yourself, (1 John 1:9) *„If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us.“* With the confession, say also, „Lord Jesus, thank You for cleansing me from every wrong by Your sacrifice, even the smallest thing. Thank You that because of Your sacrifice, I am perfectly clean before the face of God.“

If you’ve done this, let me ask you another very important and big question:

3) Would you say that Jesus is the Lord of your life? A lot of evangelical Christians have Jesus only as their Savior; or possibly as Helper. That’s great! But if He is not their Lord, it is very natural that their practical spiritual life is not worth much. It is only our submission to Lordship of Jesus that empowers us for new life!

The Lordship of Jesus in our lives gives us the power and joy to overcome all kinds of obstacles and achieve spiritual victories. If you sense your inadequacy in the area of your submission to Jesus’ lordship, say, for example, „Lord Jesus, I submit my life, my thoughts, my attitudes, my time, my abilities...“ and list specific areas you are hindering from the Lord Jesus, from filling you with His power for new life and also with His joy.

Spiritual inventory is a journey that we should walk humbly and joyfully every day. First, to continually purify ourselves before the face of God, and also to affirm our submission to the Lordship of Jesus every day.

*Lord Jesus, thank You so much for Your immediate presence in my life...*