

Measurements

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. – 2 Corinthians 10:12

There is something within us that is inclined to look outward rather than inward when it comes to self-examination. We tend to assess our successes, our failures, our achievements, our declines, our happiness, or our disillusionment against the standard of how we perceive others in the same area (whether or not that perception is grounded in any kind of reality). We are rarely content with who we are and what we have done, and so we compare ourselves to those we deem as having “arrived.” In the adolescent years, this tendency is exasperated by peer pressure. It would be a wonderful thing if it were exclusively a teenage phenomenon, but for most of Adam’s race, particularly here in the West, it continues well into adulthood, haunting many all the way to death’s door. This form of self-evaluation is not only elusive in terms of satisfaction but is also spiritually detrimental.

While the Scriptures encourage us to examine ourselves in order to understand our motives and our movements, they do so not against the vacillating standard of fallen men, but against the high and holy standard of the quintessential Man, our Lord Jesus. Though we are all uniquely crafted individuals, each wrought by God in the secret parts of the womb with specified talents, unique abilities, and sundry proclivities, we all nonetheless fall eternally short of Christ’s perfections. No matter our station in life – heredity or environment – He is the only One we are instructed and encouraged to study, evaluate, and emulate. In our Master we find all that we were designed to be and more. “What would Jesus do” is much more than a catch phrase on a bracelet or a moniker on a T-shirt, but the continuous true north on the serious disciple’s compass in all of life’s seasons and moments. We want to do what Jesus would because we long to be like Who Jesus is – holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens.

Today is another opportunity, not to strive to reach some elusive goal rooted in misperceptions and misrepresentations of a cursed world and a damaged humanity, but to live by faith like our Lord did – to commune with our Father, to love others, to lift burdens, to show compassion, to offer mercy, to be gracious, to deflect any praise toward Heaven, to be content in every situation and circumstance, to be unmoved by an evil and adulterous generation, and to be zealous for the glory of God. If this is our measuring stick, life will be abundant and free. -- D. Murcek