

Guide to Inventories

“Let us examine and test our ways, and let us return to the Lord.”

Lamentations 3:40

Now, armed with the Spirit of God, and in full view of the gospel, we will enter into the spiritual battle over the reign and rule of our hearts. Know that we have been set apart for holiness. Seek to put to death those areas of yourself that keep you from reflecting the radiance of Christ to a dark and dying world. We want to look much deeper than surface-level moral symptoms and identify our heart issues, or where our sin is rooted; namely pride and various forms of idolatry, which feed and facilitate ungodly thoughts, actions, emotions, and desires.

➤ **Make Copies of your Inventory Sheets**

You have only received one copy of each inventory sheet. If you choose to use them, you will probably need more than one for each inventory and should make copies of them before you begin. You are not required to use the inventory sheets, but they have been given to you as a guide to assist you in both working through your inventories and communicating them to your sponsor. If writing them out in your journal, on a blank sheet of paper, or a word document is more helpful for you, please use those mediums instead of the inventory sheets.

➤ **Set Aside Time**

Setting apart an intentional time isolated with God (preferably a large amount), which you devote to writing out your inventories is necessary.

➤ **Be Honest!**

Honesty and thoroughness are essential to your inventories. You must be honest with God, others, and yourself. This is no time for denial or a superficial glancing over anything you are being asked to inventory.

➤ **Understand Your Purpose**

Our goal is not a perfectly completed inventory, or for you to create (or think you are creating) a list of condemning failures. Our goal for the inventory process is that you learn how to evaluate your own heart, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and begin to actively engage the sin that has the tendency to reign in your heart. Another goal of the inventory process is that through openness and transparency, confession and repentance will be facilitated and begin to naturally occur.

This resource is from our Recovery curriculum. To find out more about Recovery and how to sign-up for the upcoming cycle, go to midtowncolumbia.com/recovery

➤ **Ask God**

You have to pray because you cannot progress without the Holy Spirit who started this work in you, and He will complete it. Ask for the Lord to bring to memory the names of people, groups, institutions, and situations that have affected your life. Go through your entire life. Nothing is too large or too small.

➤ **Balance Your Inventory**

Though we will not balance our inventories in the sense of listing both our good moral behavior and our bad, we do want to balance our inventories with the promises found in Scripture. For example, of first importance:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

As you do your inventories and look to the deep recesses of your heart, it is like searching in the bottom of a dark well. You are being asked to recall your past sin and the sins done against you. Know that you are not alone and that Christ has already been victorious over everything you have done and has been done to you—it has been literally nailed to the cross. Work through your inventories against the backdrop of Christ's victory over your sin and the freedom His death and resurrection has given you. (You must constantly remember and be reminded of this!)

➤ **Put on the Armor of God**

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12

Don't go to battle without your armor! (Ephesians 6:10-20)

➤ **Use Your Sponsor**

Let your sponsor know when you are doing your inventory so they can be in prayer for you at that time. Call them if you have any questions or if you are having difficulty. Your sponsor is waiting to help you!

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

John 8:34-36

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Abuse Inventory

Rejoice not over me, O my enemy; when I fall, I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me.

Micah 7:8

Prayerfully consider if, in your life, you have been abused in any of the areas below:

Physical Abuse (assault, neglect)

Sexual Abuse (date rape, rape, molestation, incest)

Emotional Abuse (shaming, emotional blackmail, guilt trips, emotional incest)

Power/Authority Abuse (coercion, intimidation - church, workplace, military)

Verbal Abuse (threatening, belittling, ridiculing, demeaning, name-calling)

Ritual Abuse (satanic ritual abuse, occult ritual abuse)

On a blank sheet of paper create four columns and answer the following:

➤ **Column One – The Person**

List the people, institutions, or principles that may have been abusive toward you in any way.

➤ **Column Two – The Abuse**

Specifically explain the abuse that was done to you by each person, institution, or principle you listed. Use whatever means necessary to facilitate detail, be that narrative or bullet points.

➤ **Column Three - Type of Abuse**

List the type, or category, of abuse that each situation you have listed and described falls under: Sexual, Emotional, Power/Authority, Ritualistic, Verbal, or Physical. List as many of the categories as apply to each situation.

