

40 days
a JOURNEY to HOLINESS
devotional

Dr. Dominic F. Dixon



A Journey to Holiness
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

□ Preface	v		
□ Foreword	vi		
□ Introduction	vii		
□ Overcoming Sin	1	□ God's Presence	41
□ Overcoming Lust	3	□ Taming the Tongue	43
□ Dealing with Pornography	5	□ Taking custody of your Eyes	45
□ Defeating Deception	7	□ A Sound Mind	47
□ Overcoming Evil Vices	9	□ Forming Godly Relationships	49
□ Examination of Conscience	11	□ Reconciliation	51
□ Untamed Passions	13	□ A Disciplined Lifestyle	53
□ Divine Grace	15	□ Christian Dignity	55
□ Accountability	17	□ Discernment for marriage	57
□ Teachable Spirit	19	□ Hearing God's Voice	59
□ Chastity	21	□ Prayer	61
□ Self Mastery	23	□ Faith	63
□ Dealing with Guilt	25	□ Freedom in Christ	65
□ Overcoming Rejection	27	□ A Pure Heart	67
□ Christian Ethos	29	□ Modesty	69
□ Pride	31	□ Christian Stewardship	71
□ Humility	33	□ A Heart of Worship	73
□ Unshackled	35	□ Prudence	75
□ Dealing with Bitterness	37	□ Christian Love	77
□ Christian Character	39	□ Christian Unity & Missions	79
		□ Your Personal Mission	81

To His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Bernard Moras
Archbishop of Bangalore
A True Shepherd



Preface

It's my prayer that each one of us will obey God and do what is right in His sight. We have the grace through Jesus to be holy. While I do not claim to be holy, I too am on a journey, with the Holy Spirit to guide me. God, in His love, punished the Israelites for their contempt towards God that God said “Not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers.” (Num14:23).

Further, God's wrath fell upon them and God said: “Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the wilderness. For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.”(Num. 14:33-34)

The Israelites were punished 365 days for a single day of disobedience and 40 years for 40 days of contempt. OUCH!

In obeying God, we don't need to suffer for unrighteousness and have the undue wilderness experiences that grieves the heart of God. This 40 DAYS Journey to Holiness will help you recognize your sins, embrace God's grace and live holy!

How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments. I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you. Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes. With my lips I declare all the ordinances of your mouth. I delight in the way of your decrees as much as in all riches. I will meditate on your precepts, and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word. Deal bountifully with your servant, so that I may live and observe your word. Open my eyes, so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law. Psalm 119:9-18

Foreword

Human beings have an inherent thirst or desire to be with their Creator which St. Augustine described it as, “Our hearts are restless, till it rests in you, O Lord.” Though this desire is common and natural, it is not present in the same intensity in all human beings. One has to grow in holiness as he/she grows physically, emotionally, intellectually...To increase the intensity of this desire and keep it alive could be called as ‘Holiness’.

In other words it is a stubbornness about fulfilling God’s will always and in spite of any difficulty. One who does the will of God at all times and everywhere is a holy person. A holy person’s focus is God. He sees God, hears God, lives in the presence of God and fulfills God’s will 24/7. Holiness is being passionately in love with God.

This holy desire enables him/her to look with love and compassion on the entire creation, the handiwork of God. He is happy to be his brothers’ keeper. He is happy to lay down his life for his neighbor. He is happy to share and care, ever ready to imitate his master on the Cross, in total forgiveness those who trespass against him. His entire life becomes a ‘self-donation,’ in imitation of Christ the Savior. This desire enables his/her total self-blossom.

Dr. Dixon in his *‘A Journey to Holiness,’* sketches ways and means to increase this innate desire and accelerate the speed with which each one of us are travelling towards our destiny – God. Of course it is not going to be easy, as Cardinal John Henry Newman says, “to obtain the gift of holiness is the work of a lifetime.” We need to work all through our earthly life to enjoy its fruit for all eternity.

As I congratulate Dr. Dixon for bringing out this profound devotional, the fruit of his own desire and speed with which he is travelling towards the Creator, striving to live a life that is holy, pleasing and acceptable to God. I also wish and pray that this work becomes a powerful, useful and blessed tool for the *Young Seekers* that they may also be on a *‘Journey to Holiness.’*

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Introduction

A certain young boy was frustrated for some personal problem. One night he rolled on his bed without sleep. As a result, he rose from the bed early morning before the sun rise and went to a nearby lake. While searching for a place to sit he found a huge bag filled with some material in and sat on it. For him the bag was a stool. He was sad. In his melancholy his right hand began to fiddle with the bag's mouth and it got opened. Not being aware what was in the bag, the young man sensed something like small stones that began to fall out of the bag. He picked up those stones with his playing hand and threw into the lake water one by one in his contemplative mood. Still it was dark. As the sun began to show its face to the world, those stones that he was throwing into the lake playfully, began to glitter and shine in the early morning sunlight. By then the bag was almost empty. It was now the boy felt sorry for his mistake of throwing those stones which were actually precious stones and gems. Had he recognized those stone, he would had them all as a big treasure.

Well, treasures of life come to us only when we recognize them and treasure them. What we think beautiful, spiritual, colourful, altruistic, intelligent, contemplative, philosophical and wise are gems of life. Such gems if stored in our inner self would not bear fruit in others. Hence it is all the more wise to share with others the treasures of wisdom we have through writing or music or and through artifacts.

Dr. Dominic Dixon has done that proposal. Being an intellectual and Spirit filled writer, he has brought out 40 gems that were born of his spiritual contemplation. These gems are for 40 days. An excellent exegetical work!

One could fit oneself in every gem Dr. Dominic proposed. His thoughts are very beautiful and life oriented. His so deeply filled with the presence of God, he opines that we should be in the presence of God and God's presence in us, then for example he says, *"In this day and age, it is not easy to distinguish a believer from unbeliever. This is because of our lifestyles, the way we conduct ourselves, the way we treat each other. All of this is because we do not have the presence of God within us and we fail to invoke God's presence in us. We are too caught up with ourselves rather than seeking God and Him alone"* (title **'God's Presence' Day 21**)

Dr. Dominic's thirst for purity of heart is well shown in his search for facts about various tongues mentioned in the Scripture. The following lines reveal my statement: As Christians, we should come to a point where we can boldly say: "My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness." (Prov.8:7)

INTRODUCTION BY FR. AROKIANATHAN

In attesting his arguments about how eyes can cause sin, Dr. Dixon has made his writing very interesting mentioning relevant stories like that of the following. I quoted only the ending part of the story. The previous part, the reader will have to read without fail. This will make the reader well drawn to the book: *The King rejoined, "You have answered well and wisely. You who have such chaste and modest eyes shall be my Chamberlain. From the purity of your eyes I see the chastity of your soul. You are worthy to have the care of the royal apartments confided to you."* Then, turning to the other messenger, he said: *"But you, who have such unmortified eyes, depart from the palace. You shall not remain in my house, for I have no confidence in your virtue."* (**"Taking custody of your eyes' Day 23**)

Often our relationship with people is worldly and God oriented and hence one's relationship with others must emanate from the relationship with God first. Thus he says, *"A person will have godly relationships with other people, only when they first have a relationship with God. If not, our definition of friendship will be worldly."* (**Day 25, Forming Godly relationships**)

The author doesn't limit his thoughts only for mental reflection but he also suggests certain practical homework for the reader so as to reap the maximum fruit out of reading. Here he gives in every day's reflection a practical hint: *"Write down how you would like God to help you to take custody of your eyes"*

He is also concerned about the morality of Christians expressed in the following words: *Many Christians have a moral poverty because they are self indulgent and are more occupied in satisfying their own needs that they forget God."* (**A disciplined Lifestyle.... Day 27**)

A good writer does his ministry starting from his life experience. This is what Dr. Dixon reveals that he himself was a victim of suicidal thought but how and when he changed to Christ is put in the following terms: *It was at the point of suicide that I met Christ and received His freedom. Since then, I have taken His freedom to set the captives free. What is your bondage? Your freedom awaits you, for it is for freedom that Christ set you free! The good news to a SUICIDAL person is FREEDOM!* (**Day 33 Freedom in Christ**)

The author has quoted Scripture in many places strengthening his reflection on a particular subject like 'Modesty' *Modesty is our greatest defence for maintaining purity and chastity.* St. Paul defines a modest lifestyle that we may follow: "Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, what is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." -Philippians 4:8 (**Modesty Day 35**)

INTRODUCTION BY FR. AROKIANATHAN

Division among the people of God is for man's satisfaction... is a beautiful thought that Dr. Dixon has had in his reflection. "Jesus prayed for Christian unity because He knew that there would be attempts to divide the Church. Unfortunately we see this division today which is man made for man's satisfaction". **(Day 40 Christian unity & Mission)**

His conclusion to have a vision in Christ is a good hint to finish this book.

If we are to grow with the Lord, we need to know what the Lord wants of us. We need to have a vision.

"For lack of vision my people perish." Proverbs 29:18. And we need to have the knowledge of God and His word. My people are destroyed "from lack of knowledge." Hosea 4:6 **(In conclusion last page..Author's personal Mission)**

I do believe that this book will be a best seller in the series of gems of Christian wisdom.

My best appreciation and wishes to Dr. Dominic Dixon the author of this book.

