

Taking Stock

Scripture Reading — Psalm 139:1-16, 23-24

Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ... 1 John 3:21 —

When it comes to taking stock, I know myself well enough to say that my heart can let me get away with more than it should. I also know that's true for others.

In our text today from 1 John, the Bible isn't asking us to check how we feel about ourselves. The context makes clear that God wants us to look at who we are in the light of love for God and others (1 John 3:10-4:21). This month we have been looking at what gets in the way of connecting with God and cultivating our relationships with God and others.

God's answer? Sin. Only if my heart is alert to the nuances of sin can my heart accurately condemn me or commend me.

I'll be honest: I would rather not have my heart condemn me. There's enough tough stuff in life; I don't need more condemnation.

But I'm also a realist. I don't want just a feeling of closeness to God, especially if it isn't real. I want to be close to God. That's why I need to examine myself in light of God's Word.

This morning I began the day praying through the Ten Commandments, specifically asking God to show me where I need to change. His answers may be painful--but they will also be profitable for my pursuit of the "way everlasting."

Prayer

"Search me, O God, and know my heart ... See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Help me also see that you're with me in this. In Jesus, Amen.

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