➤ **Column Four – Effects & My Response**

Prayerfully discern the residual effects of the abuse. What are the lies you believe because of the abuse? How has it negatively affected your self-image? You may need to also add items from your abuse inventory to other inventories if shame, resentment, fear, or guilt are currently present in your life because of any abuse.

Please remember, if you have been in an abusive relationship, renounce the lie that you are responsible for the abuse. That is a lie from the enemy—you cannot cause someone to sin.

Think through the following questions and write out your response:

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- How have I responded to the abuse?
- Have I suppressed the existence of the abuse?
- In what ways have I attempted to deal with it independent of God through self-protective measures?
- Who or what have I turned to other than God to cope?

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Resentments Inventory

See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled

Hebrews 12:15

According to Merriam-Webster, resentment is a feeling of indignant displeasure or persistent ill-will at something regarded as a wrong, insult or injury. It may be helpful to get a piece of paper and just brainstorm, asking God to call to mind those people who, if they walked into a room, you might have resentment toward. Also, prayerfully consider the following prompt list and feel free to add others that might be appropriate for your resentment list.

God
Jesus
Clergy/Pastors
Parents (Step)
Grandparents (Step)
Siblings (Step)
Extended Family
In-Laws
Adopted/Foster Family
Husbands
Wives
Boyfriends
Girlfriends
Babysitters
Playmates
Childhood friends
Family friends
Middle School friends

Institution:

Marriage
Religion/Church
Judicial
Government
Correctional
Education
Mental Health

High school friends
College classmates
Current friends
College

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School
teachers/counselors/principal/coaches
Employer/ee
Co-workers
Creditors
Police/Probation/Parole Officers
Judge/Lawyer
Church members
Cult members
Gang members
Sports team members
Acquaintances
Neighbors
Politicians/Civic Leaders

Spiritual Principals:

Family Authority
Heaven/Hell
Sin
Sickness/Death
Sanctification
Discipline
Retribution

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On a blank sheet of paper create five columns and answer the following:

➤ Column one – **Who are you bitter toward?**

List those who you are, or were, angry with or those who hurt you; those whom you resent or feel resentment towards.

➤ Column two – **What happened?**

Explain why you are, or were, angry, and specifically explain the action done to you. Some will prefer writing narrative, while others may prefer making an outline. Please use whatever medium will facilitate transparency the most for you.

➤ Column Three – **What has been the effect?**

Describe how this resentment has affected your life. Prayerfully discern if you have any sinful responses to any of the causes of your Resentment that you need to take responsibility for.

➤ Column Four – **How have you responded?**

Describe what was your response to the resentment. List out any sinful responses that you need to take responsibility for.

➤ Column Five – **What does gospel reconciliation look like?**

Describe any feeling that you have that seems forgiveness is impossible. List out any areas where you are resisting forgiveness. Finally, list out steps of reconciliation you need to take.

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Guilt Inventory

I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Galatians 2:21

Guilt is the remorseful result of having done something wrong. Prayerfully search your heart for the things that you carry guilt over. It is sometimes wise to think more in terms of the things you are guilty of, because a hardened heart will sometimes not experience guilt even though sin is present. The following categories are provided as prompts for you to prayerfully consider and help get you started. Also, consider false guilt that may not be the result of sin, but solely the displeasure of one other than God; "being made to feel guilty," when nothing sinful was done. Pray that God would reveal your guilt to you.

GUILT

Abortion (or approval of one)

Abuse (verbal, sexual, physical, spiritual, authority, emotional)

Addictions (gambling, shopping, sexual, drug, alcohol, food, etc.)

