



# Taking A Spiritual Audit

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Some of us have an accountant to keep us liquid, a lawyer to keep us legal, and a doctor to keep us healthy. But how do we assess our spiritual condition? How can we do a spiritual audit? How can we know we are living according to God's plan and purpose for our lives? I needed a means to conduct a spiritual audit of my life.

"A Spiritual Audit." I had never thought about such a thing. I thrashed around, trying to be helpful, but felt completely lost in doing what God wanted. I asked God to give me guidance and He blessed me with answers through His Word.

Now I have accumulated twelve questions I ask myself. I would like to share them with you, hoping you will be encouraged to develop your own audit if you feel it might be helpful.

# Session I

## Introduction

Before considering the steps of a spiritual audit, let us see how the concept of an audit, **or *examining something to see if it is true and genuine***, is an important part of the Christian life style.

There is a very strongly stated phrase repeated throughout the Letters of the New Testament: “Examine!” It is a translation of the Greek word *dokimazo* (*dokimavzw*). A Greek/English dictionary might define the word as meaning:

- to test, to examine, to prove, to scrutinise (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals, to recognise as genuine after examination, to approve, to deem worthy.



In Scripture, our Lord asks us to make many audits. Read the following passages and discuss –

- a) What does God ask us to examine, to test, to audit?
- b) Does He give a life parallel? Is a form of figurative language used? (In some cases He does not.)
- c) How can we go about doing the audit?

As always, though the verses are printed, it is best to read them from the Bible and to examine the verses that come before and after to better understand the framework in which the statement is being made.

**Romans 12:1-2** *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be trans-*

*formed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be **able to test and approve** what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

a)

b)

c)

*Ephesians 5:5-11 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and **find out** what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

a)

b)

c)

1 Thessalonians 5:14-22 - *And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. **Test** everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.*

a)

b)

c)

1 Timothy 3:8-10 - *Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be **tested**; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.*

NOTE: A deacon was a chosen church leader, but not a pastor.

a)

b)

c)

1 Peter 1:3-7 - *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be **proved genuine** and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

a)

b)

c)

2 Corinthians 13:4-6 - *Likewise, we are weak in him, yet by God's power we will live with him to serve you. Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; **test** yourselves. Do you not realise that Christ Jesus is in you--unless, of course, you fail the test? And I trust that you will discover that we have not failed the test.*

a)

b)

c)

Galatians 6:1-5 - *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should **test** his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load.*

a)

b)

c)

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 - *For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will **test** the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.*

a)

b)

c)

1 Corinthians 11:28-29 - *A man ought to **examine** himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.*

a)

b)

c)

Make a list of some things you think are important to include in a spiritual audit.

**List some of the questions others have given you that you find helpful.**

# Session II

## Sharing the Questions That Help Me

I'd like to now share with you the twelve questions God has given to me to keep my personal accounts in order.

The example of Christ – growing to be like Him.

*Ephesians 4:13-15 ... until we all **reach unity in the faith** and **in the knowledge of the Son of God** and become **mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ**. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things **grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ**.*

### **1. Am I content with who I am becoming?**

Every day I get one day closer to who I will ultimately be. Am I satisfied with who this will be? Am I “pressing towards the goal”<sup>1</sup> that drove the Apostle Paul? I would ask myself the question, “Who are the important people in my life? Who are my heroes?” “Did they finish well?”<sup>2</sup> Some did, some didn't, and a few were disasters. What can I learn from those who have gone before me, so that I can become the person that will

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<sup>1</sup> Philippians 3:14 *I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 13:7 *Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

honour the Lord Jesus Christ? Who are my *Pauls*, the ones who have been used to sharpen, mentor and prepare me? How am I doing under their direction? Who are my *Barnabases*, those with whom I can relax and share and enjoy co-ministry? Who are my *Timothys*, the ones to whom I am passing the baton? The ones whom I am discipling, mentoring, nurturing so that they will be equipped to assume ministry leadership?

We must be sure our profession does not consume our person. We must remember first who and what we are and what is our purpose.