God bless his effort for many more writings.

**Rev. Fr. J. .Arokianathan (M.A(Soc) M.A(Jour) B.Ed. (Ex-Radio Vatican Broadcaster, Rome)
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Secretary – Ecumenical Commission, Archdiocese of Bangalore

A Journey to Holiness

DAY 1

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

Overcoming Sin

Sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity. It has been defined as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law.

CCC 1849

Taking note of the words of St. Paul, we should be happy that when sin is haunting us, because the grace of God is even more available to us. All we have to do is to invoke that grace.

The key to avoiding sin, is to first understand our weaknesses, then understand that the grace of God to overcome our weaknesses is much greater.

Many times we get so stuck in feeling so weak, that we forget to rise up and ask the Spirit of God to take control.

Sin ... but it is a rebellion against God, refusal to be with God, a human possibility to be against God. - Ignatian Spirituality



WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE WORDS OF ST. PAUL
"...WHERE SIN IS INCREASED, GRACE INCREASED ALL THE MORE."
[ROM. 5:20]

Reflections

Overcoming Sin

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Be ever aware of your thoughts | _____
Be aware of what your eyes are seeing | _____
Be aware of the desires of your heart. _____

Ask God to reveal to you the cause for the sins you keep repeating. _____

Write down what you feel God is telling you to do with the sin that haunts you. _____

Write down how you would like God to make you holy.

Spend five minutes in absolute silence and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you deliver me from my sins and heal every area of my life that causes me to sin. (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Go for daily Holy Mass. Periodical confessions. Have an accountability partner who will pray with you.

Reflections

Overcoming Lust

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Meditate daily on purity and the holiness of Christ.

Introspect your heart's desires and question your heart if you see anything wrong and ask God to be the guardian of your heart.

Write down how you feel God is asking you to surrender the lust to Him so that HE may heal you.

Spend five minutes in absolute silence and allow the Holy Spirit to heal your sexuality.

Write down the things that you feel you need to do to defeat lustful thoughts.

PRAYER: My Lord Jesus, give me the grace to completely surrender my sexuality to you so that You may heal me (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: A thought by itself is not sin. But when you entertain a lustful thought, then it is sin. Be not afraid, you can overcome with Jesus on your side.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 3

Dealing with Pornography

STEPS TO OVERCOME : **REALISATION:** first realize & accept your sins and ask God to deliver you. | **CONFESSION:** He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion. - Proverbs 28:13 | **RESPONSIBILITY:** Never blame your past or present for your actions. | **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Trust God to give you an accountability partner that will journey with you, in holiness and confidentiality. | **SCRIPTURE:** "Study holiness from God's Word "Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the Word implanted, which is able to save your souls. - James 1:21 | **RETREAT:** Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not pass by it. Turn away from it and pass on. - Proverbs 4:14,15

Pornography is bad because it suggests that the human body is lustful. This is a lie of the devil.

If you do not struggle with porn, then introspect your heart for lust. Pray for those who struggle with porn.



*Holiness is what God
does in us, so don't
rely on your own
strength*

Reflections

Dealing with Pornography

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

First, right now, destroy all porn material. Perhaps reformat your phone, computer, etc after backing up of your important data.

Do not keep a computer in your bed room. If you have a net connection on your mobile device that you use for sin, then disconnect it or do not take it to your bedroom.

Write down what you intend to do to avoid pornography.

Write down and tell God how you feel. - He's merciful.

Spend five minutes in crying out to God for deliverance and renounce the sin of porn.

PRAYER: My Lord & my healer, you know my sins. I beg you to cleanse and deliver me from this wretched sin (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Daily, examine your heart and your mind. Throughout the day, remain in constant surrender to purity.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 4

Defeating Deception

Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh. CCC 675

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Rom 8:14

Any teaching that is against the Scripture and the teaching of the Church, is a deception.

Every desire that contradicts God's moral law, is deception, regardless of the urges.



If you find yourself in deception, seek the Truth in the Scriptures. God is merciful to deliver us from all deceptions. Most young people today are deceived by false love and relationships that do not quench our thirst for love and truth.

The world tells us that sexual urges are to be satisfied regardless if it is before marriage or out of marriage. The world has been deceived.

Go before God today and seek the leading of His Holy Spirit.

Reflections

Defeating Deception

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Be aware of the counterfeit urges that you may have – the urge to illicit religion, the urge to illicit indulgence.

The best way to identify the Truth, is to see if it is fitting with God's Holy Word & the Church.

Write down and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in all the Truth.

How have you been deceived and what are you going to do to avoid it?

Spend five minutes in prayer, seeking to guidance of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that I always be led by Your Holy Spirit in all truth. Remove the deception. (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. Jn. 16:13

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 5

Overcoming evil Vices

SELF-LOVE, on an evil day, in the garden of Eden, wedded sin, Satan himself officiating under the disguise of a serpent, and she gave birth to seven daughters like unto herself, who in turn became fruitful mothers of iniquity. **HAUGHTY-PRIDE**, first-born and queen among her sisters, is inordinate love of one's worth and excellence, talents and beauty. **SORDID-AVARICE** or **COVETOUSNESS** is excessive love of riches. **LOATHSOME-LUST** is the third, and loves carnal pleasures without regard for the law. **FIERY-ANGER**, a counterpart of pride, is love rejected but seeking blindly to remedy the loss. **BESTIAL-GLUTTONY** worships the stomach, green-eyed **ENVY** is hate for wealth and happiness denied, finally **SLOTH** loves bodily ease and comfort to excess. The infamous brood! These parents of all iniquity are called the seven capital sins. They assume the leadership of evil in the world and are the seven arms of Satan.

Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Matt. 5:28

Cf. Catholic Morals



When we are confronted with an evil thought, it is not sin. But we sin when we yield to the tendencies and do what they suggest, then it is sin.

Vice is a practice or a behavior or habit generally considered immoral, depraved, or degrading. If a sin is not stopped and surrendered to God, then it becomes vicious. People who are vicious, attack other people. A sexually vicious man will attack a woman sexually, either with HER body or with HIS mind.

SURRENDER TO GOD!

Reflections Overcoming evil Vices

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Sin is always crouching at the doors of our hearts and it wishes to devour us. We must resist it.

Be always alert of the devil's schemes

Write down the vices that have attached you and what was the outcome of the attack.

Spend five minutes in reading God's word on overcoming sin.

Write down what God's word tells you about overcoming evil vices.

PRAYER: Jesus Lord, help me to overcome all the sin that has come over me. Deliver me Lord... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 Jn. 4:4

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 6

THE will of God, announced to the world at large, is known as the Law of God; manifested to each individual soul, it is called conscience. These are not two different rules of morality, but one and the same rule. The latter is a form or copy of the former. One is the will of God, the other is its echo in our souls.

**CONFESS
YOURSELF**

Examination of Conscience

It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of interiority is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection. CCC #1779.

Ignatius Loyola stated that “Examination of conscience is the single most important spiritual exercise” Examination of Conscience is by far the most important spiritual exercise for a Christian from the time he rises to the time he rests. Examination of conscience is in retrospect, reflecting on our words and actions in conformity to the word of God. St. Bernard taught: “As a searching investigator of the integrity of your own conduct, submit your life to a daily examination. Consider carefully what progress you have made or what ground you have lost. Strive to know yourself. Place all your faults before your eyes. Come face to face with yourself, as though you were another person, and then weep for your faults.”

If you want to walk with God, you must examine your conscience daily and throughout the day. When we are complacent or lazy, our conscience also takes rest. When our conscience takes rest, our moral fire wall is turned off and the enemy enters with distorted thoughts intruding our minds.

Return to your conscience, question it. . . . Turn inward, brethren, and in everything you do, see God as your witness.

Reflections Examination of Conscience

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The best gift you can give to yourself is the examination of your conscience. Without which, you can never be in check. Do it every day, all day. The Holy Spirit is your guide.

Write and ask God to help you make firm decisions on making sure your thoughts are pure and holy.

Write to the Holy Spirit and ask it to dig deep down and reveal your most secret thoughts to you. Ask the Spirit of God to cleanse you from deep down.

Spent five minutes in meditating on you conscience and clean it.

PRAYER: Search me O
lord and cleanse my
tampetered conscience
Heal me... (Continue
praying as the Holy
Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. Psalm 139:23

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 7

Taming the untamed passions

god said to solomon: “And as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with **integrity** of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel for ever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘There shall not fail you a man upon the throne of Israel.’” 1 Kings 9:4-5

But, in all of Solomon’s wisdom, he became foolish. He indulged himself in every vice. He disobeyed all of God’s direct commands. He was the only King who did not have a spiritual advisory to guide him, nor was he accountable to his friends.

He who deliberately and without reason arouses a passion, and thus exposes himself imprudently to an assault of concupiscence, is grievously guilty; for it is to trifle with a powerful and dangerous enemy and it betokens indifference to the soul’s salvation.

“and the **LORD** was angry with **solomon**, because his heart had turned away from the **LORD**, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the **LORD** commanded. Therefore the **LORD** said to Solomon, “Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant. 1 Kings 11:9-11

We learn from Solomon that it is possible to know how to lead God’s people; It is possible to know right from wrong and yet live a completely debauched lifestyle. Solomon gives us the example of what happens to a gifted man when he has untamed passions.

