

Character Examination

Romans 5:3-4 NKJV but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

The goal of Character Examination is to improve self-awareness and enable ourselves to correct our thinking. (2 Cor. 10:5) Therefore, we must diligently, through concentrated effort, seek each day to see the truth and deception within our own thinking.

Self deception exists. As we improve our self-awareness, we will discover self-deceiving thoughts which lead us into spiritually harmful choices. With improved concentrated effort and practice, we can increase identification of evil thoughts, pray to God for help, and correct them with God's righteousness.

Self discovery requires a concentrated effort each day. We will need to spend enough inward application thinking about our thinking to find a path toward correction. We can investigate our thoughts when we are irritated, sad, excited, angry, impatient, anxious, etc. We can discover more how we view ourselves, our family, work, and the world around us. We can take note the messages we tell ourselves.

We can understand our thinking enough to where we can explain it to someone else. If we cannot explain or describe it, we can learn it better. As we explain our thoughts to others, we can learn even more.

When we are challenged, we can investigate our thinking to learn more about our inward responses to challenges. Are we blaming, justifying, rationalizing, or making excuses? Are we taking responsibility for our choices and actions and humbly correcting them? Were loving, patient, merciful, truthful, just, and kind? Where can we improve?

Our perception and attitudes impacts our choices. We can learn how to make interventions upon our thoughts and perceptions before we make choices. We can add some questions about our attitude, perception, and feelings before we take action. As we improve discernment upon our thinking, we can grow ability to make inward Righteous Adjustments.

Evaluating ourselves can evoke emotions, fear, impatience, frustration, and other forms of suffering. Sometimes it can involve an inward struggle because something inside is seeking to convince us not to do it. It is normal to experience delay, postponement, and avoidance of completing Self-evaluations. It takes courage, humility, and self-discipline to look squarely at our personal inward spiritual truth, to own, confess, and correct it.

Most of us will not want to see our wrongs. We might quickly distract ourselves with something else or develop reasons why not to do it. The suffering referred to in Romans 5 leads toward Godly character development. Many want such development, but few will be willing to step into the “suffering” process with “perseverance” to let such character be developed. When we let go and let God, we let go of our control or self-will and let God train us through our inward cooperation with the will of God. We will take captive our thoughts and make them obedient to the Elements of Righteousness.

If we have given ourselves over to God then we are inwardly increasing adjustments with God’s directions and principles. Otherwise, we are still trying to control things our way. Perfection is a journey, not a destination. We strive toward what is perfect, little by little, letting go of our old beliefs to build new understandings about and with God’s ways.

If we wake up, humbly and sincerely set our inward being to walk with God, then do the will of God throughout the day, we will likely be growing with God. If we skip this process, we will have little chance to be with God and experience growth. If we are not enriching our inward being with God, then we are not enriching our being with God.

We can continue to learn how God’s grace is good. Humility, sincerity, and love moving toward peace is the goal. As we grow such character within us and outward with others, we can experience the good that comes from it. We cannot know the good of God unless we experience it. Merely reading about it is insufficient. We must experience the Elements of Righteousness with continued improvement.

New action is necessary for us to change. We must move from intellectualization to sincere love and uncomfortable truth. The experience of feeling challenged is involved. It takes an improved mind and heart with

God's righteousness. Things that are easy are things we are already trained to do. Once we are trained with the Elements of Righteousness, they too, will be easy.

We ought to bring our self-evaluations from our minds onto paper. Writing down the ideas and plans help us see it better. Information in our minds can easily become minimized, exaggerated, forgotten, or hidden. Developing Godly character requires a continued conscious effort to see how we can correct ourselves further toward Godly character. We make a list of the character traits we practice using the Elements of Righteousness and Evil. Evil may sound like a bad word and it can be stigmatized. However, we must persevere. To grow, we will need to face situations that are uncomfortable and inwardly challenging. We must continue and endure.

Self-condemnation, guilt, and forgiveness

There are different views about shame. Some believe shame to be similar to self-condemnation while others believe shame can be a healthy recognition of doing wrong. Instead of using the word shame we will use self-condemnation and guilt.

