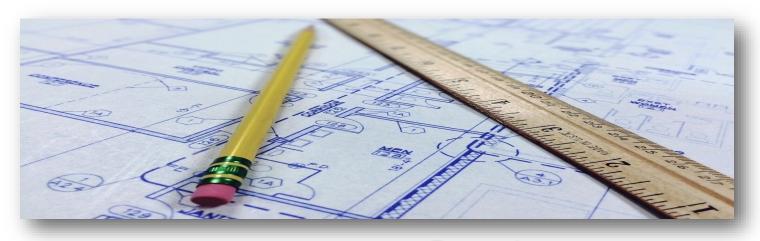


Reflecting God's Image Outside of Eden

January 2024

#### NEW YEAR, NEW MEN

A month of testimonies from men who are living God's design for their life.



### Blueprints

January 2024, Volume 6, Issue 1

*Blueprints* offers a bold message of original intent, which is that plan, purpose, and design God has inscribed into the heart of His men and women.

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Blueprints For Living Ministries, Inc. was birthed out of a preaching firestorm that occurred in "God's Country" (aka Hondo, TX) in 2011. Led by Jason Cole and Ruben Constante, Jr., this preaching revival stirred hundreds of men to seek God's will and purpose for their lives.

Two years later, Ruben created this ministry's newsletter, called *Blueprints*, which would become its first outreach platform.

By 2015, Ruben finalized this ministry's current curriculum, which is neatly organized into five blueprints. During those four years, God had initiated Ruben through a rigorous testing and refining process, which placed him in several crises

of faith. These trial periods became pivotal moments in which he learned to cultivate God's design for his life.

Blueprints For Living Ministries, Inc. now stands as a clear voice in a world that has erased and redefined God's blueprint for humanity. What began as a few sermons from behind a prison pulpit is now a team of dedicated men who are driven to impart spiritual and secular education that promotes positive change and personal growth and development.

It is a call for a return to original intent.



#### Five Blueprints For Living

- 1. The Blueprint of God's Image
- 2. The Blueprint of Gender Design
- 3. The Blueprint of Marriage
- 4. The Blueprint of the Church
- 5. The Blueprint of Discipleship



#### PILLARS OF TRUTH

Because Blueprints For Living Ministries, Inc. is dedicated to standing on and proclaiming God's original intent for life, we center our worldview on the only standard which reveals original intent: the Holy Bible.

Aside from affirming the Nicene and Apostle's creed, we adhere to the Reformed positions of the Christian faith, those doctrines which the reformers believed were central to Christianity. We stand alongside Martin Luther, who boldly refused to recant the clear teachings of Scripture. Therefore, we stand on the Five *Solas* of the Protestant Reformation:

- 1. Sola Scriptura ("Scripture alone"): The Bible is our highest authority.
- 2. Sola Fide ("faith alone"): We are saved through faith alone in Christ Jesus.
- 3. Sola Gratia ("grace alone"): We are saved by the grace of God alone.
- 4. Solus Christus ("Christ alone"): Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Savior, and King.
- 5. Soli Deo Gloria ("to the glory of God alone"): We live for the glory of God alone.

#### The printed version of this publication is sponsored by:





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Justin is afraid of fireworks.

I'm not sure why or when it started but he isn't too fond of the fanfare. But Penny and I did something last year. Before the fireworks display sounded off, we played a few fireworks videos on YouTube for him to watch, and as soon as the real fireworks were shooting off into the dark night, we turned his attention to them.

And he enjoyed them without fussing.

Maybe you need to do something like that this year. What is it exactly that you fear doing? What do you keep running from? With a little practice you may be able to jump out in faith and get it done.

Are you afraid of writing a letter home and expressing how you truly feel? Write a journal about it. Are you avoiding that task that seems to cripple you in fear? Take a few practice tries. I am afraid of looking and sounding silly as I begin this new podcast, so I am relying on all the

"practice" videos I've been doing on Tik Tok, and now I feel more confident.