Don’t live in denial or suffer with your sins. Get help!

Reflections Taming the untamed passions

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Ask God to show you if there are any lustful, prideful, emotional passions that you may have lost control over.

Write down the passions that have dragged you away from God.

Write a letter to God, asking Him to deliver you from the untamed passions.

Spend five minutes in absolute silence and reflect on taming those untamed passions.

PRAYER: Lord, You know my iniquities before I even commit or confess them. Deliver me.... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Of all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. 1 J. 2:16

Reflections

Divine Grace

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Ask God to help you to accept His grace at all times of trials and sin.

Remember, no sin is too big to overcome with the grace of God..

Write down the areas of your life that you need God's grace the most.

Spend five minutes applying God's grace in your life.

Write down how you plan on accepting God's grace when you are being tempted.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, Your grace is sufficient for me. Help me realize it... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Heb. 4:16

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 9

Accountability

One of the major reason why Christians have fallen short of character, is due to lack of accountability. Lack of accountability in finance, in sexual purity, in relationship, in family matters and many more.

Ask yourself these questions:

1. Have you been with a woman/ man anywhere this past week that might seen as compromising?
2. Have you been honest in your financial dealings or lied to anyone?
3. Have you indulged to any type of porn or explicit jokes?
4. Did you spend quality time with Jesus and His Word?
5. Have you neglected your family or your colleagues?
6. Have you lived up to the Call Jesus has called you to?
7. Do you treat the Holy Eucharist/ Church Service with contempt?

I strongly suggest that you get a trusted friend of the same gender as an 'accountability partner.'

Download this accountability software for free: <http://www.w3watch.com/w3watchfreebuy.html>

W3watch is free accountability software program helping with online integrity. Whenever you browse the internet and access a site which may contain questionable material, the program will record the site name, time, and date the site was visited. A person of your choice (an accountability partner) will receive an email containing a list of all possible questionable sites you may have visited within the month.

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.
Eecl. 4:9-10

Each of us is accountable to God for our personal holiness. At the same time, God never intended that we should battle sin single-handedly... Is it sometimes hard to confess my need and ask for help? Absolutely! It requires that I humble myself and acknowledge that I don't have it all together. The very pride that keeps you from taking off your mask and getting real is the same pride that will cause you to fall into sin. Humbling yourself by letting others into your life and allowing them to help you and hold you accountable will release the sanctifying, transforming grace of God in your life.

Nancy Leigh DeMoss - Holiness,

Reflections Accountability

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Putting yourself under
accountability will safe guard your
soul. It will help you in your
spiritual journey.

Write down the areas in your life
that you need accountability.

Spent five minutes in surrender to
God.

Write down how you would like to be accountable

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I
pray that you send me an
accountability partner
that I may live holy..
(Continue praying as the
Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. James 5:19-20

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 10

Teachable Spirit

“The king (Rehoboam) answered the people harshly. He disregarded the advice that the older men had given him and spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”
1 Kings 12:13-14.

From this we learn that some who are in leadership are 'UNTEACHABLE' and do not take sound advice from elders who have journeyed with God. If you are not a good learning disciple, you will never be a learned leader, instead, you would be a leader with liability. Many young people call themselves as prophets nowadays and cause more damage than good. God calls everyone to be of sober judgment and to be teachable when God's servants corrects or admonishes us.

evidence of a teachable spirit

1. Faithfulness to the Church without contempt
2. Openness to submit to another for instruction or counsel.
3. Daily prayer and seasonal fasting for humbling yourself before God
4. A willingness to submit to godly leaders of the Church.
5. Being honorable in character
6. Fulfilling the task given to you by the group leader
7. Being a Ministry team player and not thinking higher of yourself.

Poverty and disgrace come to him who ignores instruction, but whoever heeds reproof is honored.
Prov. 13:18



are you
teachable?

One of the truest characteristics of a disciple (student / follower) is that of being a “disciplined learner”...in essence, one who is teachable. There can be no “discipleship” without a willingness to learn, unlearn, and relearn, nor “mentorship” without submission, accountability and humility.

As we examine ourselves for hints of an “Unteachable Spirit”, clear indicators can be found in statements and actions such as, “I ONLY read the Bible, I have no need to read ANYTHING else.”

Elder Benjamin Long

Reflections

Teachable Spirit

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

If you want to grow with God, allow Him to teach you through His people.

Accept correction & rebuke as honey to you soul. Don't be in contempt.

Write down the areas in your life where you feel that you are unteachable and what has the unteachability done to you.

What is God telling you to do with your unteachability? Discern His will.

Spend five minutes in absolute silence and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, give me the grace to be humble and open to Your correction....
(Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid. Prov. 12:1

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 11

Chastity

All the baptized are called to chastity. The Christian has "put on Christ," the model for all chastity. All Christ's faithful are called to lead a chaste life in keeping with their particular states of life. At the moment of his Baptism, the Christian is pledged to lead his affective life in chastity. CCC 2348

Sex is a beautiful gift of God. Chastity is not suppressing the gift nor denying it, but living in the freedom to live with it in purity and then exchanging the gift of sexuality with our spouse. If we look at being sexually pure as a burden and a feeling that cannot be reserved till marriage, then we stand in need of God's grace.

Celibacy does not reject sexuality. It is a misconceived notion to think that celibacy is nullifying of one's sexuality. Those who are celibate, commune with God and their sexuality is expressed in the Holy Eucharist where they derive the true meaning of union – giving of one's self as a gift, in love. In the nuptial meaning of the body, we discover that our bodies reveal our calling to make a total gift of ourselves to God.

Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy. "Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end." CCC 2339:

CCC 2350 Those who are engaged to marry are called to live chastity in continence. They should see in this time of



testing a discovery of mutual respect, an apprenticeship in fidelity, and the hope of receiving one another from God. They should reserve for marriage the expressions of affection that belong to married love. They will help each other grow in chastity.

Reflections

Chastity

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Don't look at sex as lust. Look at sex as a beautiful gift from God to exchange it with your spouse.

Don't be afraid of sexual sins. Live in freedom that Christ has set you free from bondages.

Write down the issues you have with sex and confront it.

Spend five minutes in taking stock of your sexuality – mind, heart & body.

Write down how you intend on staying pure. Ask God for grace.

PRAYER: Dear Lord,
You know how difficult it is to stay pure. Help me... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

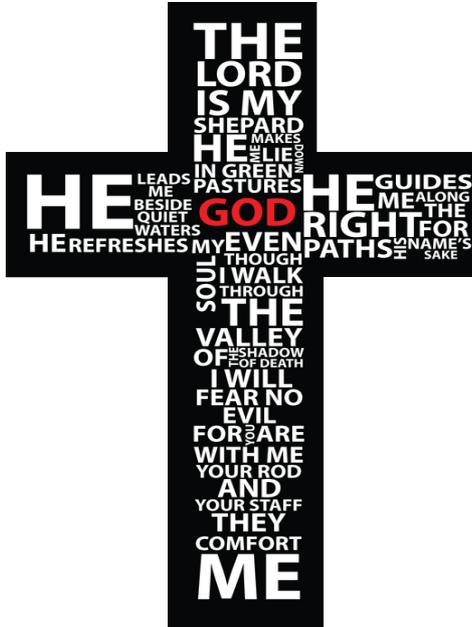
Note: "Only the chaste man and the chaste woman are capable of true love." --Pope John Paul II

A Journey to Holiness

DAY 12

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

Self Mastery



God created us to be master over everything, including our emotions, desires our actions. We should never let the accessories of our lives to master us. The love for God will make you master of the world but the love for the world will make you a slave sin.

Celibacy calls for self mastery. Self mastery means that I am in control of my desire. My desires are not in control of me. Self mastery is the true meaning of freedom. "Here we mean freedom above all as self-mastery (self-dominion)." Such freedom "is indispensable in order for man to be able to ... find himself fully' through a 'sincere gift of self' (GS, 24)" (TOB 15:2).

"Self mastery is a long and exacting work. One can never consider it acquired once and for all. It presupposes renewed effort at all stages." CCC 2342

"Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God's own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God."

St. Leo the Great

Reflections

Self Mastery

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Refuse to be a slave to your passions and desires that pull you away from God.

Sincerely seek to reform.

Write down the areas in your life where you need self mastery

Spend five minutes in seeking God about being a master of your emotions, desires, etc.

Write down how you intend in being master over your emotions, desires, etc.

PRAYER: Lord, make me a master over my emotions & feelings. Deliver me from all that hinders...
(Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 1 Cor. 9:25

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 13

Dealing with Guilt

Many times we are not able to do God's will because of the guilt that we carry within us. Guilt can be a tool to convict us of our wrongs, but it can also be a tool to condemn us, which is not of God.

Many Christians are living defeated lives because of the condemnation of guilt. Guilt robs our peace, pulls us down, gives a sense of being unworthy of God's love and forgiveness. Because of this, we lose our faith and confidence in God.

We need to understand that Jesus cleanses us from our sins, and sets us free from the guilt of those sins. If we want to live victoriously, we need to have a guilt-free conscience. 1 Timothy 3:9, "Keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience."

A good way to deal with guilt, is to address the sins that get you into guilt. Ask God to deliver you from those sins.