Self-condemnation can involve mental self abuse. Thinking evil thoughts toward one's self for whatever reason can rarely be good. This kind of thinking involves intention to punish, put down, or hurt. It can be a habit developed from childhood through years of parental criticism. But how it came to be is not as important as how to begin to gradually make corrections with it.

Self-condemnation seems to align with the 'Elements of evil.' As we practice self-examination we will improve our ability to recognize our thoughts. We will discover thoughts that align with the Elements of evil. We may discover some self-condemnation thinking. As we discover evil thoughts we can turn to prayer for help, guidance, and correction.

We have thoughts within our awareness and thoughts beyond our awareness. If we are not looking to discover deeper thoughts, we likely won't find them.

We must create new inward practices. As we discover bitterness, anger, resentment and the like, we can seek forgiveness and mercy. Forgiveness,

mercy, love, truth, and justice can help bring about good spiritual growth with such thoughts and attitudes. Our mental attitudes toward life, God, others, and ourselves will need to be closely evaluated. We can grow as we continue to learn. We will always grow most through corrective action.

When we notice self-condemnation we can pray something like this:

“God, please help me from my condemning thoughts. Guide me with more love, patience, and forgiveness. Bring me inward peace. Let your will be done within my heart and mind. Amen”

It is crucial to recognize our thoughts, test them with the Spiritual Elements and align them more with God.

Evaluate actions

We evaluate ourselves for facts about our actions. We can go as deep as we are ready to learn. The deeper the better. We can learn more about our thoughts, words, demeanor, and attitude etc. We can review our choices of where we go, what we do, and who we spend time with. We can learn messages we experience from our surroundings. What symbols, posters, pictures, books, movies, or music are we experiencing. How do these make us feel or think? It's not necessarily the material objects that can be problematic, it's more likely the way we perceive them.

We ought to evaluate our inward responses. Are we trusting God? Are we believing that all we need is God, that we can be content in all things with God? Or are we placing our trust in something else? We will learn a lot about ourselves and it's best to keep our attention to how we can trust God with our progress.

As we learn more about our misunderstandings or misplaced trust, we ought to keep our thoughts toward patiently growing with God. We will need to practice encouraging thoughts to keep us moving in God's righteousness. We can correct self-sabotaging thoughts getting stuck in evil. We can share such thoughts, pray for willingness to let them go, and strength to see God's good. It is often helpful to get moving into helping others in service to God and practice the Elements of Righteousness.

Evaluate schedule

What do we do with our time? The following worksheet is provided based upon an 8 hour sleep schedule. There are 16 spaces provided for the left over hours in a day. Due to our cognitive bias nature and self deceptive tendencies (see [mind tricks](#)) it can help us to be humble and thorough to find the facts about ourselves. We ought to be careful not to be guarded or protective in this evaluation process. Fear, pride, and self-seeking can block the process. If we get defensive we may distort the information with rationalizing and justifying. We ought to be clear and as objective as possible to see the facts while learning enough humility to accept correction. Doing this with someone who knows us can sometimes help us be more accurate. We must be truthful in this process with humble sincerity for spiritual conviction. We can see the facts for what they are so we can make better choices. We can learn a lot about our thinking and decision making process through this experience. Our minds unchecked can interfere with truth or objective analysis.

The first and perhaps easiest examination is write down precisely what we spend time doing.

Examples:

Necessities: Eating, hygiene, school, chores, exercise, work, driving, etc.

Leisure: Music, videos, games, puzzles, books, sports, shopping, art, etc.

Other: Prayer, meditation, reflection, mentoring, groups, church, reading, serving, helping others etc.

This evaluation is not to define whether we are good or bad, but to learn where we are with God's character development and to see how we can improve.

Weekly Actions Check Sheet

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Next, we review the information with a spiritual guide, mentor, or friend, someone who understands the purpose, and begin evaluating how we use our conscious thoughts during each day. We must get real and honest with someone about our choices. It's best to check our attitude ensuring we are humble and willing for God to guide us in a new direction. We can experience new sensations, gain new insights, and discover new possibilities for growth.

Going Inward

Evaluate inward purposes:

The goal is to seek God; love, mercy, peace, truth, forgiveness, compassion, justice, etc. Yet we may have other inward motivations like fear, anger, vanity, lust, etc. Such thoughts and attitudes can affect our choices, actions, words, relationships, and inward spiritual condition. The character we choose to practice brings forth consequences and we can change.