*Ephesians 6:1-7 I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*  
The King James Version translated – walk worthy of the vocation... What is your “vocation” in life?

What is your calling or “vocation” that comes before that?

Do you let your primary calling, your primary “vocation” show through in every part of your life? How or how not?

It's important that we **be** more than *we do or have*. Too often I have seen executives or tradesmen leave their title and power and have nothing to fill the vacuum. They are shells, like the large beetles you find on eucalyptus trees that look completely alive but have all their insides gone. They are as hollow as a drum.

Also, as we grow older, we must move from power to wisdom. Those who try to hold power too long are resented. Even parents who try to hold power over their children lose the love of their children. However, when we are able to give up power at the right time and become a wisdom figure, then we are useful, honoured, and kept in the mainstream.

Of course, in power, we hold the offensive, while in wisdom we are the consultant -- those who want our help come to us; we don't go to them. So I ask myself: Am I moving from power and becoming a person of wisdom?

**1. Am I content with who I am becoming?**

**a) As a Christian - What do I want to be?**

**b) What am I doing to become that person?**

**c) What changes do I need to make to become more what I want to be?**

## 2. Am I becoming less religious and more spiritual?

The Pharisees were religious; Christ is spiritual. Much tradition is religious, while relation in Christ is spiritual. Ps 63:1, "*O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*"

Do I reach out with a hungry soul for something truly spiritual?

Ephesians 5:18-20 - *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Verse 18 might correctly be translated –

***Do not be under the control of alcohol which leads to ugly sins. Instead, be being (lineal or continuing present tense) more and more under the control of the Spirit.***

What does it mean - the Christian yielding more and more to the Spirit each day?

The difference between religion and spirituality is basically a matter of control. I define religion as an experience I can control, while spirituality is an experience that controls me. After many years of involvement in organised religion, I often felt the shallowness of the experience, the restriction of the rules, and reached out with a hungry soul for something truly spiritual in a relation with Christ.

A while back, I had lunch with a man who was well-recognised in business circles and had attended just about every kind of church in his past. He was well educated, yet he was spiritually hungry. As he looked around him, he wanted the warmth of spirituality rather than the formalism of religion. He wanted to do something significant and impressive with his life before his death.

I kept wishing he could, like a child, feel the love of God in a warm, personal way, which would relieve him of feeling responsible to impress God.

## **2. Am I becoming less religious and more spiritual?**

**a) Who or what is in control of my life?**

**b) What changes do I need to make to be more what God wants?**

### **3. Does my family recognise the authenticity of my spirituality?**

They see me whole, as I really am. I would like to believe -- and must believe -- that if I am growing spiritually, my family will recognise it. John 13:35, *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”*

Do the members of my family see the love of God flowing through me to them and to others?

*1 Samuel 20:24-34 - David hid in the field ... . Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?" Jonathan answered, "David earnestly asked me for permission to go... ." Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!" "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.  
...Jonathan went out to the field for his meeting with David.*

What did Saul reveal about his own heart to his son Jonathan?

The late Ray Stedman, pastor of Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California, called together a group of men for the Council on Biblical Exposition. There were seventeen or so well-known pastors present. One was a very well known Bible scholar named Stephen Olford. During the first lunch, he said, “My brothers, I am weary of celebrity religion. I have had my share of honours, but when I die, unless my family can say, ‘There is something of God in the man,’ then I will have failed.”

There came that holy hush of self-examination for each person in that room.

### **3. Does my family recognise the authenticity of my spirituality?**

What is your family saying?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> It may be hard for children to say what they really think of a parent – face to face. Sometimes we can ask – what do you think other people think about.... If communication with husband or wife is not strong the same approach can be used.

#### 4. Do I have a flow-through philosophy?

*I John 4:7-12 - Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.*

Verse 12 may be correctly translated – ***if we love another, God lives in us and his love has reached its goal in us.***

What does the passage teach us about where we learn to love?

Where do we get the inspiration, the motivation and the strength to love other people?

When God's love is not seen passing through a person, what does that seem to indicate?

Is God's love flowing through me to others?