God has given us emotions and a conscience so when we sin, we are reminded of offending God. We need to immediately seek God's forgiveness. But we should never stop at seeking forgiveness, we should also cry out for deliverance as St. Paul cried out "Wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:24-25)

Understand that God is greater than your guilt and shame. He will remove your inner disgrace and fill you with His glorious grace.

Keep your life in check. Fasting and praying helps.

Reflections

Dealing with Guilt

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Ask God to reveal the guilt that holds you captive.

Write down what God reveals to you.

Write down how you would avoid the guilt that condemns.

Spend five minutes in simply thanking God for delivering you from guilt.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you deliver me from guilt and condemnation ... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 Jn. 1:9

Reflections Overcoming Rejection

...that leads to sin.

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Overcome rejection by asking God to fill you with His love.

Write down who and what makes you feel rejected. What provokes rejection in your life.

Spent five minutes in receiving God's love and acceptance

Write down how you think God can fill you with His love and a secure self-image

PRAYER: Dear Lord
Jesus, help me
overcome these
rejections. I know that
You love me... (Continue
praying as the Holy
Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.
Psalm 51:17

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 15

Christian Ethos

Christian ethos is characterized by a transformation of the human person's conscience and attitudes ... (TOB 45:3)

All of our legalism or 'name sake' religious attitudes will not give us the Christian ethos, it will only take us back to the law that puts us in guilt. Jesus made this peculiar statement

"For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 5:20) The Pharisees in a sense were a community much like our present Catholic community where we think that by going for Holy Mass, Confession and visitation of shrines will bring about a religious fulfillment. No, we are sadly mistaken. Jesus tells us yes, we may do all of what our tradition teaches, but we must also live sanctified lives that transcends outward spirituality.

We need to "hunger and thirst for righteousness" that Christ may fill us with holiness.

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. (Matt. 23:25-26) Jesus has now raised the bar and He tells that we don't need the law to convict us, but we need an inner religiosity rather than a mere outer expression of religion.

Ethos or Ethics is a rule Jesus said, "you heard the ethic not to commit adultery." But this is not enough to change the human heart.

Christian Ethos refers to the "inner transformation" which is our heart, the source of all desires. That is why Jesus said:

But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matt. 5:28)

my  belongs to jesus

Reflections

Christian Ethos

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Jesus has called you to a new ethic. An ethic that is not outward but now internal. An ethic of the heart!

Write down how you struggle with inner righteousness.

Write down how you would like God to help you with the transformation of your heart.

Spent five minutes in seeking God to reveal His heart to you.

PRAYER: Create in me a pure heart O God and remove all sins and ... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: This needs to be our daily cry: "Create in me a pure heart, O God" Ps. 51:10

A Journey to Holiness

DAY 16

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

Pride

The lesson of Ezriah the King of Judah

Uzziah, became the king of Judah at the age of sixteen where he ruled for fifty-two years and he did what was right in the eyes of God during the days of Zechariah who instructed him in the fear of God – and God gave him success. (2 Chron. 26:1-6)

He had a well trained army and in war, God gave him victory over the Philistines and his fame spread as far as the border of Egypt, because he had become very powerful. He built towers in Jerusalem, in the desert and dug many cisterns. He had the most advanced weapons for war. (26:6-14)

His fame spread far and wide, for he was greatly helped until he became powerful.” (26:15)

TURNING POINT - But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God. “He was unfaithful to the Lord his God, and entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. Azariah the priest with eighty other courageous priests of the Lord followed him in. They confronted King Uzziah and said, “It is not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful; and you will not be honored by the Lord God.” 2 Chronicles 26:16-21

Uzziah, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, became angry. While he was raging at the priests in their presence before the incense altar in the Lord’s temple, leprosy broke out on his forehead. When Azariah the chief priest and all the other priests looked at him, they saw that he had leprosy on his forehead, so they hurried him out. Indeed, he himself was eager to leave, because the Lord had afflicted him. King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in a separate house — leprosy, and banned from the temple of the Lord.

In his pride, Uzziah placed himself above God’s established authorities (the priests). Pride convinced him that he was above everyone else and unaccountable to no one; he felt that he was the king, after all, and could do whatever he wanted. Beware of arrogance and pride!

Reflections

Pride

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

What did Uzziah's pride and arrogance do for him? It brought God's judgment, separation from the house of God, separation from those he loved, and greatly reduced the scope and length of his reign as King. Uzziah became a prisoner to his own pride and arrogance.

Write down about your experience with arrogance and pride.

Spent five minutes in reflection

Write down how you will deal with pride.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I give me the grace to overcome pride and surrender to Your holiness... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. Proverbs 11:2

Reflections

Humility

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Be ever aware that God opposes the proud but is very gracious to us when we ask Him for strength.

Write down how you sometimes struggle with having humility

Spend five minutes in seeking humility that comes from God.

Write down how you would like God to make you humble.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that I be humble at heart with an attitude to serve... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Pride leads us to focus on ourselves. Humility leads us back out to God and others.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 18

Unshackled

“Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” Gal. 5:1

As a man was passing the elephants, he suddenly stopped, confused by the fact that these huge creatures were being held by only a feeble shackle like chain tied to their front leg and in no cage. It was obvious that the elephants could, at anytime, break away from their bonds but for some reason, they did not.

He saw a trainer nearby and asked why these animals just stood there and made no attempt to get away. The trainer replied, “when they are very young and much smaller we use the same size shackle to tie them and, at that age, it’s enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the shackle can still hold them, so they never try to break free.”

The man was amazed. These animals could at any time break free from their bonds but because they believed they couldn’t, they were stuck right where they were.

Like the elephants, many Christians believe that we are bound by our past mistakes and sins. We look down on ourselves and with that insecurity, we allow people to trample on us and cause us to sin even more.

God’s word tells us that “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Gal. 5) Christ has set us free so that we may no longer carry such burdens.

The Psalmist said “My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.” (Psalm 38:4) Our sins overwhelm us as a heavy burden when we do not allow Jesus to help us unload that burden. The load of burden we carry are sins, unforgiveness, hurt, anger, anxiety and all of this will never give us the freedom to walk as faithful Christians.

You may be shackled into a sin or in a bondage of sin. God is able to deliver you and set you free. Going for confession could lessen your burden and then to a godly counsellor to help you on a journey to holiness.

You may be dead in your sins. But know this, Christ did not come to make bad people good, He came to make dead people, alive.

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” Jn. 10:10



Reflections

Unshackled

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Christ has set you free is all you need to remember. Your past is gone, you are made new. Don't keep messing up. Have a spiritual mentor who can journey with you.

Write down the areas you feel that you may be shackled.

Tell the Lord how you would like to be unshackled

Spend five minutes in absolute silence and allow the Holy Spirit unshackle you.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you deliver me from my sins and heal every area of my life that causes me to be shackled. (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: How often I failed in my duty to God, because I was not leaning on the strong pillar of prayer. St. Teresa of Avila

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

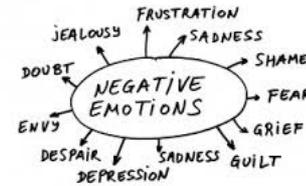
DAY 19

dealing with **Bitterness**

"Suppose that God wishes to fill you with honey [a symbol of God's tenderness and goodness]; but if you are full of vinegar, where will you put the honey?" The vessel, that is your heart, must first be enlarged and then cleansed, freed from the vinegar and its taste. This requires hard work and is painful, but in this way alone do we become suited to that for which we are destined"
POPE BENEDICT XVI - SPE SALVI

Experiences that comes from our hurts, failures, disappointments, tend to cause us to be bitter. When we become bitter, it prevents us from being loved, receiving love from God and from others. We tend to look at others with suspicion and this hinders relationships.

Some men are bitter with their mothers that they take it out on their wives as a soft target. Many women who have issues with their fathers, target their husbands, emotionally.



The best way to get rid of bitterness, is to deal with it by forgiving to the point that it no longer bothers you. Because, if you do not forgive, you would tend to take revenge on people or perhaps on yourself. Bitterness is dangerous and destructive.

Medical science says that 87% to 95% of current mental, physical and emotional illnesses come from our thought life. So when we process these bitter thoughts, we are on the journey to ruin.

The most important thing is not to be bitter over life's disappointments. Learn to let go of the past... and recognize that everyday won't be sunny. And when you find yourself lost in the darkness and despair... remember it's only in the black of night you can see the stars, and those stars will lead you back home.
(One Three Hill)

Reflections

dealing with Bitterness

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Remove the vinegar from your heart. Ask God to fill it with honey.

Write down what the things that you are bitter about and why.

Spend five minutes in forgiving all those whom you are bitter with.

Write and ask God to fill you with His tenderness & goodness (Honey)

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you remove the vinegar and replace it with honey.. Lord... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Let your past experience make you better, not bitter.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 20

Christian Character

this IS what it takes to BE a CHRISTIAN

“Put on then, as *God's chosen ones, holy and*

beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility,

meekness, and patience, bearing with one

another and, if one has a complaint against another,

forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you

also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds

everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of

Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in

one body. And be thankful.” Col. 3:12-15

Moral excellence does not come over night. If we are to work towards receiving the character of Christ, we must be tried and tested before being approved. This is hard work as we have to endure all temptations, sufferings, rejections and injustice. It is never easy without God's grace.

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved...”