Adultery

Anger (violence, fighting, murder)

Anything or anyone I put first over God (idolatry)

Being overly critical

Complaining

Controlling

Coveting (railing against God's provision in your life)

Disobedience to Authority (parents, government, church)

Dishonesty, Lying, Being Unauthentic

Fear/Anxiety

Gossip/Slander

Grudges

Lust (You can lust for things other than sex)

Jealousy

Sarcastic

Self-loathing

Self-righteousness

Selfishness

Sexual sin (broken out separately on the sexual inventory)

Slothful (not just sitting on the couch, but neglecting the important areas of life)

Stealing (from family, stores, the government, companies, church, friends)

Being Quarrelsome

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On a blank sheet of paper create four columns and answer the following:

➤ Column one – **The Cause**

Specifically, what caused the guilt that I am experiencing? List the actions you did or were done to you. Some will prefer writing the narrative of each event, while others may prefer bullet points.

➤ Column two – **Who was hurt?**

List all who were affected by every action or situation that caused your guilt.

➤ Column Three – **How does it impact you?**

Describe how this guilt has affected your life and the lives of others. Do you have any sinful responses that you need to take responsibility for, repent of, or confess?

➤ Column Four – **Reconciliation and Amends**

The process of reconciliation and amends will be handled in far greater detail in coming weeks, but begin to ask God to reveal to you who you need to be reconciled to and what you need to make amends for.

Look at The Cause column and pray through each circumstance of guilt and how Reconciliation and Amends can take place in each situation. For every situation, if you were sinned against or at fault, pray over each one knowing that Christ constantly forgives us, so we are to constantly forgive. Ask God for forgiveness and the ability to forgive those who have wronged you, and proclaim Christ's victory over the affect that any and all guilt has had on your life or the lives of others.

For every cause of guilt you have listed begin to make a list of who you need to be reconciled to, what you need to make amends for, and people you need to forgive or ask for forgiveness. Make a list of names and what can be done to facilitate reconciliation and amends, then spend time praying over your list for both the ability to forgive them and for them to be able to forgive you.

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Shame and Self-Image Inventory

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

Colossians 1:21-22

We want for you prayerfully examine, seek out, and find the parts of your self-image that are false, to find lies and refute them through the Gospel. Begin by praying for transparency, that your true self-image would be revealed to you, and that the application of Christ's victory on the Cross to your self-image would be facilitated.

A negative self-image is very often caused by shame, which is defined as a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior, or a loss of respect or esteem. A negative, or false, self-image that stems from shame can manifest itself through being ashamed of your body, being ashamed of your current state internally (caused by temptation, former sin struggles, things you have done, or things have been done to you), or being ashamed of who you are as a person.

As you begin to inventory your shame and the effects that shame may have had on your self-image, pray for complete transparency and for the cause of your false self-image to be revealed so you can submit that to God for Him to restore and redeem.

For every column or section of this inventory, each question will be addressed to what you personally feel shamed over, as well as what you feel shame over that you are/were not responsible for.

On a blank sheet of paper create three columns and answer the following:

- Column One – **What are you ashamed of?** – What do you feel shame over that you personally have done, have desired to do, or feel tempted by? What do you feel shame over that has been done to you (things you are/were not responsible for)?
- Column Two – **The Affect** – How have the things you are ashamed of, that you have personally done, affected you as well as your relationships? As well, how have the things you feel shame over, that you are/were not responsible for, personally affected you and your relationships with others?
- Column Three – **Self Image** – How have your shameful actions or temptations shaped your self-image? How have the shameful actions of others shaped your self-image?

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Fear Inventory

*For I, the Lord your God hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, "Fear not I am the one who helps you."*
Isaiah 41:13

Prayerfully consider how the list of fears below may be part of your life. Feel free to add to the list if the fears you have are not listed below.

Fear of God/Jesus
Fear of man
Fear of losing a loved one
Fear of abandonment
Fear of intimacy/relationships
Fear of rejection/loneliness
Fear of authority (parents, teachers, police, boss, etc.)
Fear of unemployment, creditors, financial ruin
Fear of sobriety/relapse
Fear of being found out
Fear of people different than I am
Fear of conflict/confrontation
Fear of success/failure
Fear of getting old/body image
Fear of losing control
Fear of illness/germs
Fear of pain/death
Fear of change
Fear of the unknown/future

On a blank sheet of paper create four columns and answer the following:

➤ **Column One – I'm Fearful of:**

List the persons, institutions, or situations you are, or were, afraid of.

