



THE CULTIVATING PROJECT

Prompting questions for *Assessing*

These questions are offered to you as a framework to explore the topic of Assessing which is the topic focus for our Cultivating Spring 2023 issue.

Assessing has to do with **determining value** and is closely related to taking inventory. To assess something means to evaluate it or estimate its quality, nature, or ability. It is practice of thoughtful, considered observation. It is an *examining* and *testing* something to determine its strength or to search for areas of weakness or potential error. It is an extended endeavor rather than a ‘one-and-done’ action. It does not involve snap evaluations. Assessing our own self and our given life helps us see “*the lay of the land*” given to us, and to recognise what it contains and what it doesn’t. Assessing helps us practice standing in the authority of what is really ours to keep, and what is ours to let go of. It is essential to the work of reclamation, restoration, being known, and being made whole.

“*The LORD examines both the righteous and the wicked. He hates those who love violence.*” Ps. 11.5 (NLT)



1. If I think of *myself* and my given life (relationships, experiences, possessions, hopes, longings...) as ‘*the land* of my being and living’, a field given to me by right to reclaim and cultivate, how do I assess that land to determine what it holds ready and what it needs?
2. What does it actually mean to assess something? Explore the word ‘*assess*’. Where have I seen that done in Scripture, in literature, in what I have observed in the world I can see?
3. What are synonyms of the word *assess*, or *assessing*? How do those words help me better understand this one? Do they shape the way I approach it?
4. It may seem easier to identify the places in me, or in my life, that have things that need to be cleared out or cleaned up. It is harder sometimes to tell where I have richer soil or good growing aspects. How do I assess where I am bearing fruit?
5. What can I thoughtfully evaluate (*assess*) as the work that might need to be done to reclaim it?
6. When I think of what it is to reclaim something, what comes to mind? How would I describe it? Does this stir up any longings, any deep aches? Any past experiences or things I’ve seen?
7. As I assess the land of my being, can I say clearly what God has given me, and what He has not? Can I say what He has taken away and accept that as part of my story? Is there a struggle still there or a story of that experience that I can tell of coming to terms with it?
8. What might *the role of assessing* play in reclaiming something rightfully mine? Is this something I am afraid to look at or answer? If it is, why is that?
9. How do I develop the eyes to see and courage to look at the true conditions of my life and to make a holy judgement about the conditions I see? Is this something I can go to God with and ask for help? Am I afraid to, or ashamed to ask God for help here?
10. How would my assessing my “land” help me heal and become whole? What does assessing *do* in me? In the labour of reclaiming do I really have a right to take anything back that I’ve lost back? Peace? Well-being? Clear conscience? Hope? Authority? Calling?