2 Tim. 2:25

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior, because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

I Pet. 1:14”

Reflections

Christian Character

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The only way to attain the Christian character, is to allow ourselves to be tried, tested and approved.

Write down how you find it difficult to live as a Christian

Spend five minutes in meditating on God's own character

Write down how you think you could live as a Christian, approved by God

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you help me to become a good Christian... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." Rom. 5:3-5

Reflections

God's Presence

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:W

Write down what will distinguish you from the world of unbelievers?

Spend five minutes in invoking God's presence in your life!

Write down and ask God for His presence to always to be with you!

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you cause Your holy presence to manifest in my life... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: The presence of God in your life is the absence of sin in your life.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 22

Taming the tongue

"If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless." James 1:26.

It seems that our religiosity majorly depends on how we tame our tongue and how we bring it into submission of the Holy Spirit.

"Sins of the tongue, deliberate or innocent have destroyed Churches, prayer groups, ruined more marriages and broke up relationship than any other kind of sin." We are accountable for what we say.

"... for from the fulness of the heart the mouth speaks." (Matt. 12:34)
The Word of God testifies to what is true. We speak what we have already conceived in our hearts. What is restless in our hearts we speak. What we have not confessed in our hearts, we speak.

As Christians, we should come to a point where we can boldly say:
"My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness."
(Prov. 8:7)

*Lord, make my words as sweet as honey,
for tomorrow I may have to eat them!*



Gossip and slander have become acceptable sins in the Church

The Bible mentions many kinds of tongues, Which Tongue are you?

- a flattering tongue (Psalm 5:9)
- a proud tongue (Psalm 12:3, 73:9)
- a lying tongue (Psalm 109:2, Prov. 6:17)
- a deceitful tongue (Psalm 120:2)
- a perverted tongue (Prov. 10:31, 17:20)
- a soothing tongue (Prov. 15:4)
- a healing tongue (Prov. 12:18)
- a destructive tongue (Prov. 17:4)
- a mischievous and wicked tongue (Psalm 10:7)
- a soft tongue (Prov. 25:15)
- a backbiting tongue (Prov. 25:23)

Reflections Taming the tongue

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The Bible is very clear that every word we utter has consequences. We need to take custody of our tongues before we get hurt.

Write down in what ways you have not been able to take custody of your tongue & the damage caused.

Write down how you would like God to bless you with a holy tongue.

Spend five minutes in asking God to delete destructive words from your vocabulary.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that You take custody of my tongue... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness." James 3:9

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 23



Taking custody of your eyes

A certain pious King sent two messengers successively to the Queen with a communication from himself. The first messenger returned and brought an answer from the Queen, which he delivered exactly. But of the Queen herself he said nothing because he had always kept his eyes modestly cast down and had not raised them to look at her.

The King receives the two messengers. The second messenger also returned. But after delivering in a few words the answer of the Queen, he began to speak warmly of her beauty. "Truly, my lord," he said, "the Queen is the most fair and lovely woman I have ever seen, and thou art indeed happy and blessed to have her for thy spouse."

At this the King was angry and said: "Wicked servant, how did you dare to cast your eyes upon my royal spouse? I believe that you may covet what you have so curiously gazed upon."

Then he commanded the other messenger to be recalled, and said to him: "What do you think of the Queen?"

St. Francis of Assisi used to exhort his brethren frequently to guard and mortify their senses with the utmost care. He especially insisted on the custody of the eyes, and he used this parable of a King's two messengers to demonstrate how the purity of the eyes reveals the chastity of the soul.

He replied, "She listened very willingly and humbly to the message of the King and replied most prudently."

But the Monarch again asked him, "But what do you think of her countenance? Did she not seem to you very fair and beautiful, more so than any other woman?"

The servant replied, "My lord, I know nothing of the Queen's beauty. Whether she be fair or not, it is for thee alone to know and judge. My duty was only to convey thy message to her."

The King rejoined, "You have answered well and wisely. You who have such chaste and modest eyes shall be my chamberlain. From the purity of your eyes I see the chastity of your soul. You are worthy to have the care of the royal apartments confided to you."

Then, turning to the other messenger, he said: "But you, who have such unmortified eyes, depart from the palace. You shall not remain in my house, for I have no confidence in your virtue."

The Works of the Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi, London: R. Washbourne, 1882, pp. 254-255

Reflections

Taking custody of your eyes

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

If you don't take custody of your eyes, you will face the devil head on.

Write down how your eyes trouble you with lust, greed, envy, etc.

Mortify your eyes,
lest you look upon God with contempt!

Spend five minutes in getting a hold of your eyes and what is seen.

Write down how you would like God to help you to take custody of your eyes

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus,
thank You for this
opportunity to take
custody of my eyes...
(Continue praying as the
Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: "The eye of the adulterer watches for dusk; he thinks, 'No eye will see me,' and he keeps his face concealed." Job 24:15

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 24

A Sound Mind



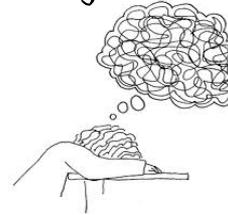
The Holy Spirit is the author of Power – the power to forgive, the power to overcome, the power to heal. He is the author of the Power of Love – to love God in worship, to love God through loving others. He is the author of a Sound Mind and therefore, we can rely on the Spirit of God to renew our minds, to take every thought captive to obey God and to think and conceive holy thoughts about God and people.

“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things” Col. 3:2

The devil knows that if our minds are occupied with the things of this world or if our minds are filled with anxious thoughts, we can be defeated. When we constantly set our minds on the things of the world, for our need and our greed, and how we are to fend for it, we stop relying on God by not setting our minds above.

Our thoughts are real, It occupies mental real estate space in our brain. When there is an overload of negative thoughts, there is a mental break down.

Thoughts are Real



When we process bad thoughts, when we make bad choices and we hang on to anything that is negative, anger, abuse, irritation, frustration,

And all the negative sides of emotions – it's not just a harmless thing, it is a physical change that occurs in your brain.

We are designed and wired that every time we think - we build thoughts and as we are thinking. If we choose to think in a negative direction we are still going to build thoughts.

Scientists say, that **we are wired for love.** (God is a God of grace and He says to do good to live well.) (Gen. 4:6-7). So our bodies are designed and aligned like that. So if we're going to choose the negative it's not the norm for the body. It's the highjack.

A man who is of sound mind is one who knows how to trust in God

Reflections

A Sound Mind

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

All through our life, we have allowed ourselves to be filled with toxic thoughts that are painful, lustful, prideful and full of sin.

Write down the thoughts that trouble you and cause you to not have a sound mind.

Spent five minutes in meditating on the meaning of having a sound mind

Write down the action plan you have for having a sound mind

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, please cleanse my mind and fill it with thoughts of power, love and self control... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Rom. 10:5

Reflections

Forming Godly Relationships

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

The best relationship one could have, is first with God and then with family. If somewhere you have not been kind or faithful, renew it.

Write down where you need to fix your relationships and with whom. Also the relationship that are destroying you and need to be broken off.

Write down how you would like God come into your relationships and heal.

Spent five minutes in seeking God for healing of broken relationships.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I need your intervention and your loving friendship. Heal my broken relationships ... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice. Prov. 27:9

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 26

Reconciliation

Christianity seems to contradict the world in all shapes and forms. Bless those who curse you, pray for those who persecute you... love your enemies... Is this religion for real or is it a fantasy?

Sr. Rani Maria a Franciscan Clarist Nun while serving the poor and oppressed in Udainagar in India, was brutally butchered to death in 1995 because the rich and powerful were angered by her mission.

Samandar Singh was convicted of her murder. He was tried and sentenced to prison, where he spent eleven years. During that time, his wife divorced him and his first son died. Behind prison walls, he began plotting how he could take revenge against the man who pushed him to kill the nun. But he also received a visit from another nun, Sister Selmi Paul, who happened to be the murdered nun's own sister. She hugged him and called him brother. He was profoundly touched by it, so much so that from this embrace his journey of repentance began. He gave up plans for revenge and accepted the sorrow caused by the murder. Eventually, Samandar was released because of a petition signed by Sister Rani's family, the provincial of the Clarist congregation and the bishop of Indore.

When his release was slow in coming, a delegation went to see the local governor to plead his case. "Only you Christians can truly forgive," the Governor said. "You are a great example. Go, I shall do all I can to get him released."

Once he was free again, Samandar began to treat Sister Rani's family as his own.

"I regularly visit her tomb," he said. "for me, it is like a sanctuary of peace and strength." "I want everyone to know that Christians work to make India great. The missionaries give us hope through their service, which is to make us a strong and independent people."

MATTHEW 5:43-45

"You have heard that it was said,
'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'
But I tell you:

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES



and pray for those who persecute you,
that you may be sons of your Father in heaven."

You may not be able to reconcile with someone who raped you or a family member or even murdered a loved one. What you can do is, remove all hatred and forgive that person in the words of Christ "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Reflections

Reconciliation

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Are you angry, bitter or having a burden of unforgiveness or even hatred? _____

Ask God to reveal to you all that is hidden. _____

Write down what you feel about those whom have hurt you. _____

Spent five minutes in first reconciling with God.

Write down what you think God will want you to do with those painful emotions

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, please give me the grace to deal with all these damaged emotions... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them." 2 Cor. 5:18-19

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 27

A Disciplined Lifestyle

"Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air." 1 Cor. 9:26

A Christian is someone who has a vision and a mission in life, not someone who is aimless.