Here are some thoughts and sensations we can choose to experience: Complaining, happy, excited, hopeful, loving, peaceful, compassionate, empathetic, caring, condemning, encouraging, faultfinding, complimenting,

grateful, fearful, worried, angry, peaceful, wandering, obsessing or fixed, drifting, empty, task focused, forgiving, merciful, critical, pessimistic, optimistic, regretful, doubtful, confident, content, pleasing, depressing, slow, racing, distracted, unfocused, etc.

We can only choose to do from the choices that we know. If all we know is anger and hurt, we will likely continue to choose it. New choices will involve setting our thoughts toward new ways and principles. We will need to focus upon them and learn. We must take it further into new action with the new ideas and ways in order to gain experiences and understandings. Our new experiences can lead us into witnessing new results. This new insight is powerful and spiritually good.

We can begin each day setting our thoughts with God. As we grow our understanding with the Elements of Righteousness through experience our attitudes, choices, and actions will likely change. Prayer each morning for help, with sincere truth and a humble heart, is a good idea.

Character List

Our attitudes and actions reflect what we think and believe. What we inwardly let play out in our thoughts provides structure for what we outwardly do. What we do reveals what we believe. If we fully believe in Jesus, we will be increasingly becoming like Jesus. We will grow in the Elements of Righteousness and our behavior will testify to it.

In order to improve we must see where we can improve. This means we need to find the errors in our ways. We need to improve our thought awareness. As we raise awareness to our thought structure we will become more capable of redirecting that structure. For example, we can replace, "I hate Mondays," with, "help me God to see your good today." Prayers can become thought restructuring, if we inwardly open ourselves for restructuring. Yet we must have a willing attitude. If we are unwilling to let go of our old ways and experience more of God's good, it likely won't happen.

The character we practice is the character we are developing. Whatever it is we do, that is what we choose to be trained in. Most of the times we have developed reasons for what we do. It is good to question our reasoning and make sure we are being entirely honest with it.

Our inward character can be very different than our outward character. We may find ourselves smiling at people we are not glad to see. This is being fake or presenting a falsehood. In the early stages of learning we need to simply recognize this in congruency. As we mature spiritually we can learn how to adjust our minds toward God's love and peace so our smiles are honest and right. It takes time to work through our fear, resentments, pride, and self-seeking.

It's best to seek congruency between our inward behavior and our outward behavior.

If we say we desire more peace and yet we rarely slow down then we may be deceiving ourselves. There is an old saying, "We judge ourselves by our intentions while others judge us by our actions." It's best to set aside our intentions, what we assume about ourselves, and look more closely at what we actually do. If we do not slow down and practice calm behavior, we are not seeking peace.

"Trying" without really doing anything different could be self deception. There are many ways we can and do fool ourselves. If we are honest and thorough in our self examinations, we will discover ways we are deceiving ourselves.

Our actions prove our faith. We can observe and study our actions. We can learn about what we believe watching for what we do. If we are obedient to God's truth then we will move more in that direction.

Examples of character

(God's good/righteousness - Truth, Love, Mercy, Forgiveness, Generous, Just, Peace, Compassion, Patience)

(sin/evil - dishonest, resentful, withdrawn from intimacy, hold grudges, impatient, miserly, anxious, fearful, selfish, irritated, discontent, uncaring, unfair)

Spiritually destructive actions can be anything that hinders God's love.

Some examples of destructive character: lying, not taking responsibility for actions, didn't show up for things I said I would, held grudges, kept secrets,

focused on negative things and blamed other people, used others for selfish gain, blamed, complained, avoided solutions, isolated or avoided people. Self-seeking, doing things for self or own benefit. Upset others for entertainment purposes, laughed at others mistakes, and participated in useless arguments. Stole things, exported, cheated, etc.

Examples of corrective actions - Speak the truth, take responsibility, practice forgiveness, learn good, serve others, slow and calm down, own mistakes, humble self, become more present and approachable to others, doing what we said we will do, take action toward solutions, repair damage in relationships, practice generosity, prioritize God, and practice empathy.