Bottom line: If the Lord has placed it in your heart, then He will make a way. Even it takes a little practice.

Ruben Constante Jr.





You Never Know What God is Doing

Pastor Stephen Cervera

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It is so easy when things go good in life to look to God and be grateful that He has blessed you. On the other hand, when things are bad right away the blame is on the enemy. We know the Lord will open doors that no one else can open nor no one can close. But what is God really doing?

I'm mindful about the story of the potter and the clay, how the potter molds and shapes the clay into what he wants it to be. God molds us and shapes us.

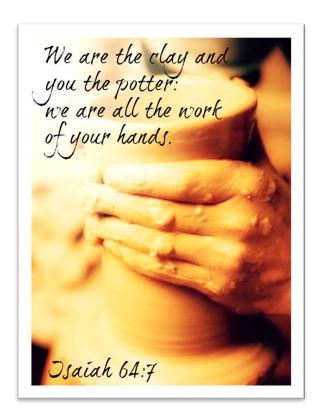
Even when it becomes uncomfortable, we need to realize that we are a work in progress. The Bible teaches us that He is the author and finisher of our faith, that is Jesus has already written our story. Trusting in God no matter how uncomfortable it may be is what we need to do!

Simply put our trust in Him. When you trust in Him it's then we can grasp the understanding that God is in control. Despite our opinions we cannot be quick to blame the enemy when things are not what we think they should be. We need to trust Him in the good and the bad! I know that sounds easy but either way your trust is a full-time commitment. Fully trusting God.

Either we have trust or a lack of trust.

You never know what God is doing when you do not put your trust in Him. God will never leave us or forsake us!

He will see us through the highs and the lows. The hills and the valleys. If you want to know what God is doing just put your trust in Him and no matter what we face know that God is in control! I thank you Father because even though I may not know what You're doing I trust in You because I know You do!





#### Why Wait for the New Year?

Penny Constante



A new year brings new beginnings.

Another year has passed, and a new year is upon us. Most people (me included) will have a New Years' resolution, something to achieve to better themselves or to enrich another person's life. But I wonder why we wait for January 1st to make the start of our desired goals.

Maybe we shouldn't wait to do the things we know we should be doing.

Maybe we should make everyday a "New Year" and work on our improvements. We can start with something small and easily attainable. Something as small as complimenting everyone you

interact with—or say "no" to that second serving of dessert!

The small habits will become second nature and add up to become big things. This is especially true for small acts of kindness. We won't be perfect every day, but that's ok. Every day is a new day to try again. If we do this, we won't need a New Years' resolution because we will be achieving our goals or working on being a better person every day.

Let's take life one day at a time instead of one year at a time.  $\blacksquare$ 

WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING OFF FOR THE NEW YEAR THAT YOU CAN BE DOING TODAY?





One of the hallmarks of our humanity is desire.

Whether it's a craving for a large pizza or an appetite for destruction, each of us yearns. Longings, in fact, are what create conflict, according to James (Jas. 4:1). It is our desires that not only characterize our humanity, but they prompt us to take action and make life worth living. In many ways, desires can make or break you.

And they define what kind of person you are.

When God draws someone to Christ and the new birth begins, a fundamental change occurs within that person. It is literally a new creation that is formed. And with that comes a change not only in speech and conduct but something much more profound. The new birth changes human desire.

And it does this by properly defining it.

A tragic mistake made by many children of God is thinking God will give them what they want, because Jesus said, "you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you," but the reality of the Christian life transcends mere want.

It transforms it.

We are promised to receive what we desire not

because God is anxious to fill our lives with creature comforts but because He radically alters the cravings of our soul. He provides structure, order, and a lasting joy. He heals the heart and restores the soul. And because of this heavenly transformation, our desires change, too. They no longer characterize carnal pursuits but reflect the image of God.