John 7:38 - *“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”*

The freshness is in the flow. The mountain stream is fresh; the swamps are stagnant.

Some of us want to be a lake, not a river. We want to accumulate before we let too much flow through. However, as a Christian, I am to let the blessings flow through me.

Certainly this involves more than money *per se*. When Christ praised the widow who gave a mite, was He not praising her sacrifice rather than her gift? Could it be that God appreciates only what we give as a sacrifice?

David had sinned and the country was suffering. David asked for God’s forgiveness.

2 Samuel 24:18-25 - *On that day Gad went to David and said to him, “Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.”*

*So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad. When Araunah looked and saw the king and his men coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”*

*“To buy your threshing floor,” David answered, “so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped.”*

*Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take whatever pleases him and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. O king, Araunah gives all this to the king.” Araunah also said to him, “May the LORD your God accept you.”*

*But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. **I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.**"*

*So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.*

*David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.*

*Then the LORD answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.*

a) What was the easy way out that was offered to David?

b) How did David respond?

If I have been blessed with leadership abilities, that blessing should flow out. If I have been blessed with making money, that blessing should flow out. If I have been blessed with handy-man skills, that gift should flow out and into the church.<sup>4</sup>

When we are operating within our gifts in areas that we are passionate about, it creates a net energy inflow not an outflow.

Oswald Chambers warns that when we dam the blessings in our life, we become stagnant, cynical, mean-spirited. If we don't

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<sup>4</sup> Romans 12:6-8 - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.*

*If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

have a “Timothy” that we are mentoring or someone to whom we are witnessing, or we are not using our giftedness in ministry, we will become bitter, angry “Christians.” We must break the dam and let blessings flow like a river, for the freshness is in the flow. Do I really have a flow-through way of Christian living?

#### **4. Do I have a flow-through philosophy?**

Give a specific example of how God’s love is flowing through you.

Do you have a person to whom you are exhibiting Christian friendship with the purpose of helping the person know Christ?

Consider a ministry God has given to you. Who are you helping to teach/train/mentor to carry on that ministry?

Consider what God has revealed to you in His Word. How are you planning to share with others? (E.g. Bible Study, Life’s Issues, Counselling, etc.)

## 5. Do I have a quiet centre to my life?

Consider each of the following passages, and develop a definition of the word “peace” as used in them:

*Hebrews 13:20-21 May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, {21} equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Definition of peace:

*1 Peter 3:10-11 For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. {11} He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it."*

Definition of peace:

*II Peter 3:13-14 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. {14} So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Definition of peace:

III John 13-14 *I have much to write you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink. {14} I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.*

Definition of peace:

*Revelation 6:3-4 When the Lamb opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" {4} Then another horse came out, a fiery red one. Its rider was given power to take peace from the earth and to make men slay each other. To him was given a large sword.*

Definition of peace:

Bishop Francois Fenelon, who walked with God three hundred years ago, said, "Peace is what God wants for you no matter what is happening."

I press this point to myself for it is important in my life. Oswald Chambers says, "In our Lord's life there was none of the press and rush of tremendous activity that we regard so highly, and the disciple is to be as his master."

There is an important difference between the fast track and the frantic track. It is not God's will for me that I be frantic.

My great friend Dr Kent Haralson tells a story about his days with IBM. He says - When I was with IBM, we had an excitable manager who, whenever he got confused, called a managers' meeting to display it. After one of these fruitless meetings, I gave him my favourite little verse: "When in trouble, when in doubt, run in circles, scream, and shout."

This harriedness is epidemic in our society. Unless we are running on empty, we don't feel we are normal. Often I, too, need to hear the command, "Be still, and know that I am God." (Ps. 46:10)

The late USA Senate chaplain, Dick Halverson, was quick to remind people that Jesus didn't have a day planner; He simply "went about doing good." When He was on His way to raise a dead child, He stopped to help a woman with an issue of blood. He didn't prioritise raising the dead over helping the sick. He simply went about doing the good that came His way. Jesus had that quiet centre. Do I have it too? Peace is the evidence of God.

### **5. Do I have a quiet centre to my life?**

Do I have peace with God?

