

“Heart Check”
Selected Scriptures
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Introduction: *“But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Galatians 6:14)*. All believers want to be able to say this with all our hearts, but as time goes on we can easily lose our perspective on true humility. How does this happen? It is because we are not doing a heart check on a regular basis. How do we recognize when our hearts are deceiving us?

Test #1: Do you have a proper perspective on God’s sovereignty?

What do we already know?

- A. God is the creator of all that is (*Genesis 1:1*)
- B. God does as He pleases (*Psalms 115:3*)
- C. God is sovereign over man’s will (*Proverbs 16:9*)
- D. God is sovereign in salvation (*John 1:12-13*)
- E. Both good things and calamity come from God (*Lamentations 3:37-38*)
- F. God works all things to the good of the elect (*Romans 8:28-29*)
- G. God is working through trials to produce Christ-likeness (*James 1:2-4*)

Let’s do a test on how much we believe this with all of our hearts:

- 1. How much does anxiety play a part in your life?
- 2. How much do you fear man over God?
- 3. Do others view you as a person who is content and thankful?
- 4. How much do you manipulate others or circumstances to get what you want?
- 5. How much do you complain? Sigh? (*Lamentations 3:39; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10*)

Test #2: Do you have a right perspective about yourself?

What do we already know?

- A. We are wretched!! (*Romans 7:14-25; Luke 17:9-14*)
 - B. Not many wise... (*1 Corinthians 1:26-31*)
 - C. We deserve nothing but eternal destruction (*2 Thessalonians 1:9*)
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- 1. How are you doing in your home and at work in the area of patience and anger?
 - 2. Are you defensive when addressed by your spouse, friends, or boss?
 - 3. Are there people who are fearful of getting in your way or making you upset?
 - 4. When was the last time you thought or said “I would never....” concerning someone else?
 - 5. When was the last time you compared your maturity to that of someone else?
 - 6. Do you show partiality or personal favoritism? Are you prejudiced against a specific culture or a certain mindset?

Test #3: Do you have a right perspective about your relationship with Jesus Christ?

What do we already know?

- A. We are children of God (*1 John 3:1-3; Romans 8:16-17*)
- B. We are God’s children because of God’s work alone (*John 1:12-13; Romans 9 [whole chapter]; Ephesians 1:3-14; Romans 8:29-30*)
- C. We are slaves of Jesus Christ: Doulos (*Philippians 1:1*)

How are we doing with our relationship to Jesus Christ?

- 1. So, how are our times with God?
- 2. Are we faithfully committed to the body of Christ? That is, are we faithfully attending, serving, giving, etc.?
- 3. Is Christ being exalted in our homes? If someone lived with us for two months and we didn’t change any of our current patterns, would they say that we love Jesus?

4. Are we being disciplined? How often are we evangelizing and discipling others?
5. Would others say that we love Jesus or that we love the world and the stuff that comes with it?
6. Are we concerned about God's agenda or ours?
7. Are we tithing on a regular basis?
8. Does our speech and attitude reflect that we represent the King of Kings or ourselves?
9. Does your countenance reflect the grace, mercy, and love bestowed upon you because of what Jesus Christ did on the cross?

Test #4: Do you have a right perspective about your circumstances, trials, and inconveniences?

What do we already know?

- A. God is in control (*Lamentations 3:37-38*)
- B. God has a plan (*Romans 8:28-30*)
 - *to make us more Christ-like. (*Romans 8:29*)
 - *humble us (*1 Peter 5:5-6; 2 Corinthians 12:10*)
- C. We need to be thankful in all things (*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*)
- D. We are to be full of joy no matter what (*1 Peter 5:3-9*)
 1. Do you complain about your trials and inconveniences or do you thank God?
 2. Do you try to organize or manipulate your life, family, and friends in order to avoid trials? Are you afraid of trials?
 3. How would others say you do in the midst of inconveniences and trials? Would they say that you honor Christ or that you are impatient and complaining?
 4. Do you look forward to trials and inconveniences knowing that God will humble you through them to make you more Christ-like?
 5. Do you look at trials and inconveniences as opportunities?

Test #5: Do you do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus?

What do we already know?

Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31

Does the pursuit of excellence in work, school, or sports cause us to:

- *not get time with God?
- *miss church on a regular basis?
- *spend our money on the pursuit of excellence to the degree of not giving faithfully to God?
- *not be in discipling relationships?
- *not be able to serve faithfully in the local church body?

How about for those of you faithfully involved in a church body? Does your pursuit of excellence in a ministry:

- *cause you to not be patient, gentle or gracious with others in the ministry?
- *cause you to sacrifice your responsibilities at home on a regular basis?
- *cause you to have too much of a sense of self-importance (sin of pride) or be haughty because you do it better than others?
- *cause you to not trust others to do the task at hand because it won't meet your standard?
- *cause you to be driven by a fear of failure and a fear of man?

As we continue to check our hearts in light of Scripture and humble ourselves before the mighty hand of God, we will see the following fruits in our lives:

- *Fruit of the Spirit
- *Less anxiety
- *Less defensiveness
- *Less fear
- *Less hypocrisy and more integrity
- *More unity within the body

*Ultimately, a greater love and relationship with JESUS CHRIST!!