The walk of faith is one of wholeness that defies conventional wisdom, because grace defeats human ideas. His love amends our constitution. When our hearts are aligned with His, our thoughts are changed because the "implanted word" (Jas. 1:21) is present, speech is "seasoned with grace" (Col. 4:6) because of the I AM within us, and conduct is holy because we are "renewed in the spirit" of our minds (Eph. 4:23). Yes, God will give you what you desire. Yes, He will give you the "desires of your heart" (Ps. 37:4). But first He will give you a new heart.

And that new heart will reflect His desires, not our own.





Serving time at the Torres unit (2001-2016) taught me countless lessons and provided me with several opportunities to lead and serve the community around me. One day, a young man whom I had been mentoring many asked me what I had thought was the most important thing in my Christian faith. (He was converting from Islam to Protestantism and wanted me to teach him the fundamentals of the Christian faith.)

So, I asked him, "What do *you* think is the most important thing in life?"

"Discipline," the young man had said, puffing his chest out.

I asked him why he had felt that way, and he shared with me how discipline is a core practice of the Islamic faith and how he had still believed that to be true.

"I disagree," I said. "Discipline is not the most important thing in my faith."

His eyes shot wide open and was anxious to hear my response, because he was ready to rebut me with all the doctrine he knew. Then I shared with him Proverbs 29:18, where the Word says, "Where there is no revelation, the people case off restraint."

"The phrase 'cast off restraint' is a term for discipline or self-control," I said. "And discipline is used here as a secondary object. In other words,

discipline is not the primary thing. It comes second to 'revelation' or 'vision'." His face became stern. I continued. "You see, discipline is the effect of something, not the cause of it. When you fell in love with that woman you mentioned to me last week, why did you 'discipline' yourself to be your very best for her?"

He looked at his notepad, rubbing it between his hands. "Because I loved her," he said.

"Exactly," I said. "Your discipline was the result the effect—of your love for her. In your mind, you had a 'vision', a goal to be your best for her. That vision produced discipline."

His life was changed forever.

As the new year dawns upon us, I want to encourage you all to think about your vision. Think about what drives you. Why are you disciplined? You may think you are not "disciplined," because you are not a fitness guru or an entrepreneur or college student, but you are disciplined in other areas. Perhaps at work or parenthood or marriage. You apply yourself diligently to various tasks throughout your life because of a vision.

Because of a goal.

What is that goal? What drives you? Because whether you know it, something is driving you. It could be anger or bitterness or even to prove somebody wrong! The human heart possesses an enormous capacity for drive—and it can present itself in many forms!

Don't misunderstand me here. I am not disparaging discipline per se. Discipline is critical and a key component to successful living, but it always comes second to visions/goals, for even criminals exhibit phenomenal discipline and patience in executing their lawless acts. But their vision is clearly off kilter!

Is yours?

As we enter the new year, we want to give voice to men who reached rock bottom and were found by God. These men enrolled in our God's Design for Life class at the Kyle unit, graduated the class, and are now living a law-abiding life.

They are honoring God's design for life.

I graduated back in April of 2023 about 6 months ago. The class was so interesting. I learned about so much in black and white that has been disillusioned values over my life. Ruben peeled back the layers of all the deception, so I could learn more about recognizing God's will and plan for me instead of trying to figure it out. So, I learned a few things and most of them were after the fact, after graduating from the Blue-

For those of you who have yet to leave your current program—be ready—it's going to be hard and frustrating for you on the outside. It will always be challenging. What you think you have



prints class.

figured out, well, you don't. Hurdles come from everywhere. For me to write that I learned everything that was taught and—POOF—all problems solved.

Not going to happen. Only after I was gone for a while did things start to surface. They all rode in on the depression-anxiety-anger-helplessness-desperation train all together and right on time. What I *did* realize was that I did have some tools that were buried in me by Ruben via the Holy Spirit.