Many Christians quit going to Church, to prayer groups or even hate the word of God – all in an attempt to escape “discipline” that has been camouflaged by a hundred and one excuses. Such people are restless and unstable in their character because they refuse to follow the biblical principals of a godly character.

The kind of discipline a Christian needs, is not an alarm clock to waken them or a time card to ensure they clock in the right number of working hours but a discipline that stems from the heart and from a grateful heart of love for God.

Many Christians have a moral poverty because they are self indulgent and are more occupied in satisfying their own needs that they forget God.

Christianity and the presentation of the Gospel has become a sales gimmick while our worship has become performance.



Our true Christian discipline is revealed only in times of adversity, sickness and persecution and temptations.

Many people want to serve God, but they want to serve God according to their own schedule, not according the schedule of God.

In April of 1941, the world famous violinist, Fritz Kreisler, was forced by an accident to lay aside his violin for many weeks. When finally he turned his instrument again, he said, "*My fingers were so stiff that playing seemed impossible, but my desire was so intense that I told my fingers, you are my slaves. I am the General and I order you to play. You know they played!*" The discipline of years paid off!

Reflections

A Disciplined Lifestyle

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

If you want to be a disciplined Christian, then watch your habits and patters of rest and behavior.

Your prayer discipline will be based on your love for God.

Write down what you feel is a Christian disciplined life

Write down how you intend in being disciplined. FASTING | PRAYER | READING

Spnd five minutes in asking God to give you the grace to be disciplined.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, teach me Your ways of discipline and honesty ... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "The consistent discipline of a Christian and friendship with Jesus will result in us becoming like Him."

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 28

Christian Dignity

"Christian, recognize your dignity. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness" (Pope St. Leo the Great).



If there is one thing that Christians have forgotten about is to uphold the dignity of being the Body of Christ. We seem to be going back to Sodom and Gomorrah.

By his reason, man recognizes the voice of God which urges him "to do what is good and avoid what is evil." Everyone is obliged to follow this law, which makes itself heard in conscience and is fulfilled in the love of God and of neighbor. Living a moral life bears witness to the dignity of the person. CCC 1706.

Apart from God, we have no dignity as we merely are because of the fall of man. Dignity is what God does for us – He makes us holy and holiness is what God does in us and not something that we have in ourselves or do for ourselves.

The Human dignity has been swallowed by the scandal of society and false liberation.

"Scandal can be provoked by laws or institutions, by fashion or opinion. Therefore, they are guilty of scandal who establish laws or social structures leading to the decline of morals and the corruption of religious practice, or to social conditions that, intentionally or not, make Christian conduct and obedience to the Commandments difficult and practically impossible." This is also true of business leaders who make rules encouraging fraud, teachers who provoke their children to anger, or manipulators of public opinion who turn it away from moral values." CCC 2286

In working endlessly and living like mad men and women, we sometimes think that we have earned dignity. But all of our doings have not given us freedom or dignity, rather, it is our lack of dignity that is wasting away in gluttony, greed, pride and false fulfillment.

Reflections

Christian Dignity

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Being holy is a great sign of upholding our human dignity.

Write down in what way you have been undignified as a Christian

Write down how you would like to be more dignified as a Christian

Spend five minutes in meditating on the meaning of Christian Dignity.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I have been undignified at times, pls help me... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Human beings have value because God values us.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 29

Discernment for marriage

"Her (Mary) husband Joseph was an honorable man..." Matt. 1:19

Never, ever marry a man without first discerning if he is a man of honor. Whether he will embrace you or disgrace you. Whether he lusts after women or whether he honors women. If you let him abuse you or use you even for once, he will abuse you again.

Unfortunately, in Christendom, there are a lot of foolish men and women with loose morals, enticed by the world.

"How hard it is to find a capable wife! She is worth far more than jewels! Her husband puts his confidence in her, and he will never be poor." Proverbs 31:10-11

Too many women, in the guise of trying to be equal with men, have become equally perverted with perverted men. These women in turn develop a questionable character with the hurt they receive.

"A wife of noble character is her husband's crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones." Prov. 12:4

Divorces in the Church are increasing because Christian men and women have gone down the road of dishonor.

If you are seeking God for a spouse, then first put yourself under accountability with a spiritual elder. If you find yourself interested in someone and that person is also interested in you, then both of you should discern the interest under the spiritual discernment of a spiritual elder.



A Marriage will have heaven or hell experiences. But we must understand the purgative or purgatory stage in this life as God, through marriage, prepares a married couple for the union of Christ and His Bride, the Church. The purgatory experiences sanctifies us for the coming of Jesus as the Bridegroom.

If you are in an undiscerned relationship, get out of it. If you are with a person who is dishonorable, get out of it. Separation may hurt, but it's the honorable thing to do.

Reflections

Discernment for marriage

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Proverbs 31 - This is your prayer for the type of spouse you want to marry. (male/ female)

Write these Scripture here...

Galatians 5:22 - These are the fruits you should pray to be born from your relationship both now and in the future.

Ephesians 5:21 - This is the type of marriage relationship you should seek to live out.

Spend five minutes in seeking God for your spouse.

Write and ask God for the type of godly spouse you want.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I seek only Your holy will for my marriage... cleanse me of my past... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: ASK God the cleanse you from your past and to heal you emotionally, mentally and sexually. Keep yourself free from sin as you would expect your future spouse to be the same.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 30

Hearing God's Voice

The uniqueness of Christianity as a religion, is that it is the only religion that professes a personal relationship with its Creator by calling Him "father" right from the beginning and all through eternity. Jesus always wanted us to know the father and He declared, "This is eternal life that they may know (God)" (Jn. 17:2).

Some how, Christianity has behaved as a fatherless religion because we do not quite obey Him. We misbehave because we have closed our ears to His holy voice. Like sheep, we have all gone astray and we don't recognize His voice.

The word of God still laments: *"To whom can I speak and give warning? Who will listen to me? Their ears are closed so they cannot hear. The word of the Lord is offensive to them, they find no pleasure in it."* Jer 6:10 (NIV)

How do we hear God's voice

1 – Stillness of Thoughts

God can speak to us through our thoughts or through visions, through what we see, etc. That is why we need to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" 2 Cor. 10:5 because God may be speaking to us. Be still, be renewed.



2 – Stillness of Heart

Even if you're in the busiest place, God is still able to speak to you in the stillness of your heart. Especially when you are in trouble and you just cannot help it, the Scripture holds true when God says *"Be still and know that I am God."* Ps. 46:10

You're not able to pray, just sit down or prostrate before God and be still.

3 – Stillness of Soul

"I have stilled and quietened my soul." Ps. 131:2

Soul refers to the entire make of the human being, dealing with our senses. There are times that our entire make up is struggling to know God or the be delivered by God. Stop whatever you're doing for a brief moment and allow God in the stillness of your soul.

3 – Stillness of Scripture

"Blessed is the one ...whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night." Ps. 119:2

Meditating on God's word could be your best source of hearing God's voice. It's Scriptural.

Reflections

Hearing God's Voice

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Learning to hear God's voice could be the best learning of your life.

In your business, ask God to keep you calm enough to listen to His voice.

Write down what you feel about hearing God's voice.

Spend five minutes in listening to God's voice.

Write down what God is telling you now. Listen to His voice!

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, give me the grace and serenity to listen to Your holy voice... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue; God's voice is its most essential part. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that He will listen to mine." - Andrew Murray

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 31

Prayer



“ Christians, don't "say" your prayers. But "pray" ”

Our prayer life will be proportionate to the love we have for God. Because we as humans always want to be around those whom we love.

The meaning of prayer in its true sense

is communing with God and invoking of His presence. Prayer will give us that intimacy with God as God knows our very being. He is faithful, He is kind, He is a loving God. *"The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him" Lam.3:25*

The moment we look at prayer as a ritual or become legalistic "one hour" Christians, we lose our "relationship" with God. Prayer is to *"pray without ceasing"* 1 Thes. 5:17. Prayer is to constantly receive God's love and to then love Him in return.

Getting to know God on an intellectual level can happen through reading but getting to know God internally, can happen only through prayer that brings about a revelation of God.

"PRAYER IS NOT MONOLOGUE, BUT DIALOGUE; GOD'S VOICE IS ITS MOST ESSENTIAL PART.

LISTENING TO GOD'S VOICE IS THE SECRET OF THE ASSURANCE THAT HE WILL LISTEN TO MINE"

- ANDREW MURRAY

If you find yourself struggling with prayer in keeping with one hour. Don't do that. Don't set a time frame for your prayer, it has to be a relationship. Be disciplined in communing with God. Let prayer to flow freely, lovingly and not ritualistically. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide.

While praying, it would also help to read the Holy Bible and meditate on God's word.

Remember, Christianity is a relationship of love, with a loving God who cares for us, who delights in our well being.

Reflections

Prayer

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Don't get caught up in guilt of not praying for one hour. Get caught up in freedom to commune with God.

Write down the difficulties you have with your prayer life.

Spend five minutes in enjoying your dialogue with God.

