



May 17, 2024

Keeping It Real  
Part 3, Seeing Ourselves

I'm one of those who hates clutter, disorganization, and things unkempt and unclean. But having kids and dogs in a very old and leaky house has made me a lot less finicky on the clutter and disorganization part! But I still don't like to be dirty, and yet, I've worked lots of dirty jobs in my life. I've done farm work, including feeding and caring for livestock, building fence, and working ground. I've also worked in the oil patch. So, I know what it means to get dirty. And I mean REALLY dirty! But I know the cure for dirt and grease, and I rarely missed a hot shower and lots of Dial soap, if I could help it. I enjoy feeling clean and not being an offense to those who must be around me.

Now, I doubt that many people enjoy being dirty and smelly. Most of our populace goes to great lengths to look and smell good. But do we ever think about the mental and spiritual side of "cleanliness"? We try to keep the dirt out of our ears, our deodorant fresh, and the dandruff brushed from our shoulders, but what about our mind, that soulish part of man that God calls "the heart"? Is it filthy and full of corruption? Are we proud, selfish, intolerant, judgmental, lustful, angry, hateful, and covetous? Are we adulterers or even murderers?

Wow, that was quite a list of unsavory conditions, wasn't it? And while we might admit to being a bit selfish now and then, or losing our temper now and then, few of us would admit to the other conditions on that list! Certainly, we are not vile murderers! But Jesus said that if a man lusts, he HAS committed adultery in his heart. And if a man hates, he HAS murdered in his heart. Are we suddenly realizing that our "hearts" might not be as righteous and clean as we first thought?

Our problem is this: it is very difficult to objectively judge our mental and spiritual cleanliness. This is because we are totally depraved sinners—YES, God says we are all sinners (Romans 3:23)—and as such we are blind to our own spiritual condition. God through the prophet Jeremiah testified,

**Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

God says we can't know the extent of the depravity of our own hearts (minds). If we want to know the real condition of our hearts, we need an unbiased outsider who can see inside us and judge objectively. David knew this well and that's why he called out to the LORD,

*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:23, 24).*

So, the real issue is not that we can't know. God has provided a mirror for our soul, called The Word of God. Holy Scripture will reveal our true mental/spiritual condition. The Hebrews author wrote,

**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.*

The real issue then is, "Do we WANT to know?" Like David, God's born-again children should want to know. We don't want to be smelly and offensive to our Heavenly Father or to those around us who need God's saving grace. God's children are to be vessels of honour (2Timothy 2:20).

Are we?

God bless and consider!