I had begun to look for a church and a friend somewhere said, "Find a place where the preacher is anointed," and I wondered what's that? Is it someone who dances around on stage? As I began to follow Blueprints for Living Ministries on YouTube and Tik Tok through Ruben's videos and clips I started to see this miracle before my eyes. Why is it every time the past six months I am going through something up pops Ruben on Tik Tok with a word about the very challenge I am facing? I gave up on writing it off to chance and just plain luck.

God was speaking to me.

What's even more, these videos gave me peace about dealing with the situation and later, it felt like it was no big deal. I could handle it. I could sleep. I had the peace of mind, and, God I discovered, without that you really do have nothing! I also started thinking: Where's Ruben in all this? From the first video I really don't see him. Every clip starts with, "Hey Andy, it's me, God again, and I need to talk to you." From there I am in another place learning how to understand and move forward in my current situation, and I'm at peace the rest of the day.

So, what does Blueprints for Living Ministries

FEATURE

mean to me? It has taught me what anointing is, and who Holy Spirit is and how He can speak to you—if you allow Him. You see, to really find the peace of God that I have discovered through the Blueprints for Living Ministries program, you will have to pursue and seek it. Listen and study on a regular basis. Open your heart to receive and learn. Stay with it. I couldn't imagine *not* being connected to Blueprints for Living Ministries on a regular basis. It provides me with the oxygen I need to keep moving forward.

in victory just as I hope for myself. Be watchful, and never stop expecting the best from yourself.

and alcohol. I hope and pray you guys learn to live

-Jayden Besch

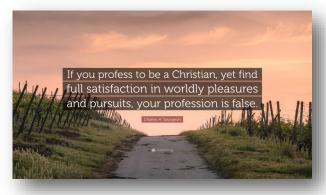


-Andrew Bush

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Hello gentlemen. Hopefully it's Happy Holidays for y'all even in the least desired place away home. I'll never forget how Ruben broke down the garden scene in Genesis. I had heard it once before about the lust of the flesh, eyes, and pride of life tactics that Satan used on Eve. But I didn't realize that it's the same tactic all throughout the Bible and the ones still used on all of us today.

Sobriety is important to me guys. I'm in my two years now which I'm grateful for. I have a good job, wonderful family, and support which I'm also very grateful for. But I'm going to be transparent with y'all. I struggle with sexual sin and temptation. It has its flares, but I remain hopeful that I'll finally get tired of it enough just like the drugs





#### A Life with Purpose: The Onyx

By Antonio D. Kimble, Sr.

Blueprints for Living Ministries transformed my life.

It has given me a much better understanding of what a man is and also what a man's responsibility is in life. In understanding my role as a man and my responsibilities as a man, I have grown and learned patience with my duties as a man within my family and society. Through the Blueprints classes and being here in the free world, I have much more patience with my children and with others.

I am also being a beacon of light unto those that do desire help. I am able to share my experiences with others that have had the same issues that I once had and continue to overcome. Because I do have a clear understanding of my responsibility as a man and as a man of God it is my obligation to show people just how he is working through me. My purpose is to be able to reach more people that want and need help of better understanding the role of being a man, a husband, a brother, a son, and a father.

Also, along with this I have gained a huge understanding of authority, which plays a huge role in life of understanding that we must govern ourselves accordingly within the rules of society and God's laws.

Without abiding by authority and understanding the duties of a man, we will forever be stuck on a merry-go-round, a repetitive cycle. Those are the two most important things in my life that I have been governing myself and which I have been living by since I have been free.

My successes have been slow, but steady. Successful does not necessarily mean buying materialistic and worldly things, but successful in the way that I conduct myself as well as how I interact with people. Others see my transformations

by the way that I interact with them and other people and how others cling to me due to the relatable knowledge that I now possess.

I have only possessed this knowledge because of the tools that I gained during the Blueprints classes and allowing this knowledge to work for me. The classes have helped my life and helped me grow more than I have ever imagined.

