

When our children do wrong, they can cause us pain or sorrow. If you are a child of God, to an even greater degree, your sinful ways cause God pain and sorrow.

b. Desire a helpful recommendation

- 1) David concludes his prayer by desiring a helpful recommendation from God saying, "*lead me in the way everlasting*".
- 2) Man's ways are often wrong. (Proverbs 16:25) "*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*"
- 3) Even the ways of believers often differ from God's ways. (Isaiah 55:8-9) "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*"
- 4) God's way is the way everlasting or the way that endures.
- 5) Elsewhere, the Psalmist prayed, (Psalms 86:11) "*Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.*" May that be our prayer!

Conclusion: David's prayer was a prayer for spiritual health. Because he was serious about wanting to walk close to God, he courageously prayed *Search my heart*, *Try my thoughts*, and *See if my way pains You*. David took the results of this spiritual medical and asked God to lead him in the right way.

If you are serious about walking close to God in the year to come, this prayer is one you will want to pray often. As God's examination reveals need for change, humble yourself and ask God to help you change.

If God has convicted you this morning of a spiritual illness in your life, do not put it off. Humbly confess your sin and seek His help to change.

If you have not yet memorised Psalm 139:23-24, write them on a card and begin memorising them today.

Song: Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - 337

Prayer for Spiritual Health

29 December 2019 AM - Psalm 139:23-24 - Scott Childs

Introduction: When you see a doctor and have a medical done, he checks your body to see if everything is in proper working order. As 2019 draws to a close, we ought to ask God to do a spiritual medical on our lives. The Spiritual Medical form you just received is between you and God. Ask God how He would rate each of your spiritual conditions. (Read the form)

It is funny how we are, we do not want the doctor to lie to us, but at the same time, we do not want to hear any bad news. However, if we do have a physical problem, we want to know so that we can attempt to correct it as soon as possible.

A person who wants to maintain good physical health will make necessary changes to problems found in his medical. The same is true for the person who wants to maintain good spiritual health. If spiritual sickness exists, you should not want to ignore it!

Transition: If you are serious about maintaining sweet fellowship with God, here is a three-part prayer that you ought to pray regularly.

1. Search me, O God

a. Ask God to examine your heart.

- 1) The word for "*search*" that David used here literally means to examine thoroughly. It implies investigating, exploring and searching carefully.
- 2) God knows we were born with heart problems. (Proverbs 22:15) "*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*"
- 3) He knows our hearts are bent on going astray. (Jeremiah 17:9) "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*"
- 4) Our heart is the storehouse from which all that we do comes forth. (Matthew 15:19) "*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.*"
- 5) For that reason, God warns, (Proverbs 4:23) "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*"
- 6) Because God already knows the spiritual condition of our

hearts, asking Him to search us is for our benefit.

b. Desire an accurate report on your heart

- 1) The truth is, God already knows your heart.
 - a) (Psalms 44:21) "*Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.*"
 - b) (Job 31:4) "*Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?*"
- 2) Asking God to know your heart is asking Him to give you a report on your heart's condition.
 - a) He may identify secret sins hidden in your heart that no other human knows about.
 - b) He may uncover bitterness lodged in your heart that you have kept for years.
 - c) He may expose sinful habits that you do not believe God can help you overcome.
- 3) If you want to grow spiritually, then desire that God examine your heart carefully so that His report will reveal what He knows is inside.

2. Try me

a. Request complete testing

- 1) Medical testing is often unpleasant. It may require a needle, fasting, a cleansing or exposure to an unpleasant testing device.
- 2) Spiritual testing can also be very unpleasant. The word "*try*" that David used describes the testing of gold by fire to see if it is pure.
- 3) God often uses painful measures to test our thoughts.
 - a) In Genesis 37-50, God used slavery and an unjust prison sentence to try Joseph.
 - b) In the book of Job, God allowed physical loss and severe sickness to try Job.
 - c) God was not testing either of these men (Joseph or Job) to punish them for sin. It was for their good.
 - d) To test your thoughts and mine, God may use an illness, a loss, a financial setback, a heartache, an accident, a wayward child or the like.
- 4) It is not difficult to have cheerful thoughts and a sweet

attitude when all is well, but trials reveal what we are deep down inside.

- 5) God wants to test what you think about. Some people have the opinion that thoughts do not matter, only actions matter. That is not true. In reality, **you are what you think!** Jesus reminded us of this when He said, "*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" (Matthew 5:28)
- 6) God gave us His Word that we might, "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.*" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22) If we will test the things we think on by the Word of God and accept only what passes the Bible test, our thoughts will always pass God's test.

b. Desire an accurate report on your thoughts

- 1) The Psalmist prayed "*know my thoughts*". Again, this is for your benefit not God's. Many times, we deceive ourselves, but God's test will reveal the truth.
- 2) God already knows your thoughts. (Hebrews 4:12) "*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*"
- 3) What kind of thoughts does God find in your heart?

3. See if any wicked way be in me

a. Request a close inspection of your ways

- 1) The word "*see*" describes an inspection. The word "*ways*" depicts our paths in life or our habits.
- 2) David has already asked God to search his **heart** and try his **thoughts** now he asks God to see or inspect his **ways** or the things he does. This takes God's Spiritual Medical to a higher level. Every part of our lives is important to God.
- 3) Another key word in this phrase is the word "*wicked*". This particular word refers to pain or sorrow. David did not want any of his ways to cause God pain or sorrow.