Write down how you intend on praying with freedom.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, thank You that You are my personal savior and that I can speak to You... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: The relationship between you and God is a relationship of freedom that comes from love.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 32

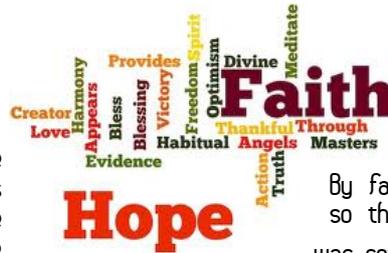
Faith

We have “faith” in people because we “believe” in them with our past experiences of their faithfulness. Inasmuch the same way, since the time of creation, we are aware the countless people who have believed in God and put their faith in Him and He always honored that faith. As a matter of fact, to please God, we need to have faith in Him “And without faith it is impossible to please God.” (Heb. 11:6)

The Bible tells us that only if we are righteous we would have faith in God “But my righteous one will live by faith” (Heb 10:38) The Bible tells us that in order to be saved, we need to have faith “those who have faith and are saved.” (Heb 10:39)

Read about those in the Bible who trust God and God gave them victory...

“Faith pleases God.”



By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did... he was commended as *righteous.*

By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death... he was commended as one who *pleased God.*

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became *heir of the righteousness* that is in keeping with faith.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his *inheritance*, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

By faith the Israelites *passed through* the Red Sea as on dry land, but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

By faith the *walls of Jericho fell*, after the army had marched around them for seven days.

Reflections

Faith

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Write your name in the brackets

By faith (your name) _____ pleased God
and honored God. By faith _____ passed through
the difficulties in life. By faith _____ offered to
God praise and worship...

Spend five minutes in understanding
God's faithfulness.

Write down how you would like express your faith in God.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I
pray that you give me
great faith as your
servants of the past ...
(Continue praying as the
Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: Don't have mountain faith where you cannot move a mustard seed. But have mustard seed faith so you can move mountains.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 33

Freedom in Christ

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

The very same freedom that we have to love, gives us to opportunity to sin. When we struggle with sin, we wonder why God gives us the freedom to sin. If God takes away our freedom to sin, our freedom to love also goes.

If we think the way to avoid sin is by changing our freedom so we cannot sin - with same chord we are changing our freedom to love.

We need to stand firm and in liberty from all bondage of sin. We should not be entangled with the yoke of bondage of the vices of the world.

Many rag pickers who are taken into refuge homes for care, sometimes go back to picking rags because they are so accustomed to doing so. Inasmuch the same way, we who are delivered from the bondage of sin, sometimes go back into sin because of the drawing of the engraved habitual sins.



Most of us do not understand the meaning of freedom. Some of us abuse the freedom that Christ has given us. Some of us do not accept the freedom that Christ has given us and say that we need time. Before we know it, we have been in the same bondage for years and still asking for time to get out of that bondage.

Some people do not want to accept Christ and His freedom because they feel that the moment they accept Christ, they will have to give up their vices. It's like the Eskimo story. *"Eskimo: "If I did not know about God and sin, would I go to hell?" Priest: "No, not if you did not know." Eskimo: "Then why did you tell me?""*

It was at the point of suicide that I met Christ and received His freedom. Since then, I have taken His freedom to set the captives free. What is your bondage? Your freedom awaits you, for it is for freedom that Christ set you free! The good news to a SUICIDAL person is FREEDOM!

In almost everything that touches our everyday life on earth, God is pleased when we're pleased. He wills that we be as free as birds to soar and sing our maker's praise without anxiety. - A W Tozer

Reflections

Freedom in Christ

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Freedom is the greatest gift that God has given us. He has given us the right to choose.

Write down the areas in life that you feel trapped and why.

Spend five minutes in asking God to set you free!

Write down what freedom means to you and how you are going to experience it.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that you give me the grace to experience Your freedom... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh." Gal. 5:13

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 34

A Pure Heart

“Purity is a requirement of love”

“Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart” Ps 24:3-4

From the Holy Scriptures we see, that God reveals Himself to those whose ways are pure and the hearts that conceive no evil. A person with a pure heart is a person who has been purged of carnal behavior and cravings.

How can we expect a God that is all holy to indwell in us and how can we expect to see God in our situations when we are so unholy?

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matt. 5:8)

We need to also look at people as holy and not be judgmental but to be pure “To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure.” (Titus 1:15)

create
in [me] a
CLEAN

HEART, O GOD,

and renew
A RIGHT
spirit
WITHIN
ME

“I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them, I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God.”
Ezekiel 11:19-20

When our hearts are divided with the cravings of the world and the love of God, we will

struggle to be pure. We need to ask God to remove the hardness from our hearts and make it soft that we may absorb God's love.

If you desire to have a pure heart, only God can do that for you. Plead with Him as David pleaded, love Him as David did and then your heart will be after God's heart as David was a man after God's own heart.



Reflections

A Pure Heart

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

On our own, we can never have a pure heart. That is why David asked God to create a pure heart in him.

Write down your definition of a pure heart.

Write your Psalm 51 to God.

Spent five minutes in pleading with God to give you a pure heart.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, create in me a pure heart... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." 2 Tim. 2:22

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 35

Modesty

“Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons.

Modesty protects the mystery of persons and their love. It encourages patience and moderation in loving relationships. Modesty is decency. It inspires one’s choice of clothing. It keeps silence or reserve where there is evident risk of unhealthy curiosity. It is discreet. There is a modesty of the feelings as well as of the body. Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of improper fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies. Modesty exists as an intuition of the spiritual dignity proper to man. Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person” (CCC 2521-2522, 2523, 2524).

Both men and women are called to be modest in not only how we dress but also in how we live our lives, in how we spend our money and how we raise our kids. We also need to be modest in the way we present the truth about ourselves so that we do not exaggerate.

Modesty is the virtue that properly evaluates the dignity of the human body. Virtue or lack of it come from the human heart.



Modesty is the virtue that is always sober and good in faith and morals, and not boastful of talents or achievements but being humble about one’s importance.

Modesty is our greatest defense for maintaining purity and chastity.

St. Paul defines a modest lifestyle that we may follow. “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, what is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” -Philippians 4:8

Reflections

Modesty

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

As a man or women, check the way you dress or the way you speak and communicate with people.

Write down how you think you may have been immodest in your speech or action.

Spend five minutes in introspecting your lifestyle.

Write down how you plan on being modest

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I commit my lifestyle to You. Lead me in the way of modesty that I may please You. (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: Modesty is not old fashioned. It's an eternal virtue.

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 36

Christian Stewardship

"... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave." Matt. 20:26

The very sound of these words must have shaken up the disciples of Jesus as they were expecting to be served as they were the ministers for Christ's Kingdom. To their ironical dismay Jesus told them that they are to serve others.

"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matt. 20:27

Jesus then told them that the very purpose of His coming was to serve people. This sent another shocker to his disciples as they thought that Jesus was a King. Indeed, Jesus was a "serving" King. He served a "life sentence" as a ransom for our sins.

Stewardship is a way of life for all those who call themselves Christians. All that we have belongs to God, our gifts and talents and all of this must be used for God's glory alone.

Stewardship of Time

As Christians, we should value our time at work and at Church. Many Christians do not take their Church or ministry commitment seriously. They walk in as and when they like, thinking that they don't have to take ministry seriously. That is disastrous.

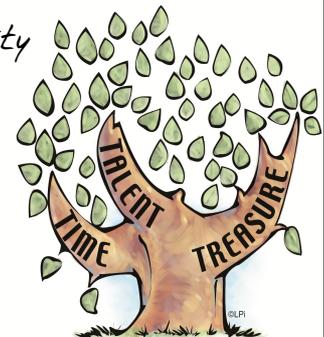
Stewardship of Talent

Christianity has the best talent of performing arts, journalism, singing, creativity, etc. but very few use it and many who do use their talents for the Church, do so like slots.

Stewardship of Charity

Anything that you have in excess is not yours, it belongs to the needy.

The world has enough money to abolish starvation but for the selfishness of men.



Reflections

Christian Stewardship

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Worship is giving God the best that He has given you. Be careful what you do with the best you have. Whenever you get a blessing from God, give it back to Him as a love gift. Take time to meditate before God and offer the blessing back to Him in a deliberate act of worship. If you hoard a thing for yourself, it will turn into spiritual dry rot, as the manna did when it was hoarded. God will never let you hold a spiritual thing for yourself, it has to be given back to Him that He may make it a blessing to others. Oswald Chambers

Write down how you can become a good Christian Steward

Write down your understanding of stewardship.

Spend five minutes in asking God to make you a good steward..

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I offer my gifts and talents to You. Use it for Your glory... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others." Augustine

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 37

A Heart of Worship

"Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness." Psalms 29:2

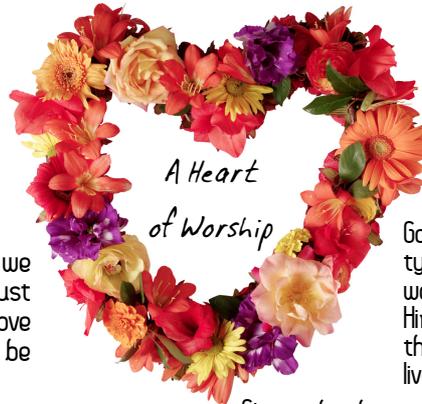
We must first come to understand that we must worship the Lord our God and not just be ritualistic. True worship comes from the love we have for God if not worship would be meaningless.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! Psalms 95:6

We live in a day where we call God as our friend. But through that friendship, we forget to give Him that reverence. All of the men and women of God of old, either knelt or prostrated before God as a sign of adoring Him in all His splendor.