I truly never would have thought nor believed that I would be that guy to share his story with others or offer knowledge that others would want to hear and apply to their own life. I never thought that I would be that guy that people will genuinely want to look up to in a positive way, but since I have taken the Blueprints classes I have gotten the patten for success.

I am able to share my story and listen to other stories people's with patience and give them the structural patten of life for a man, which Blueprints gave to me. This has helped me come outside of myself and see things the way I would not have normally seen them. I currently view things differently, my thought process, and how I say things.

This is how Blueprints has helped my life, giving me the jewels necessary to



show me how to apply it in my daily life. I will continue on putting in the work and the time to make sure that other people will have the tools given to me to go through life accordingly.



-Antonio D. Kimble, Sr.

of you waiting to come home I encourage you to attend this class. I heard someone say the truth always prevails. No matter how much you try to cover, dress, or imitate it with a lie, the truth is the truth.

Be blessed, brothers!

- Juan Silva.

Greetings, it's been a journey brothers in Christ. As I was waiting for my release in the Kyle unit, I met Ruben, and he invited me to the Blueprints class in which it was educational as well as spiritual. Everything he spoke about was truth and GOD's truth. Also, it prepared us for what was and is to come out here in the world!

Because for us who have spent an extended period incarcerated, we might stumble upon any situation we are not ready to embrace. I've always like to learn about GOD, so what I learned from the Blueprints class is the principles Ruben taught based on the word of GOD. They go hand in hand with how we are to live our lives out here.

Spirituality, family, manhood, and responsibility to our children as well as setting an example to others are some of the things we were taught. Accountability is also a means of our fellowship. Those



# A special thanks to these faithful ministries and organizations who make our classes possible!





Well, here we are again at the threshold of the old and the new, saying farewell to 2023 and hello to 2024. And what about New Years resolutions? What kind of resolution does a Christian make?

Common New Year's resolutions are commitments to quit smoking, to stop drinking, to manage money more wisely, and to spend more time with family. By far, the most common New Year's resolution is to lose weight, in conjunction with exercising more and eating more healthy. These are all good goals to set. However, 1 Timothy 4:8 instructs us to keep exercise in perspective: "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come." The vast majority of New Year's resolutions, even among Christians, are in relation to physical things. This should not be.

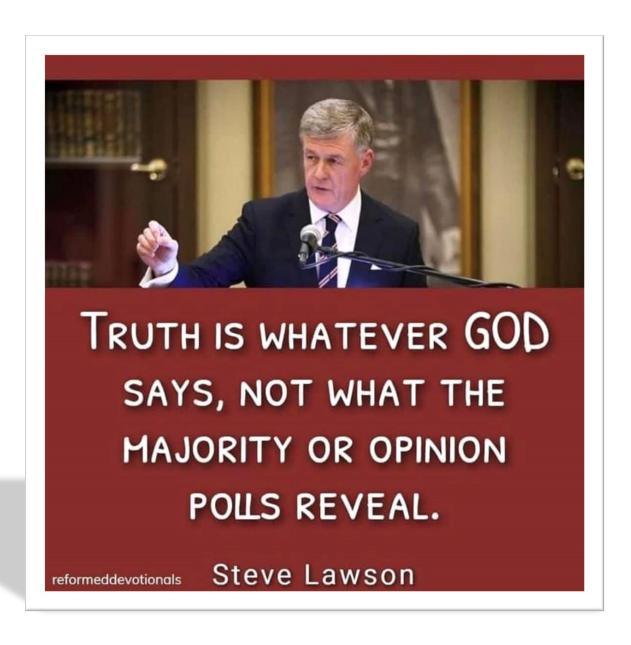
Many Christians make New Year's resolutions to pray more, to read the Bible every day, and to attend church more regularly. These are fantastic goals. However, these New Year's resolutions fail just as often as the non-spiritual resolutions because there is no power in a New Year's resolution. Resolving to start or stop doing a certain activity has no value unless you have the proper mo-

tivation for stopping or starting that activity. For example, why do you want to read the Bible every day? Is it to honor God and grow spiritually, or is it because you have just heard that it is a good thing to do? Why do you want to lose weight? Is it to honor God with your body, or is it for vanity, to honor yourself?