We ought to make a list of the character we practice and be specific. We can always learn more detail. This can help us learn about ourselves so we can set some goals for corrective action. Practicing correction requires us to learn more about correction. We will need to study, ponder, and walk differently.

God gave us free will and the power of choice. Our goal is to move forward toward building results with increased godly character traits. One measure of success is when others close to us are talking about good changes they have noticed in us. Quite often, such reports are spoken with joy.

Attitudes List

We write down descriptions of our mental attitudes. How would we describe our mental attitude toward our friends, self, family, work, school, life, traffic, etc. What do we think about ourselves and the world we live in? What kind of feelings and sensations do such thoughts provoke within us? How might our inward attitude affect our outward behaviors? Do our actions align with our thinking or are we thinking one way while acting another? How do our attitudes, thoughts, and actions affect our relationships?

We must avoid blaming others for what we do. If other people 'make us' feel sad or angry then we choose to believe they are in control of how we feel. We will be choosing to make ourselves emotionally dependent upon other people. We can choose to rely more upon God and less upon how others respond. As we increase our reliance upon God we will be reforming our thoughts toward God for reliance and less upon anything else.

We must avoid an inward attitude of helplessness. We will need an attitude of trusting that God's righteousness will bring good. We can choose new direction with God. We can walk in it. We can experience God's goodness.

Who we are on the inside affects who we are on the outside. Who we are on the outside impacts our relationships and everything we do. If our attitude goes unchecked, we will likely be functioning upon our old trained ways.

The inward attitude we have toward people who love us has an affect upon them. If we are bitter toward someone, it will impact our interactions. We are to examine how we view others. Are there people we see as weak, mean, rude, annoying, etc. If so, we can set our minds upon the Righteous Elements of God and pray for direction with a willing and teachable soul.

We are to wear the armor of God into our relationships. We are to practice speaking the truth with the goal of producing peace and love. We are to advocate for righteousness and have confidence in God's protection. Encounters in relationships requires a skill in discernment. Building discernment requires training in it. We ought to listen carefully to others for their experience and learn.

The better we become with the collective Elements of Righteousness, the better our relationships can be.

Corrective Action

"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer." Albert Einstein

Regular concentrated effort upon corrective action will be necessary. We will need to see and understand both the problem and the solution. Yet the solution cannot fully be known until we have experience with it. We will know the solution to the level of experience we have with it. (Proverbs 12) Until we learn through new experience we will only have theory.

We must be checking ourselves for growth to ensure we are indeed growing. Self-deception will always exist. As long as we practice the necessary use of making assumptions, we will participate in thinking errors. (Cognitive bias codex)

Growing and improving requires continued and laborious thinking about our inward behavior. It can be like someone in a manufacturing plant observing a conveyor belt of materials moving by with the readiness of removing a defected item. We won't get them all, of course, but we ought to be getting some of them.

An unchecked mind is one that will not improve. Some of us can fall victim to the faith or belief in running on autopilot, because it is easy and requires little effort. We can slip into a manner of going with the flow.

Matthew 5:20 "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

If we are to grow more than the common leadership, it will require new and different thinking. We will need to respond with God more than the mainstream.

If we rely upon the group we are with for guidance, teaching, and training, we will unlikely improve beyond that group. The group can even slowly degrade in spiritual condition more and more over time leading ourselves with it. Such spiritual destruction happens all the time. When a group relies upon itself instead of spiritual principles, it can lose spiritual direction. It can wither, dry up, and become spiritually stale or dead.

Because of deception, we must honestly and thoroughly evaluate ourselves and the groups we attend. Is the group improving? How so? Is it obvious to everyone?

If the goal is Jesus or God, then we can compare ourselves and group with the standards of Jesus. Are we honest, humble, serving, giving, forgiving, merciful, and just like God? How can we do better? Are we doing better? How so?

The fact is that we can do better. It's not difficult to see identify the steps we can take. We just need to commit to take them. We need enough faith in God to do them.

We need to examine our character and ensure we are improving with the will of God. We need enough concentrated effort upon the Elements of

Righteousness to ensure we continue in it with increasing measure. We can inwardly cling to what is good and abhor evil (Romans 12) “Behave like a Christian” NKJV. We do it for improved experiences with love and peace. We do it for purification of our hearts and cleansing our conscience. Once we have experienced such results, we do it because we know it is good and right.

