



## How to Take a Daily Moral Inventory

To make this time most meaningful, we suggest that you select a quiet, secluded place where you can be completely alone. It is almost impossible to concentrate if you are in a room with someone else.

Jesus often withdrew from the crowds to refresh himself spiritually; and we, if we want to grow in His likeness, must make the same strategic withdrawal. We need to select a spot that will become our "prayer closet," where we can shut out the world for a time of communion with Him.

To avoid idle daydreaming, we suggest that you follow this simple structure to make your prayer time most meaningful:

### 1. Take Your Daily Moral Inventory

The D.M.I. is designed to help you identify twenty negative and twenty positive attitudes that you may have expressed through your thoughts and behavior in the past 24 hours. It is a mirror to help you get in touch with your own heart; and it will, if you do it honestly, give you valuable insights into the attitudes that motivate your actions.

Start your D.M.I. by marking column 1, top to bottom, by either filling in the box to indicate a negative attitude or marking with a check to identify a positive attitude. The top columns do not represent calendar days - just the sequence of your inventory. Refer to the D.M.I. Commentary if you don't understand some of the attitudes on the list.

### 2. Pray About Your D.M.I. Insights

So much of our prayer life is ineffective because we "pray amiss." We miss the target! Pray specifically that the Holy Spirit will deal directly with the negative attitudes that the D.M.I. has revealed. Remember "prayer changes us - we change things." The following prayer steps will help to lead you into His Presence:

*"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."*

*Proverbs 4:23*

*"When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."*

*James 4:3*



- ❖ **Relax and detach.** We can only begin meaningful prayer when we detach our attention from external distractions. This is not easy because we are so conditioned to outside stimuli, that we have to discipline ourselves to "turn off" outside noises and "tune in" the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is helpful to sit in a comfortable position and consciously relax all parts of your body, or to kneel, which helps us to humble ourselves before God.
- ❖ **Focus your attention on the Lord.** He is always present in the heart of born-again believers, but we are not always present to Him.
- ❖ **Pray - converse with the Father,** through Jesus Christ, who is not only our Savior, but also our Counselor and Guide. He is delighted to give direction to his children and forgiveness to those who confess their sins and ask Him for wisdom. (James 1:4, II Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 11:28).

Keep your D.M.I. in hand and refer to it, one attitude at a time, as you talk to your heavenly Father. Confession means to "say with God," or to agree with God's judgement. Don't rationalize or minimize your problems. Internal housecleaning is even more important than brushing our teeth and bathing our bodies, so we need to cultivate the habit of cleansing our souls each morning...begin to converse with God in prayer, and be specific.

- ❖ **Confess and ask forgiveness for your negative attitudes.** Do not bother to recount the events and problems that you had with other people yesterday. Deal only with your reactions and attitudes toward them. (1 John 1:9,10)
- ❖ **Ask the Lord to cleanse your weak areas, (those areas where you filled in the squares on your D.M.I.), and ask Him to change yesterday's liabilities into today's assets, and to fill you with His Holy Spirit.** To be filled with" means to be "controlled by." (2 Corinthians 12:9)
- ❖ **It is vitally important that we prayerfully acknowledge who we are in Christ.** Read Ephesians 1 and confess who you are in Christ.

**"I AM A UNIQUE, UNREPEATABLE MIRACLE OF GOD!"**

*"Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

James 1:4

*"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

2 Chronicles 7:14

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his words have no place in our lives."*

1 John 1:9,10

*"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*

2 Corinthians 12:9



- ❖ **Close with a period of thanksgiving.** Praise the Lord for His mercy and forgiveness. Thank Him for your brothers and sisters who are helping you to change your life. Express your gratitude to God for the hope that you have in Him for the future.

### 3. Keeping a Journal

Keep a daily journal to record the insights gleaned from your prayer time. Date each entry. This is not a diary to record events from yesterday, but rather to preserve the insights that God reveals to you about your character development. Be as specific you can be in recording the impressions that God's Holy Spirit makes upon your heart.

This journal is not for public information. You are writing only for yourself in order to record your spiritual pilgrimage. If you will take the time to work this exercise, it will be a tremendous tool to help you articulate the working of the Lord in your life, and your journal will become one of your most treasured possessions.