Philippians 4:13 tells us, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." John 15:5 declares, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." If God is the center of your New Year's resolution, it has chance for success, depending on your commitment to it. If it is God's will for something to be fulfilled, He will enable you to fulfill it. If a resolution is not God-honoring and/or is not in agreement with God's Word, we will not receive God's help in fulfilling the resolution.

So, what sort of New Year's resolution should a Christian make? Here are some suggestions: (1) pray to the Lord for wisdom (James 1:5) regarding what resolutions, if any, He would have you make; (2) pray for wisdom as to how to fulfill the goals God gives you; (3) rely on God's strength to help you; (4) find an accountability partner who will help you and encourage you; (5) don't become discouraged with occasional failures; instead, allow them to motivate you further; (6) don't become

proud or vain, but give God the glory. Psalm 37:5 -6 says, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your right-eousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."





Now that 2024 is here, we are stepping out in faith and launching our new podcast called "Reflecting Him."

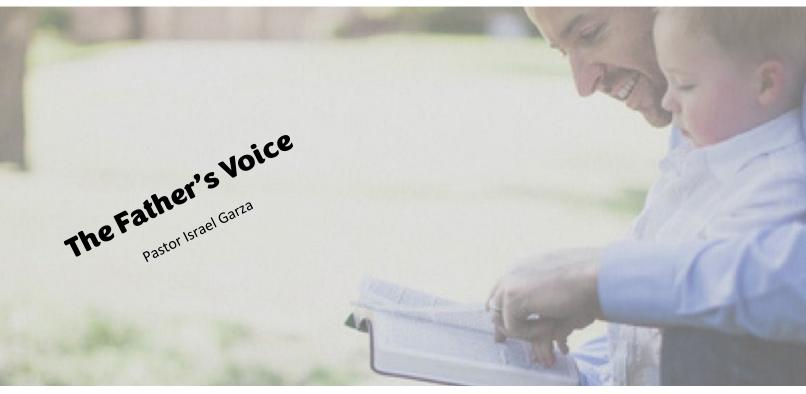
With this new platform, we will be pointing all attention to the highest duty we have as Christians, and that is to reflect God's image. When taken as a whole, from Genesis to Revelation, our grand goal is to be like Jesus.

Not construct more church buildings, not publish books, or secure prestigious awards. We are called to reflect the glory of Christ. That is what "Reflecting Him" will be promoting. Through interviews, Bible lessons, cultural commentary with Pastor Israel, and various discussions, we will highlighting the upward call of Christ in our lives.

Follow us on our new YouTube channel "Reflecting Him" and be sure to subscribe! You can find it on the Video tab of this website.









I am three years into losing my dad.

As a matter of fact, it has been since then that I've noticed that daily I yearn for his voice. I long to hear his whisper, his calm yet strong voice. Now let me make this clear, I am in not comparing my father's voice to that of God's. But what I have and am learning is that there is deep within me, a void without my father's voice, much more without God the Father's voice. The sad truth is that the more time passes, the absence of my father makes it harder for me to hear his voice. Fellowship is key for us to hear God's voice.

Daily I must try to search within me my dad's voice, his counsel, his laughter, and his wisdom. I have no tangible record of his voice, of his anger, or his loving words. How I wish I had more than pictures. I wish for video, for conversations— anything that can make my father tangible.

As I awake every morning and read my Bible I thank God for His wisdom, for His love so grand

for us that we have tangible witness of His voice, of His instruction. I recall anticipating lockdowns! How I wanted the time to sit and study the Word of God. I was soothed, encouraged, and strengthened by His Voice. This hunger to fellowship with God is vital to my life as a Christian. One of the most powerful truths of Psalm 119:11 is that we not only hide God's word in our heart, but that God in His wisdom gave us His indwelling Spirit.

