
INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2 Corinthians Paul gives the Corinthian church the command to “Examine yourselves”, and the teaching pattern of Jesus and the Apostles was often to ask pointed questions to help people diagnose their spiritual health or sickness. This PDP is designed for that purpose, to help you examine yourself through the lens of The Bible’s “Gospel-Church-Mission” pattern. After you’re finished answering these questions yourself, I strongly recommend asking a Christian brother or sister who knows you well to go through your responses with you. They will often have better insight into you than you!

As sinful people we are prone to be horrible self-evaluators so before you answer these questions take some time to pray, lay down your pride before God, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight to see and acknowledge the reality of who you are, knowing that grace covers our weaknesses.

GOSPEL

1 Corinthians 15 says that the gospel is “of first importance” to Christians and that it is something “in which you stand”, spoken in the present tense. Colossians 1 says that the gospel is like a crop that grows to cover an increasing amount of ground in the hearts of Christians. In other words, the gospel isn’t something we just needed to get saved and that mature Christians have moved on from; it’s the dazzling centerpiece of the entire Christian life. It’s something that maturing Christians are increasingly embracing and moving deeper into.

These questions are designed to help you evaluate the depth of your belief in the gospel.

Which of the following “ditches” on either side of the gospel do you tend to fall into?

DITCH TO THE LEFT: “LICENCE”	THE GOSPEL PATH	DITCH TO THE RIGHT: “LEGALISM”
I tend to feel and function like my level of obedience to God isn’t that big a deal. I sometimes take grace for granted, treating it like a license to sin.	I rest in the fact that Jesus fully took God’s wrath for my sin at The Cross, knowing that God no longer has any wrath left for me, only love. Overwhelmed by His grace, I work hard to obey him out of love and worship.	I tend to feel like the level of God’s love for me depends on my current level of obedience to Him.

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

- How deeply does your heart believe the following statement: “Because all of it was poured out on Jesus at the cross God has no condemnation left for me, only love”.
- Does weak trust in the adequacy of what Jesus has accomplished for you leave you plagued by fear of condemnation or guilt before God? How are you growing in this area?
- The amount of grace that we “breathe in” from God will affect the amount of grace we “breathe out” towards people. Which statement would the people who know you the best (husband, close friends, HG) say is more true about how you dispense grace...
 - I am slow to be offended and quick to forgive
 - I am quick to be offended and slow to forgive
- Circle one. I tend to relate to God more as: “Judge who punishes” or “Father who loves”?
- On a scale of 1-10, how true is the following statement: “I feel like the amount of God’s love for me depends on the level of obedience in *my* life”?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- On a scale of 1-10, how true is the following statement: “I feel like God’s love for me depends on the level of obedience in *Jesus’* life”?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

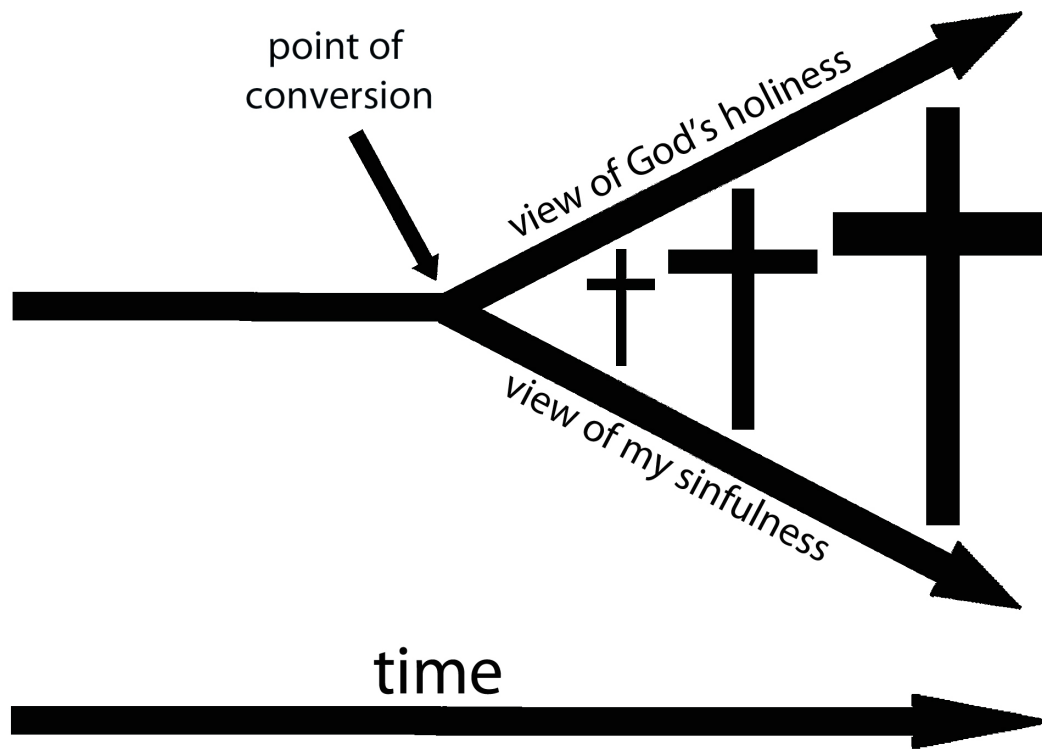
- When was the last time what Jesus has done for you made you, personally, weep?

