

Recognizing Who You Are

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BIG SANDY, Texas—It is my opinion that a major impediment to emotional and spiritual growth is that we as people lie to ourselves about who we are. All of us face denial about certain aspects of our lives.

To help you break through your personal denial and to recognize who you are, I want to share five different ways in which you can examine yourself.

What you eat

Consider the phrase "You are what you eat."

I will paraphrase four historical comments from "phrases.org.uk."

- In 1826, Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote (translated into English): "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are."
- In 1863, Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach wrote (translated into English): "Man is what he eats."
- In 1923, nutritionist Victor Lindlahr developed the Catabolic Diet and wrote: "Ninety per cent of the diseases known to man are caused by cheap foodstuffs. You are what you eat."
- In the 1960s hippy era, the phrase got a new lease on life.

What you do

Consider the phrase "You are what you do."

In James 1:22-25, the apostle James described the difference between a hearer of the Word and being a doer of the Word.

Notice his strong statement in verse 26.

James 1:26—"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless."

What you think and feel

Consider the phrase "You are what you think and feel."

There is a famous scripture concerning this idea in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 23:7—"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."

Jesus taught that what we think and feel can actually be the origin of sin. In the Sermon on the Mount, He mentioned the examples of murder (Matthew 5:21-26) and adultery (verses 27-30).

What you love and hate

Consider the phrase "You are what you love and hate."

Jesus taught: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21).

As you can recognize, people can be identified by how they spend their money and their time.

People can also be identified by their passions. What does a person love? What does a person hate?

Be careful not to be consumed by a negative passion—a root of bitterness (Hebrews 12:15).

It is psychologically healthy to have positive passions (Philippians 4:8).

What you choose

Consider the phrase "You are what you choose."

Many years ago, Moses wrote God's view about the importance of choice. A beautiful section of scripture is found in Deuteronomy 30:11-20. The most famous part of that section is found in verse 19.

Deuteronomy 30:19—"I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live."

Here are some other instructions about choice.

- Proverbs 28:13—choose repentance
- Matthew 6:22-23—choose light
- Matthew 5:3-12—choose blessing