

DANGEROUS PRAYERS #1: "SEARCH ME"

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life." Psalm 139:23-24

STEP 1: "SEARCH ME"

"Investigate my life, O God, find out everything about me"

Why pray this prayer?

Because often the most common lie we tell is the one we tell ourselves. We don't even know ourselves very well. The heart is deceitful (Jer. 17:9). We can deceive ourselves. God knows us better than we know ourselves.

Sometimes we are in denial Other people have a problem, not me.

STEP 2: "REVEAL MY FEARS"

What makes you anxious? Could it be that what we fear the most reveals where we trust God the least?

Pray: *"God, reveal my fears. Test me, God, and show me where my anxious thoughts fall. Show me where I am being bound and controlled by fear."*

Declare God's Truth: "Perfect love, casts out all fear." 1 Jn. 4:18 "God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7)

STEP 3: "UNCOVER MY SINS"

Pray: *"God you know me inside and out. Show me anything about my life that is inconsistent with your truth. Show me anything that I am doing that is displeasing to you. See if there is any offensive way in me. Father, reveal the ways I have put something or someone ahead of you"*

Three Searching Questions:

1. What are others trying to tell me? Are there people in my life who care about me who are trying to tell me something? Pay attention.
2. What have I been rationalizing or excusing in my life? Where have I blamed others rather than taking responsibility?
3. Where am I most defensive? What subjects are off limits?

God's Promise: "If we confess our sins to God, He is faithful and just to forgive our sin, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 Jn. 1:9). Sometimes we need to confess to others as well - James: "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for each other that you might be healed." (James 5:16)

STEP 4: "LEAD ME"

When we genuinely allow God to search our hearts; reveal our fears and uncover our sins – we will come to the realization of our need for His leadership in our lives. We mess up badly otherwise.

This requires vulnerability, honesty and humility before God and others. *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand that he may lift you up in due time" (1 Peter 5:6).*

Prayer: *"Lord you know me and you love me. Nothing is hidden from you. I confess that I have resisted your leadership in my life. I have lived as if I know better than you how I should live my life. I confess that I have a stubborn and rebellious heart. Forgive me and cleanse me of my sin. I trust in you. I know that when I trust in my understanding more than I trust in you, I get myself in trouble. Father, I ask that you would lead me on the path of everlasting life. Amen."*

Using this prayer as a regular spiritual discipline can bring significant growth and breakthrough. If you are struggling with this and feel like you are "stuck" at some point, you may need someone to come alongside to help. Please contact the Pastor for suggestions.

DANGEROUS PRAYERS #2: "BREAK ME"

Proud, Unbroken People vs Broken People

Nancy Leigh DeMoss contrasts characteristics of proud, unbroken people who are resistant to the call of God on their lives with the qualities of broken, humble people who have experienced God's revival. Read each item on the list as you ask God to reveal which characteristics of a proud spirit He finds in your life. Confess these to Him, then ask Him to restore the corresponding quality of a broken, humble spirit in you.

Proud, Unbroken People

- Focus on the failure of others
- Self-righteous; have a critical, fault finding spirit; look at own life/faults through a telescope but others with a microscope
- Look down on others
- Independent/Self-sufficient spirit
- Maintain control; must be my way
- Have to prove that they are right
- Claim rights
- Demanding spirit
- Desire to be served
- Desire for self-advancement
- Driven to be recognized and appreciated
- Wounded when others are promoted and they are overlooked
- “The ministry is privileged to have me!”
- Think of what they can do for God
- Feel confident in how much they know
- Self-conscious
- Keep people at arm’s length
- Quick to blame others
- Unapproachable
- Defensive when criticized
- Concerned with being “respectable”
- Concerned about what others think
- Work to maintain image/protect reputation
- Find it difficult to share their spiritual needs with others
- Want to be sure no one finds out about their sin
- Have a hard time saying “I was wrong. Would you forgive me?”
- When confessing sin, deal in generalities
- Concerned about the consequences of their sin
- Remorseful over their sin – got caught/found out
- When there is a misunderstanding, wait for the other to come and ask for forgiveness
- Compare themselves with others and feel deserving of honor
- Don’t think they have anything to repent of
- Don’t think they need revival (think everybody else does)

Broken People

- Overwhelmed with a sense of their own spiritual need
- Compassionate; forgiving; look for best in others
- Esteem all others better than self
- Dependent spirit; recognize need of others
- Surrender control
- Willing to yield the right to be right
- Yield rights
- Giving spirit
- Motivated to serve others
- Desire to promote others
- Sense of unworthiness; thrilled to be used at all; eager for others to get the credit
- Rejoice when others are lifted up
- “I don’t deserve to serve in this ministry!”
- Know that they have nothing to offer God
- Humbled by how much they have to learn
- Not concerned with self at all
- Risk getting close to others; willing to take risks of loving intimately
- Accept personal responsibility; can see where they are wrong
- Easy to be entreated
- Receive criticism with a humble, open heart
- Concerned with being real
- All that matters is what God knows
- Die to own reputation
- Willing to be open and transparent with others
- Willing to be exposed (once broken, you don’t care who knows)
- Quick to admit failure and to seek forgiveness
- Deal in specifics
- Grieved over the cause/root of their sins
- Repentant over sin (forsake it)
- Take the initiative to reconcile conflict; see if they can get to the cross first
- Compare themselves to the holiness of God and feel desperate need for mercy
- Continual heart attitude of repentance
- Continually sense their need for a fresh encounter with the filling of the Holy Spirit