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HEART WHISPERS (1998)

## EXAMEN OF

## CONSCIOUSNESS

### *Looking for God*

Again look back over the events of the day; this time be aware of when you experienced God's presence in your life. It may be that you were conscious of God in yourself or in others. Notice your interior moods, feelings, urges, movements.

Was there any joy, pain, turmoil, increase of love, anger, harmony, conscious prayer, isolation, or fulfillment present? In what general direction do you feel you are being drawn by God?

How have you been responding to these experiences or situations?

### *Expressing Repentance and Gratitude*

Seek forgiveness from God for the moments when you were unresponsive to the divine presence and love. Pray for a willingness to change those things and attitudes that distance you from the Creator God who loves you. Praise God for those times when you have sensed your closeness and cooperation with God's purpose. Someone has written, "Life takes a lot of consecrating, but when it is lived thankfully, it is well on the way to becoming a holy thing." Reflect on the "holiness" of your life.

### *Receiving Help and Guidance for Tomorrow*

Finally, ask God for what you will need tomorrow. It may be that you want to pray to overcome something or to accept a "thorn in the flesh." Perhaps there is a need for perseverance or for a greater sensitivity to God's presence in your life. Maybe also there are some resentments or attitudes to let go of or a sense that you need to love more. Remember that alone it is difficult to change old patterns, but the Holy Spirit is our strength and support as we try to grow more fully into God's image. You may choose to write your reflections, especially to note the prayer you have made for what you need tomorrow. Expect to be surprised by God's response!

This exercise adapts the Ignatian form of daily self-examination. Approach this exercise with joyful expectation that God will reveal blessings and new directions rather than choosing a negative approach of searching only for what is amiss in your life.

### *Thanksgiving*

Look back over the day and notice where you need to express thankfulness. Do not simply choose what you think you "ought" to be thankful for, but by merely reflecting on the day see what emerges. Notice how you feel toward what is showed to you. Do you see a gift edness in your life? Do you sense your own need? Allow gratitude to take hold of you, and express it to God. Sometimes gratitude will begin with small incidents, especially on difficult days. Notice how your sense of the day changes as you express your thanksgiving.

### *Asking for Insight*

Next pray for guidance, asking the Holy Spirit to show you what you need to see. Do not simply review your own analysis of the day but open your heart to God with the willingness to see what God wants to reveal.

\* What you wear born to do, enjoy doing, do well

Dearly Beloved,  
Grace and Peace to you.

*What will it profit you to gain the whole world and forfeit your life?*

*Indeed, what can you give in return for your life?*

—Mark 8.36-37

In how many ways do you forfeit your soul?

For what borrowed thoughts,

what presumed judgments,

have you given away

what is you,

the dark I AM at the core?

What can counterfeit that beauty,

approximate that mystery,

replicate that once-in-a-lifetime You?

Oh, yes, the suffering of honesty is real,

the cost of being yourself is awful.

Almost as bad as not,

except for the stripping away of what isn't,

the loss of what was loss to begin with,

the death of all that isn't eternal of you,

with nothing left but divine light.

Come stand in this clearing,

exposed and true,

solitary yet embraced—possessed—

and let the word that began all things

burn in you.

Deep Blessings,

Pastor Steve

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Steve Garnaas-Holmes

*Unfolding Light*

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