The Einstein quote “stay with problems longer” means it is wise to stay with the problem while seeking a solution and not moving away from the problem until we understand a solution. If we identify a problem behavior and do nothing about it, we can be like Proverbs 12:1.

Each day we can identify our problem using the Elements of Evil and it’s solution in the Elements of Righteousness. Once we identify the problem and solution we can ponder how to put it into action. We can discuss it with others for more ideas. After we have put it into action we can learn through our experience and make more adjustments.

Einstein likely was seeking solutions for problems, but he needed to keep focused to continue breaking the problems down into their finer parts to see how they worked. Then he likely would continue looking at how to fix it while persevering until he arrived at a corrective answer.

We can do this with the Spiritual Elements as well. We can gradually improve our awareness and understanding with the Elements. With continued study, reflection, practice and evaluation of our inward selves, we can grow our spiritual awareness and gain deeper insights. We can improve spiritual discernment and experience new spiritual sensations.

Many people recognize Einstein as a genius, but the quote is suggesting it’s not his DNA that was genius, but the use of his time, effort, and mental focus. He persisted toward solutions. This is likely true with any genius. To increase intelligence about something requires a higher amount of time and energy toward it. It’s less about thinking harder and more about thinking longer and in different ways.

Another example is a man named Stephen Hawking. He would sit and think for hours about space, physics, etc. His mind invested a tremendous amount of focus upon such things. He lived to ponder, examine, and explore.

1 Timothy 4:15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Moses and Jesus both agree we ought to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. We are to give our all toward loving God.

Philippians 4:8 NIV “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—**think** about such things.”

Reflection and meditation about God’s ways, purpose, will, and character is a necessary regular activity for our development. We ought to do it every day and throughout the day. Yet, progress is the focus, not perfection.

In the beginning, we will likely require reminders and a lot of redirection. Over time, it will become easier and more part of who we are, if we continue to do it.

We ought to be imperfectly progressing toward perfection.

Fear and Anger

As we improve our concentrated effort upon our inward spiritual thinking, we will likely discover bitterness, deception, fear, anger, and other Elements of Evil. It can help to take notes and watch for patterns. The more we put into our spiritual awareness and discovery, the more we are likely to understand it better.

Resentment, anger, and bitterness are similar. Fear, worry, our even being concerned can all tie together. The thoughts and emotions tied into such things will seldom do any godly good. What good can it do to spend an evening replaying worrisome, hurt, anger, or fear within our minds and conversations? When they come about, we can practice prayer and resetting our minds upon Elements of Righteousness. We can be helpful to God and others even when we are inwardly suffering. Helping others can and often does improve our suffering.

First, we will need to train ourselves more with introspective analysis. We will need to investigate our thinking to find where resentment and fear exists. We can make a list when and where we experience fear or anger. We can describe the who, what, when, where, and our reasons for it. Try this with objectivity. We “stay with the problems longer.” We stay with ‘our problems’ not someone else’s.

We may have deep rooted resentments from the past. We write those down as well. We ought to be as honest as possible revealing everything. We are aiming for a purification of our hearts and a cleansing of our consciousness.

Once we make our lists we ought to share and discuss it with another person who understands. Such a person is often someone who has a clean conscience and is a neutral party. This discussion can further our understanding even more if we can remain humble, ready for correction, and seek spiritual solutions. We can learn more about ourselves through sharing with each other deeper spiritual truth.

Example List

I’m angry or resentful at/about:

1. Boss
2. Spouse
3. Parent
4. Friend
5. Government
6. Life

Next we can refer to the number and write down our reasoning:

1. Not promoting me.
2. Being unfaithful
3. Never around
4. Lying
5. Evil and manipulative
6. Unfair and cruel
7. Religion/God

We will need to review our attitudes and actions with these situations. We ought to see where our actions and attitudes contributed to our resentments, hurt, or fear. We can use the number system again to keep consistent.