➤ **Column Two - The Affect**

Describe how this fear has affected your life.

➤ **Column Three - The Cause**

Prayerfully ask God to reveal to you, and ask yourself, what is the cause of this fear? Also, what specific biblical truths about God do you need to rest in to drive away fear?

➤ **Column Four – What's next?**

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List out steps you need to take with repentance or trust in facing this fear.

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Sexual Inventory

Flee immorality...your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, you are not your own...you have been bought with a price...glorify God in your body.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

God's design for sex is for it to be a frequent, joyous expression of love between a man and woman in the confines of a committed, lifelong marriage. It is an intimate gift from God that carries a ton of weight spiritually, physically, and emotionally—therefore it can have dire consequences when abused or distorted.

Prayerfully consider how you have participated in sex outside of God's intended design for sex within marriage. Below is a list of sexual sins, or evidence of God's intended design for sex being corrupted by sin. Prayerfully consider if you have participated in any of the following:

Pre-marital sex
Adultery
Homosexuality
Promiscuity
Lust
Fantasizing

Pornography
Prostitution
Sexual abuse
Self-sex/Masturbation
Phone/Cyber Sex
Bestiality

Ask yourself in what ways you have sexually sinned, or participated in sex that was not a part of God's intended design for sex in marriage, and pray that God would reveal to you the sexual sin you would normally keep hidden.

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On a blank sheet of paper create four columns and answer the following:

➤ **Column one – Who/What**

With whom, or with what, have you engaged sexually outside of God's intended design for sex? Inventory every act of sexual sin that you can remember. (For example: list names of people, objects of lust or fantasy.)

➤ **Column two - The Cause**

What specifically happened? Give the account of every sexual act you listed in the first column. Again, use whatever means you prefer.

➤ **Column Three - The Affect**

For each sexual act listed in Column One, describe how each act has affected your life and the lives of others. If the effect has changed over time, list every phase of the affect.

➤ **Column Four – Next Steps**

Describe how Christ has offered you freedom from sexual sin. List out what repentance looks like and the next steps you need to take.

Concluding Your Inventories

You have now completed your heart inventories. Now ask God if there is anything you may have left out intentionally or unintentionally that needs to be added, write those things down on the appropriate sheets. Now praise God for revealing areas that need to be dealt with and for the process of healing that is taking place in your life! If you have not already begun, start meeting with your sponsor to discuss and pray over every item on your inventory.

And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:9

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Additional Resources to Compliment the Inventories:

Abuse

Additional Scripture to Meditate On:

Psalm 10:17-18
1 Peter 2:19-2
Joel 2:25

Reflection Questions:

1. Although we have experienced abuse, we are responsible for the way that we respond. Do you use past abuse as an excuse for your present behavior and sin?
2. Just as we are responsible for our own actions, so are our abusers. Do you try to blame yourself for the abuse that you have experienced?
3. How has the abuse you have experienced affected your view of God? Do you blame him or doubt his goodness because of it?
4. Do you believe the lie that you would be basically "good" if it weren't for the abuse you have experienced?

Additional Resources:

Anger and Abuse Talk- <http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>
Rid of My Disgrace by Justin and Lindsay Holcomb (sexual abuse)

Resentments/Anger

Additional Scripture to Meditate On:

James 1:20
Galatians 5:19-24
Psalm 4:4
Joel 2:12-13
Luke 23:34
Romans 12:19
Hebrews 12:15
James 4:1-10

Reflection Questions:

1. Where do your anger and resentments spring from?
2. Do your resentments spring from a desire to be in control and a feeling that life would be better if you were in control?
3. What actions in your life spring from your resentments? In other words, how do you react to these feelings of resentments?

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4. Reflect upon the righteous anger of God. How does your anger compare to his? In what ways is it different? How does God respond to anger? How do you?
5. Do you respond to your resentments by burying them and pretending that they are there or by lashing out at others? Think of a way that you can redeem your responses.
6. Do you trust God to rule as a just and sovereign King?

