

“Seeing What’s Really There” A Topical Message

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December 30-31, 2017

Take-Home Truth: Self-awareness is key to seeing what’s “really there” in our lives and using that knowledge, with God’s help, to initiate change.

WHAT IS SELF-AWARENESS?

Self-awareness = the capacity to clearly see my tendencies and inclinations and how they impact others

The “Self-Awareness” Concept in the Scriptures

- Many examples in the Psalms
Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
Psalm 19:12 (English Standard Version)
- *Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.* Psalm 51:6 (ESV)
- Many examples throughout the Old Testament stories
 - In 1 Samuel 25, David came to a point of self-awareness that changed his behavior.
 - See 1 Samuel 25:32-35 (below for slides).
 - *And David said to Abigail, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! ³³Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from working salvation with my own hand! ³⁴For as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there had not been left to Nabal so much as one male.” ³⁵Then David received from her hand what she had brought him. And he said to her, “Go up in peace to your house. See, I have obeyed your voice, and I have granted your petition.”* 1 Samuel 25:32-35 (ESV)
- Many exhortations in the New Testament to look inward
 - Jesus’ words in the Gospels.
 - *Keep a close watch on yourself . . .* 1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV)

WHY AREN’T PEOPLE MORE SELF-AWARE?

- Many do not pay attention to what’s going on inside them or around them.

- Many have an aversion to hearing negative truths about themselves.
- Some people need psychological or spiritual healing.

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves . . .²⁶If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. James 1:22, 26 (ESV)

HOW CAN I CULTIVATE SELF-AWARENESS IN THE YEAR AHEAD?

Exposure and response to the truth is key for self-awareness.

Three-Fold Listening

- Listen to God.

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!²⁴And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!
Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV)

- **Through the Scriptures**

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

- **Through the voice of the Spirit**

- Listen to your spiritual community.

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Hebrews 3:12-13 (ESV)

- Listen to yourself.

Three Practices for Application

- Practice real-time awareness.
- Cultivate a short period of reflection each day.
- Keep a self-awareness journal when needed.