Am I at peace with others?

Am I allowing the inner peace God gives me to flow into all my life?

## **6. Have I defined my unique ministry?**

Do I know what I can do effectively? The need is always bigger than any person can satisfy, and so my call is simply to handle the part of the need that is mine to do. 1 Cor 12:7, *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”*

In business I subscribed to the wisdom, “Opportunity is never mandated.” Just because I had the opportunity to do something didn’t mean I had to do it.

Fortunately, I was able to define my unique ministry early in life, so I have not gone through midlife change. When I was a young Christian, I looked at a tombstone and decided what I wanted on mine: HE STRETCHED OTHERS. He Trained others. 2 Tim. 2:2, *“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”* I have never changed it.

Defining my unique ministry is important because so many requests are made that take time and energy. Unless you know the things you can do uniquely well, you end up doing many mediocre things just to please others. Definition and discipline are essential.

## **6. Have I defined my unique ministry?**

## **7. Is my prayer life improving?**

Oswald Chambers's<sup>5</sup>, in his little book, *Prayer, the Holy Occupation*, defines the essence of prayer as “finding the mind of Christ.”

I have sat and listened to men pray great powerful prayers full of “thee’s and thou’s” and with all the proper King James English. I sometimes wonder if God is even there at times. But at other times, I hear people just talking to Jesus like He was sitting right there next to them. They’ll say, “God, I don’t even know why I’m here today,” or, “Jesus, it’s just the three of us sitting here talking.”

And, I’ll admit, I open one eye and look around the room, for I was sure another presence was there. I didn’t see anyone, but those prayers made an impression on me. More and more now, I hear someone pray the prayer of reality. A few of these prayers have been so earthy that I can’t repeat them, yet I am sure they reached the throne.

I need to be much more fully a man of prayer, but I can perceive progress if I am making it. Progress, not perfection, is all I can hope for in my spiritual growth.

One test of my prayer life is this: Do my decisions have prayer as an integral part, or do I make decisions out of my desires and then immerse them in a sanctimonious sauce I call prayer?

## **7. Is my prayer life improving?**

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<sup>5</sup> Oswald Chambers (1874-1917)

## **8. Have I maintained a genuine awe of God?**

*Exodus 20:18-20 - When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning."  
(The word fear here means "holy awe.")*

Awe inspires, it overwhelms, it intimidates my humanness, it inspires worship. Awe isn't learned; it is realised. That is often why we read portions of Scripture that talk about God in His Awesomeness before we pray.

I remember a Ziggy cartoon strip that had him standing outside, and looking up at the stars with awe, saying, "Go, God, go!" I have felt this same response on a clear night looking up at the Southern Cross. It generally comes when I am alone with nature or when I have seen His salvation work in a changed life.

I read an article by Dr. Gerhard Dirks, the great German computer scientist. In it he talked about his own awe of God. "Can you imagine," he said, "a mind so great as to conceive the DNA?" I can't. The awe of God -- is it growing within me?

## **8. Have I maintained a genuine awe of God?**

## 9. Is my humility genuine?

To me, nothing is so arrogant as false humility. I remember listening to a talented young lady sing in a church I used to attend. Afterwards, I said, “You’ve got a fantastic voice.”

It shocked her. She wrapped her arms around her torso and bent all the way forward, saying in a hysterical voice, “Don’t praise me. Give God the glory!”

I wanted to shake her out of this false humility, so I said, “He didn’t do the singing; you did.” Then I said, “I didn’t say it was divine. I said it was lovely.”

I would have liked to have spent some time talking to her about accepting her gift, her strength, with gratitude. Wouldn’t it have been so releasing for her if she could have said, “Thank you very much. I thoroughly enjoy my gift. I appreciate the opportunity of singing for God’s glory.” Then she would not have been denying her gift nor the compliment I gave her. Again, Bishop Fenelon said, “Accept the compliment from a worthy person as a comfort of God.”