Additional Resources

Anger and Abuse Talk- <http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>

Article "Understanding Anger"- <http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings> (Look at bottom of page under Additional Resources)

Guilt

Additional Scripture to Meditate On:

Romans 8:1-2

1 John 1:8

Psalm 51:7

Galatians 2:21

Ezekiel 16:8

1 John 2:2

Reflection Questions:

1. Do you have an elevated view of yourself or do you see yourself as a completely guilty person before a holy and just God?
2. Do you live in fear and condemnation or in the complete acceptance and love of the cross?
3. Guilt is not a feeling but a state of being. Do you feel guilty for things that you are not guilty of or do you feel innocent of things you are in fact guilty of?

Additional Resources:

Guilt and Shame, Fear, and Sexual Sin Talk-

<http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>

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Shame and Self-Image

Additional Scripture to Meditate on:

Romans 6:1-4
Colossians 2:13-15
2 Corinthians 4:7-11
Colossians 1:21-22
Psalm 107:13-16
2 Corinthians 4:16-18
Romans 12:1-3
Mathew 6:25-27
Jeremiah 31:33-34

Reflection Questions:

1. What do you feel shame over that you need to take to Jesus?
2. What areas of self-image do you need to let God deal with/restore?
3. Have you been honest with biblical community about the ways you struggle with shame or self-image?
4. What truth do you need to preach to yourself about how the gospel deals with your shame and self-image issues?

Additional Resources:

Guilt and Shame, Fear, and Sexual Sin Talk-

<http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>

It is Finished: The Hope of the Cross, Shame is Finished by Brandon Clements

<http://www.midtowncolumbia.com/2009/index.cfm?sp=teaching&s=36;>

http://www.newmediaserver.net/midtown/sermons/04_03_10_Brandon_2.mp3

Fear

Additional Scripture to Meditate On:

1 John 4:18
Luke 12:4-7
Deuteronomy 10:12
Psalm 23:4
Isaiah 41:13
Deuteronomy 31:6-8
2 Timothy 1:7
Psalm 27:1
Hebrews 13:6
John 14:26-27
Philippians 4:6-7

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Jeremiah 17:5-8

Reflection Questions:

1. What situations or thoughts make you fearful or anxious?
2. How do you respond to feelings of fear and anxiety?
3. What do your fears reveal about your trust of God? Do you view God as good and sovereign?
4. Are your fears based on unreliable emotions that don't actually reflect reality?
5. Fears often reveal that we are putting our hope and trust in unreliable things (i.e. things other than God). What idols are you trusting in?
6. Do you let the circumstances around you govern your fears or the constant and eternal character of Christ?
7. Read 1 Peter 5:5-7. How do you think pride relates to anxiety?

Additional Resources

Guilt and Shame, Fear, and Sexual Sin Talk-

<http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>

"Freedom from the Fear of Man" -JR Vassar

http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/resource_files/audio/201002281115FMWC21ASAAA_JRVassar_FreedomFromTheFearOfMan.mp3

Sexual Sin

Additional Scripture to Meditate On:

Genesis 2:21-25

Romans 12:1

Proverbs 7

Colossians 3:5-6

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Hebrews 13:4

Proverbs 5:17-23

Matthew 5:27-30

Ephesians 4:19-24

Ephesians 5:3-5

Galatians 5:16-21

1 John 2:16

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

1 Corinthians 10:13

Reflection Questions:

1. Reflect on God's purpose and design for sex. How do your views and actions differ?
2. How have you attempted to twist God's gift of sex in order to use it for your own selfish desires?
3. How has sexual sin marred your image of men and women created in the image of God?

Additional Resources:

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Guilt and Shame, Fear, and Sexual Sin Talk-

<http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/recovery-teachings>

Porn-Again Christian: A Frank Discussion on Pornography & Masturbation by Mark Driscoll:

read for free at: http://relit.org/porn_again_christian/

Talk and Q&A on Homosexuality between Jon Ludovina and Thor Sawin-

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/935194/Q%26A-Thor%20and%20Luda%20copy.mp3>

"God & Sex" -Matt Chandler-

http://northway.thevillagechurch.net/resource_files/audio/200910161900HWC21ATAAA_MattChandler_CultureAndTheology-GodAndSex.mp3

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