"Depend on it, my hearer, you never will go to heaven unless you are prepared to worship Jesus Christ as God."

~ Charles Spurgeon



"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain" Matt. 15:8-9

God is not looking for lip service type of worship, He is looking for worship that comes through loving Him, through knowing Him and through projecting Him in our daily lives.

Since the heart is the center of all desires, our worship starts with the heart and its desire to worship should not be out of compulsion.

As we learn to worship God in reverence, we should also worship God in the way we live as Christians. It is of no use if we spend hours in worship and then dwell in our sinful ways. The type of worship that God seeks is a person with a clean conscience, a heart that is contrite and not puffed up.

In reading the Psalms, we see how the Psalmist worshiped God. Do study the Psalms.

Reflections

A Heart of Worship

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Is your heart filled with gratitude of worshipping God? _____

Write down what worship means to you

Spend five minutes in worshipping God.

Write down you own words or song of worship to God.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I give me a heart of worship that I may feel Your holy presence (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)...
Amen

Note: It is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men. - C S Lewis

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 38

Prudence

Prudence is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; "the prudent man looks where he is going." "Keep sane and sober for your prayers." Prudence is "right reason in action," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of the virtues); it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid. CCC 1806

"The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty." Prov. 22:3

A Prudent person is a person who discerns, thinks and then makes decisions. Many decisions are taken today with lack of prudence and it ends in disaster. There are so many divorces in the Church today due to lack of prudence in dealing with marital matters.



"Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult." Prov. 12:16

Ours is a world of chaos and this has produced people with a short fuse and an easily angered temperament. The best way to deal with annoyance, is to stay calm because most people are unreasonable today.

"Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the LORD." Prov. 19:14

This calls for both men and women to be prudent in choosing the right spouse. Never marry a liar for your marriage will be a lie. Never marry an adulterer for your marriage will be adulterated. Never marry a gambler for your marriage will be gambled with. Ask the Lord for a prudent spouse and discern about the spouse if it is from God.

Reflections

Prudence

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Never make decisions in haste. _____
Always have godly elders to your
discernment as that is Prudence. _____

Write down where you think you
have not used prudence _____

Spent five minutes in asking God to
give you Prudence.

Write down how you intend on being Prudent in the future

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I
pray that you give me
prudence that I may do
well... (Continue praying as
the Holy Spirit leads
you)... Amen

Note: "Don't trust all men, but trust men of worth; the former course is silly, the later, a mark of
Prudence." Democritus

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 39

Christian Love

The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love.

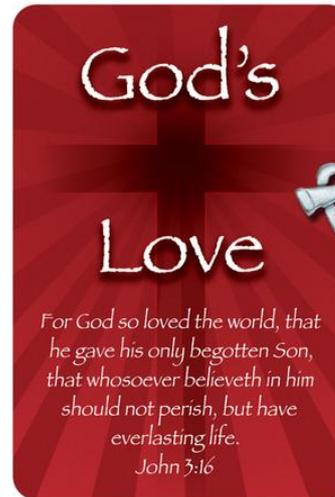
Goodness comes from God and from that goodness we learn to love God in return and to also love people around us, even those who are difficult to love.

Christ died out of love for us, while we were still "enemies." The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our enemies, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself. CCC 1825

In the context of loving our enemies, Jesus does not expect us to go and be friends with all who offend us for that would not be wise at all times. But Jesus expects us to love our enemies in the sense to forgive them and not take revenge.

Nothing can bring a real sense of security into the home except true love. Billy Graham

The practice of the moral life animated by charity gives to the Christian the spiritual freedom of the children of God. He no longer stands before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who "first loved us". If we turn away from evil out of fear of punishment, we are in the position of slaves. If we pursue the enticement of wages, . . . we resemble mercenaries. Finally if we obey for the sake of the good itself and out of love for him who commands . . . we are in the position of children. CCC 1828



Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers over all wrongs. Prov 10:12. If we only practice this in our families and in society, our world would be a place of love and not war.

No matter what people may do to us, if love be our response, we will never betray God with our reaction. We love them because we love God and God loves them.

Reflections

Christian Love

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

Christian love is a love of purity and without reserve.

Write down the times that you have not expressed love to your family and friends when you could have.

Spent five minutes in asking God to fill you with His love

Write down how you would now like to demonstrate God's love.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I open my life to receive Your love so that I may love.... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "You can see God from anywhere if your mind is set to love and obey Him" ~ A.W. Tozer

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

DAY 40

Christian Unity & Missions

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." Jn. 17:20-21

Jesus prayed for Christian unity because He knew that there would be attempts to divide the Church. Unfortunately we see this division today which is man made for man's satisfaction.

But the early Church was united that " They all joined together constantly in prayer..." (1:14).

Their worship was in union with the Holy Spirit that " ...they were all together in one place" (2:1).

Their commitment to being united was bound with the love they had for Christ" Every day they continued to meet together...They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people" (2:46, 47).

Their praise, their petitions, their thanksgiving, their sufferings were all in oneness " ...they raised their voices together in prayer to God" (4:24).

The sign of Christian unity is this "All the believers were one in heart and mind" (4:32).

The early Christians had frequent fellowship that was pure and holy and not of the world " And all the believers used to meet together..." (5:12).

It is no wonder that "the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47).



The early Church, their hearts were filled with joy, for they were at peace with God and men. They were happy, for they loved God and one another. Such a joyful community attracts people, just as a beautiful flower garden attracts butterflies and bees. Such a church grows daily, naturally and without much conscious effort.
Dr. Kyung Chik Han

Reflections

Christian Unity & Missions

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES:

"If a commission by an earthly King is considered a honor, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?" — David Livingstone

Write down what's your definition of missions

Spend five minutes in seeking God's guidance for missions.

Write down and ask God to use you as a missionary at your work, etc.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, help me discern my call to missions, I want to serve You... (Continue praying as the Holy Spirit leads you)... Amen

Note: "The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become." — Henry Martyn, missionary to India and Persia

A Journey to Holiness

BY DR. DOMINIC DIXON

You Personal Mission

If we are to grow with the Lord, we need to know what the Lord wants of us. We need to have a vision. "For lack of vision my people perish." Proverbs 29:18. And we need to have the knowledge of God and His word. "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge." Hosea 4:6

What should be included in a mission statement?

- God's mission for your life.
- A statement of service to others.
- How your God-given time, spiritual gifts, talents, abilities, personality, experiences, and money fit into your overall mission.
- Your passion. What gets you fired up to get out of bed in the morning?
- Your community. Who were you meant to serve?
- Your contribution to the world.

Where should I write my mission statement?

Anywhere you desire! Find a quiet, comfortable place where you can be alone with your thoughts. Once you have your completed mission statement, post it in 2-3 places where you can view it on a regular basis.

When should I write my mission statement?

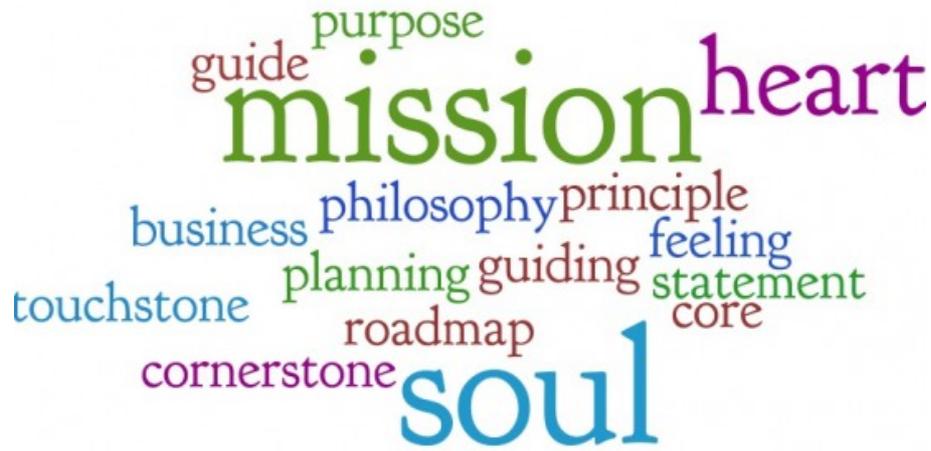
There's no better time than NOW! The sooner you have a handle on God's plan for your life, the sooner you have a direction in which to head. As you work on your mission statement, be sure to focus on the task before you when you are in prayer and discernment.

How do I go about writing my mission statement?

- Set aside 30 minutes to an hour a day for a couple of days to generate your thoughts and ideas.
- Spend time in God's Word and prayer, asking God to reveal to you what His plan is for your life.
- Utilize morning pages or a journal to get your thoughts and ideas down on paper.
- List your spiritual gifts.
- List your God-given talents and abilities.
- Determine what you are truly passionate about.
- Focus on a statement of service to others.
- Figure out your target audience or community.
- Determine why your mission is important.

Why should I spend time writing a mission statement?

God wants you to be tuned into His plan for your life. Spending time now in determining your mission is time well invested to create a clear direction for the rest of your life.



Write your mission statement here