1. (Boss) I was late a lot and complained.
2. (Spouse) I yelled at and belittled my spouse. I would make myself unavailable.
3. (Parent) As a teenager, I avoided my parents a lot and felt uncomfortable around them.
4. I shut down and wouldn't talk at times.
5. I was selfish and would not volunteer or contribute to society.
6. I was pessimistic, distrusting, and uninvolved.
7. I was afraid to ask questions. I blamed others for my learning and experiences. I followed the crowd more than God.

No one is perfect, yet we all can improve. Improvement is the goal. There are many ways where we have fallen short of God's goal for us and just as many ways where we can receive correction with Righteous Adjustments. It is important to improve our ability to see, recognize, identify, and understand how our faith, choices, attitudes, and actions affect the spiritual condition within ourselves and others.

The world does not do this. This process will look and feel out of place. Awkwardness will be a common experience until we get used to it. We must persevere into the training experience, even though it is different.

We are to seek the spiritual truth within our thoughts, motivations, attitudes, and actions. We continually explore how to be more right with God. We can learn how our participation with the Elements of Righteousness can spiritually feed souls. We must be patient with perseverance, willing to continue long enough to witness and experience the spiritual results.

Growth takes time. When we water a dying bush it doesn't flourish green in a day. If we continue to feed our souls with God's good character, with sincere truth and humility, we can experience amazing grace.

Daily spiritual evaluation and adjustments

(Example list)

Sin	What happened?	Mind & Heart affects	Righteous Adjustment
Greed	I kept money for myself not spending it on others. Love and trust in money.	Fear of not having enough, prioritizing money above relationships, love, and doing good.	Less is more, humbly increase sharing with others, generosity, mercy, seek building Love, belonging, and peace.
Lust	Envy others, want more, judge others by appearance, sexual desire & gratification.	Feel inadequate, unsatisfied, emotionally empty, alone, superficial, shallow, bored, desire physical gratification.	Think more spiritually, build empathy, focus on the hearts of others. Discuss and redirect temptation, pray for help to do the will of God.
Gluttony	Seeking food for good feelings, avoiding feelings, indulging in taste and smell for pleasure.	Feel ashamed, insecure, weak, anger, fearful, helpless or hopeless attitude. More is better.	Be okay with little, trust more with God, face feelings more, seek compassion, peace, meditation, and intimacy. Seek the truth.
Pride & Vanity	Worry about what other people think. Focus on self-image, have the last word, be better, look great.	Always competing. Feel alone, angry, untrusting, unsafe, guarded, fear of disapproval.	Humble ourselves, pray for acceptance, be content with God, talk about faults, and weaknesses. Learn to laugh at self and mistakes.
Resentment	Hold grudges, fault finding, complaining, victim thinking, defensive, and blaming.	Angry, guarded, hard hearted, hold grudges, protective, untrusting, seek retaliation, passive aggressive.	Forgiveness, mercy, seek peace, humbly seek to understand others with empathy. Pray for others good. Realize our own faults.

<p>Self Condemnation</p>	<p>I'm a bad person. I don't deserve anything good. Sabotage good things. No compliments.</p>	<p>Focus on fear daily, feeling afraid and anxious. Believe hopeless thoughts and focus upon mistakes.</p>	<p>Identify strengths and good deeds done each day. No put downs. Let others like me and be good to me. Practice intimacy and kindness authentically.</p>
<p>Dishonesty</p>	<p>False flattery to make others feel good, lie to control others, manipulate to get our way. Avoid responsibility. Be fake, hide feelings.</p>	<p>Think about manipulation and control over relationships. Learn ways to take advantage of others. Deny responsibility with our spiritual damage.</p>	<p>Humbly confess our dishonesty. Stop controlling people. Be real/genuine, sincere, & honest with others. Let others disapprove. Seek humility, compassion, truth, justice, and peace.</p>
<p>Idolatry</p>	<p>Trust in something other than God. Give much of our time, energy, and focus toward that thing we trust. Less toward God.</p>	<p>Place security and/or dependency upon money, material, status, people, etc. Feel good when achieving - dependency upon it.</p>	<p>Reduce superficial practices. Increase practices with compassion, truth, love, peace, etc.. Make God a higher priority in thoughts and actions. Practice the greatest commandment each day.</p>
<p>People Pleasing</p>	<p>Worry about what other's think. Seek to win approval and fix people. Control and manipulate others.</p>	<p>People need me, I know what's best for them. I can help, if only they do what I say. Nervous, anxious, & fearful of not being accepted. Fear mistakes.</p>	<p>Realize there is a God and it isn't me. View others as God's people. Learn to be okay with others for who they are instead of where we think they should be.</p>
<p>Control</p>	<p>We must be in control. Do not trust others. Want something done right, do it yourself. Be a step ahead of everyone else.</p>	<p>Responsible for everything and everyone all the time. Feel anxious and fearful frequently. Fear mistakes and problems.</p>	<p>Give up controlling people, places, and things. Seek doing the will of God and let God work God's way. Increase in the Elements of Righteousness.</p>