My father's memory is deep in my heart, mind, and person. I know that in many ways I reflect the teachings of my father, the example of my father and his ability. But no matter how much I miss him, love him, and would love to have him back, my love for God the Father is greater. I never wish to be separated from God again. I knew that in time my father was going to pass. But like my father it is my calling to lead my son towards a relationship with God.

One of the last conversations that my father and I had was about honoring thy father and mother. The point he wanted to make was that we must start all by honoring God and fellowshipping with Him. My life was lost with our God the

Father, just as many young men are lost without their earthly fathers. Ultimately, we need both. It is here on earth that our father teaches us to hear, listen and submit to God's Voice. How to distinguish between our father's voice and that of our flesh.

Just three years ago, my voice was one I would no longer be able to hear, no longer would I be able to fellowship with my father, nor would I have a record of him. But we are never without God the Father. We have His Holy Spirit, His written Word, and prayer. My question is do you yearn for the Father's Voice, or have death, trouble, anger, or anything else kept you out of fellowship and hearing His Word?





As I sit here and reflect not only on this year that is about to end but also in the restoration that God continues to do in me through the years, I ask myself some questions to examine myself:

Where am I in my walk with Christ? How is He working in my life? Is my life giving testimony of Christ to others?

I tend to do this reflection often not only because it is the end of the year, but also because as a follower of Christ I desire to grow in Him, be a better person and more than anything I desire that others would see Christ in me.

And as I go through this list of questions, I realize that every one of them starts with who Christ is, His essence, and His character. It will be impossible to bear fruit without being connected to the vine. Self-evaluation is good. Being accountable is

great. We need that as much as we all need of the body of Christ. That's how we grow and edify each other but also our own personal time with Christ must be intentional, and we must be completely reliable on Who He is not in all the great things we think we are doing for the Kingdom.

Christ is the head of the Body and by Him all things move, everything in earth and heaven was created through Him and for Him. My life, my relationship with Christ and my growth is attached to who He is and there is no other way around that. He is the Blueprint. I am designed according to His Image; therefore, as I evaluate myself, I must look to Him and who He is because in Him I will find the true condition of my Heart and exactly where I'm at in my relationship with Him.

Whether we preach, teach, sweep, or mop for the kingdom, it's all done because of His grace in us. The apostle Paul understood this to the full. He explains it in 1 Corinthians 15:10. "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

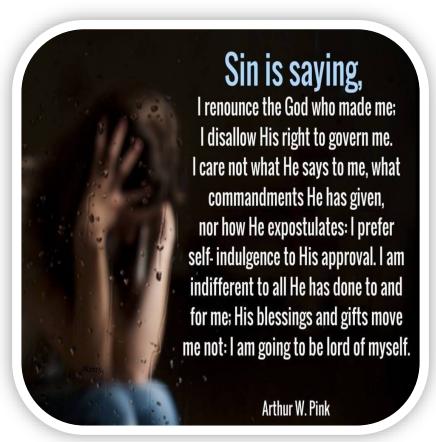
So, as I seek God and meditate on who He is I realize the same thing David shared in Psalms 139.

God, you know everything about me. "You have hedged me behind and before and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it" (Ps. 139:5-6).

Therefore, instead of evaluating myself I make myself accountable to Him and I ask Him to be the One who evaluates the condition of my heart. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23-24).

Life can get so busy that sometimes we can even be so self-reliable that we take our eyes off the source. We go through life doing so many things in God's name, relying on what we know intellectually rather than relying in the guidance of His word being enlightened by His Spirit. You might say, "What's the difference?"

Well, the difference is exactly what we just talked about; we need to *intentionally* look for Him, read His word, and seek Him who He is an How He wants us to respond to His greatness and as we focus on that His Spirit will transform and prepare our hearts to live for Him.



## Don't forget to stop by our social media sites to see more of what God is doing through our ministry.







