

Traits of the Self-Life

As you make spiritual preparation for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the following can be used as a help to self-examination.

The following are some of the features and manifestations of the self-life. The Holy Spirit alone can interpret and apply this to your individual case. As you read, examine yourself in the very presence of God. Are you ever conscious of:

A secret spirit of pride; an exalted feeling, in view of your success or position; because of your good training or appearance; because of your natural gifts and abilities; an important, independent spirit?

Love of human praise; a secret fondness to be noticed; love of supremacy, drawing attention to self in conversation; a swelling out of self when you have had a free time in speaking or praying?

The stirrings of anger or impatience, which, worst of all, you call nervousness or holy indignation; a touchy, sensitive spirit; a disposition to resent and retaliate when disapproved of or contradicted; a desire to throw sharp, heated flings at another?

Self-will; a stubborn, unteachable spirit; an arguing, talkative spirit; harsh, sarcastic expressions; an unyielding, headstrong disposition; a driving, commanding spirit; a disposition to criticize and pick flaws when set aside and unnoticed; a peevish, fretful spirit; a disposition that loves to be coaxed and humored?

Carnal fear; a man-fearing spirit; a shrinking from reproach and duty; reasoning around your cross; a shrinking from doing your whole duty by those of wealth or position; a fearfulness that someone will offend and drive some prominent person away; a compromising spirit?

A jealous disposition, a secret spirit of envy shut up in your heart; an unpleasant sensation in view of the great prosperity and success of another; a disposition to speak of the faults and failings, rather than the gifts and virtues, of those more talented and appreciated than yourself?

A dishonest, deceitful disposition; the evading and covering of the truth; the covering up of your real faults; leaving a better impression of yourself than is strictly true; false humility; exaggeration; straining the truth?

Unbelief; a spirit of discouragement in times of pressure and opposition; lack of quietness and confidence in God; lack of faith and trust in God; a disposition to worry and complain in the midst of pain, poverty, or at the dispensations of Divine Providence; and over-anxious feeling whether everything will come out all right?

Selfishness; love of ease; love of money?

These are some of the traits which generally indication a carnal heart. By prayer, hold your heart open to the searchlight of God, until you see the groundwork thereof. *"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting"* (Psalm 139:23-24, NIV).

The Holy Spirit will enable you, by confession and faith, to bring your "self-life" to the death. Do not patch over, but go to the bottom. It alone will pay.

Oh, to be saved from myself, dear Lord, Oh, to be lost in Thee; Oh, that it might be no more I, but Christ that lives in me.

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10, NIV).