Sloth	Do it later. Avoid discomfort and postpone action. Excuses... I don't feel like it. I'll wait until it feels right.	"To do" list is piled up. Can feel shame, overwhelmed, or insecure. Others can think less of me due to lack of productivity. Lost belief in abilities or hope.	Humbly seek God in prayer and seek support from others. Confess feelings and thoughts. Stop listening to self direction, take small steps toward goal, take action daily for gradual improvement.
Self-pity	Focus on the negative. Bring others down. Remember the pain and hurt. Victim thinking. Stay negative and dwell upon problems.	Feel miserable & unmotivated. Sad, angry, and alone. Complain and blame. Feeling stuck. Poor perspective on life. Low confidence. Bring in negative messages.	Own the lack of effort and negative thought messages. Add in good ones. Practice God's truth, confess fear & anger, think sincere affirming positive thoughts daily. Spend time with others who have overcome their self pity and ask questions then listen.
Isolation	Keep others out. Don't trust people.	Loss of intimacy, connection, increased loneliness.	Spend time with others daily, build intimacy, and practice compassion.

Avoiding corrective action delays improvement. Delay is dangerous and is often fuel for destruction. We ought to progressively grow inwardly with God's solutions. Little action creates little progress.

Taking corrective action can stimulate new and different perceptions. Different inward behavior leads to different thoughts and feelings. Different doesn't mean wrong or bad. Different is just different. If we are different with God, we can trust it will be a good different. The goal is to be Godly different.

We can revisit our character again and again to learn more how we can improve in the Elements of Righteousness.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we haven't sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. WEB

We will need to continue practicing self-examination and God's righteousness in order to keep growing.

Humility is key. We can do this, if we are humble and ready to be different. We ought to continuously clothe ourselves more with humble sincerity and observe our inward spiritual truth.

We ought to practice examining ourselves continually to improve our spiritual awareness. It can be tempting to evaluate others, but we are to right ourselves with God. As we right ourselves with God, we will influence and help others. Righting ourselves with God means we are inwardly improving with love and peace.

We ought to practice sharing our own faults and how we can correct them. If we are humble, we are not protecting our pride. We will be seeking patience, kindness, and tolerance. Our practice of Godly good will help others in Godly good ways. Demonstration can often times be the best teacher. As we make Righteous Adjustments we can often witness different responses from those around us. This is a gradual process that requires perseverance and patience.

We can use the blank chart below as a guide to to work through our own inward conditions. We can easily draw one of these on a blank sheet of paper. It's best not to be too proud about the appearance of the work or trying to have it done perfectly. The point is to get into learning. We can learn as we go. It's best to get right to it.

Sin	What happened?	Mind & Heart affects	Righteous Adjustment

If we are having trouble identifying our evil character/defects ways we can consult those around us for some ideas. We can ask family members, loved

ones, friends, and coworkers. Chances are they might know a few things about us we are we don't. Our defensiveness, resistance, or anger can develop and are likely signs of truth we don't want to know. We must be careful to ensure fear or pride do not stop our progress.

We ought to always approach such investigation with humble and sincere readiness. When it comes to spiritual growth, we ought to be careful around sarcasm or joking. We ought to be sincere with compassion. Growth with God is not a game. It is soul development. It's always best to laugh at ourselves, not others. Our attitude can greatly affect our spiritual work. Humbling ourselves in prayer, even if all we do is humble ourselves, can be helpful.