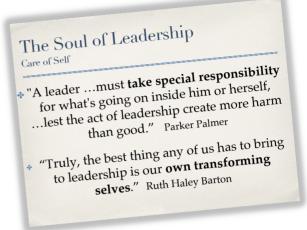
## Importance and Danger of Self-focus:

"...give heed to yourself

and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen ..." Deut. 4:9

King David strengthened himself in the Lord; he tended to his soul; he considered his ways and turned his feet...(Ps.119:59)



Proverbs 4:23 "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it *flow* the springs of life."

Jeremiah 3:40 "Examine your ways and test them...and return to the Lord..." (in the midst of devastating loss, disillusionment)

Haggai 1:5 "Consider your ways, you have sown much and harvested little..."

Jesus speaks of the one thing that's necessary in the midst of frantic service for the Lord.... Luke 10:42

He pleads with us to come and take rest for our souls. Matt. 11:28

Paul says to Timothy "...train yourself to be godly..."

1 Tim. 4:7b, NIV

"...watch over yourself and your teaching" 1 Tim. 4:16

## **Dangers**

One of our problems is we have an enemy who wants to convince us that we shouldn't pay any attention to ourselves...

Some see self-care as pampering or an **excuse for self-centered behavior** - this is a wrong understanding/misuse.

Our Enemy will distort this to keep us from growth & fruitfulness.

He will convince you it's **selfish to focus on your own growth**He will try to **distract you** with good things (always many good things to do so you don't have to look at your soul.)

He will accuse you and say you don't deserve time with God.

He will want you to think God's love is based on what you do.

He will want you to **wallow in your sin** and shame, thinking you have to fix yourself or make yourself better. This keeps you from forgiveness and freedom

He will **overwhelm you** making you think change is all up to you. We are transformed by God as we let Him renew our minds, our thinking & our beliefs! That takes time and effort on our part.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be

transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you
may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable
and perfect... I say to everyone among you not to think of himself
more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober
judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has

assigned." Romans 12:2,3, ESV

**Enemy's voice** - Pharaoh said to the Hebrew slaves. (Ex. 5:4) "Go back to your labors, it's because you're lazy that you want time with your God." I think some of us hear that same voice today.