Here are a couple definitions of humility that I like. **“Humility is accepting your strength with gratitude.”**

Thoughts:

And, second, **“Humility is not denying the power that you have but admitting that the power comes *through* you, not *from* you.”** Thoughts:

**“Humility is taking God’s view of who you are in relation to Him and other people.”**

Thoughts:

We are not to pray to be given humility; that prayer would have to be answered with tribulation. We are told to humble ourselves. Matt 23:12, *“he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”* James 4:10, *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”* 1 Pet 5:6, *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:”* Humble yourself. Am I doing it?

### **9. Is my humility genuine?**

Do I think in terms of God needing me, or me needing God?

Do I rejoice in the gifts God gives to others?

Do I still clearly see my sins and my need for daily repentance?

## **10. Is my “spiritual feeding” the right diet for me?**

I’ve stopped calling my spiritual reading time “a devotion” but rather, “a feeding time,” for it is when my soul gets fed. It took me many years to finally come to what I believe to be a healthy menu uniquely fitted to my needs.

We can’t all wear the same glasses, nor can we take the same medicine. Just so, we have different personality and character traits that need developing or dwarfing. That means we must find the spiritual feeding that is right for us.

Currently, I’m reading four or five different books. To me, it’s like eating five-grain bread. Each source is contributing something I need, either in prevention, maintenance, or development. This includes the Bible, various writings of the saints, and short sermons by great preachers of the past. I find I feed best on those things that have lasted and that have produced the people I admire most.

## **10. Is my “spiritual feeding” the right diet for me?**

Do I keep all I hear/read in the proper perspective? Am I noble?

*Acts 17:11 - Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*

## **11. Is obedience in small matters built into my reflexes?**

Do I try to bargain with God or rationalise with Him?  
Obedience largely determines my relation with Christ following new birth. He says in Jn. 15:14, that I am His friend if I obey Him. Therefore I must check my obedience. My good intentions count for little.

I can obey God out of fear or from love. Both He and I prefer love.

*1 John 2:5 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love truly reaches its goal in him.*

*1 John 5:3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome... .*

Also, how do I handle disobediences? Do I give excuses or confessions? Do I foolishly either carry guilt or try to punish myself for what God alone can forgive -- and will have?

Am I secretly punishing myself for a past sin?

## **11. Is obedience in small matters built into my reflexes?**

## **12. Do I have joy?**

**Luke 15:10** *In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.*  
Define joy as used in the passage:

*Luke 24:51-53 - While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.*  
Define joy as used in the passage:

*II Corinthians 8:1-2 ...we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.*  
Define joy as used in the passage:

*Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*  
Define joy as used in the passage:

Joy is promised to me. Ps 16:11, *“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* Joy is promised me. Do I have it? If the relationship with Christ is right, I do.

To me, joy is perfected in the full belief in the total sovereignty of God. The God who loves me is in charge.

Romans 8:28 - *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

Doubt dilutes joy.

I have a firm belief in the sovereignty of God. I totally believe that God doesn't need me, He loves me; and I don't work for Him to earn His love. I work for Him as a result of His love. I work and minister and serve as a response to His love and mercy and grace. He lets me work in order to mature me. That brings joy.

Does my joy extend into my suffering? My suffering is my maturation. Even my dry periods produce perseverance, which is pleasing to God. Therefore, I can be joyful in the adequacy of God.

## **12. Do I have joy?**

Do I have joy even in hard times?

Do others see the joy in me?

## **My motive**

The most important element in my spiritual audit is my motive for wanting one. Am I working for progress or for pride? Too often, some of each. My life is a mixed bag.

I cannot put a number on my audit. I want only to know that I'm progressing. Coming to maturity is such a slow progress. An audit is more than a statement of condition. It is also an indication of my spiritual potential.

So what does this spiritual audit say for you? Doing a serious audit can be a healthy exercise. It can be used of God to draw you closer to Him. It can be used of God to reveal His plan for your life. It can be used of God to show you what He is doing, where He is at work, so that you can join in. It can be used of God to reveal how He wants to expand your borders. It can be used of God to show where sin is present and correction is needed. It can be used of God to assure us of His abiding love for us and the certainty of the fact that we already have eternal life.