- When you obey God, which of the following statements best characterizes your motivation...
 - Avoidance of fear, guilt, or condemnation motivate me to obey.
 - Love for Jesus, a desire to be like him, and pursuit of joy motivate me to obey.

- Explain your answer. Which shapes your attitude, how you think, and how you feel throughout the day more:
 - What Jesus has accomplished for you
 - What you have accomplished or have failed to accomplish for God

- Romans 6:1 says that some people who have small thoughts of grace will adopt an attitude that says, "*It's not a big deal if I keep sinning because grace will abound.*" Is the gospel producing an increasing hatred of sin in your life or is this blasé attitude toward sin present in your life? Explain.

The following is a visual representation of Christian growth in the gospel:



EXPLANATION: As we mature as Christians after our conversion our view of God will go “up” – we’ll increasingly see him as more and more holy. On the other hand, as we mature as Christians our view of ourselves will go “down” – as we grow in wisdom and understanding we’ll see more of our sinfulness. As this paradox becomes more real to us, we’ll see the cross as bigger and bigger and bigger, becoming progressively more overwhelmed with gratitude, joy, and humility as we are made aware of the extent of what Jesus did for us.

As you look at the past year, do you see yourself growing in these areas?

- I have grown in wonderment before God because I have grown in my view of his holiness.
- I have grown in humility before God and others because I see more of my sinfulness.
- My life is marked by increased gratitude, humility, joy, and worship because I see more of what Jesus did for me at the cross.

CHURCH

1 Peter 2 says that believing the gospel will transform us into a unique people who are like foreigners in this world, belonging to another (heavenly) country. The New Testament calls these unique gospel-people “the church”. The church is a people who are becoming increasingly unique from the world because they are being transformed into the likeness of their kingdom’s lord, Jesus.

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus’ comprehensive explanation of what a “kingdom life” should look like. The following questions are designed to help you evaluate yourself by his teaching.

- Do you take seriously the Word of God, tremble before it, and cherish it in your life by devoting yourself to growing in your understanding of and obedience to it? Or do you find yourself “relaxed” toward the Scriptures, devoting little time to it and having a “relaxed” attitude toward walking according to it? (Matt 5:18-19) Explain.

- Few, if any, sins are more out of step with the gospel than the sin of unforgiveness. Is there anyone in your life, past or present, that you are harboring anger or unforgiveness toward, regardless of the level of their sin against you? Do you struggle with admitting fault and asking forgiveness? (Matt 5:21-26)

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

- Jesus said sexual immorality is not just in actions but also in thoughts and intents of the heart. Describe the purity level of your life – thoughts, eyes, emotions, and actions. (**NOTE:** *this is often read as a directive applying almost exclusively to men. For many women this may include things like daydreaming about romantic relationships with other men or emotionally indulging in Disney-ish depictions of other relationships – in books or movies – in a way that sows discontentment in your heart toward your husband.*)
- Matt 5:29-30 describes a godly attitude toward and response to sin. Do you genuinely hate sin and violently oppose it or is it tolerated in “acceptable” areas or at “acceptable” levels in your life? Explain.
- Are you as devoted to your marriage (or possible future marriage) as God is in your actions, attitudes, thoughts, and emotions? (Matt 5:31-32) Describe the health-level of your marriage.
- Is the level of truthfulness in your speech a reflection of the level of truthfulness in God or are you given to hints of deceitfulness through lying, manipulation through partial truth-telling, or exaggeration? (Matt 5:33-37) Explain your answer.

- Even the sinful world loves and cares for themselves and people they like. Having a posture of love and caring toward *people that feel like enemies* is a sign of grace at work in your heart. (Matt 5:38-48). Are you increasingly loving and praying for people who sin against you, hurt you, or inconvenience you? Explain.

- Which is truer of your Christian activity (prayer, devotion to Scripture, giving to the church and the needy, etc)..
 - “Most of my Christian activity takes place in public with the possible motivation of maintaining a Christian image before my family and/or friends.”
 - “Most of my Christian activity takes place in private so that I can honor God who will reward me in eternity.”
 - I find myself somewhat apathetic toward Christian activity and it is largely absent in my life.

- Jesus taught that the way you use your money is one of the best indicators of your heart (Matt 6:19-24). Which of the following best describes how you use your money..
 - The way I use my money reveals that I am valuing heaven over earth. My life is structured so that I can and do give to the church, am generous toward people in need, and spend for my family and myself wisely within my means.
 - The way I use my money reveals I am valuing earth over heaven. My life is structured so that I spend almost all of what I earn on my family and myself, with little or nothing to invest in heaven by giving to the church or needy.

- Matthew 6:25-34 teaches that worry (aka “stress” or “anxiety”) is functional atheism coming from a heart that is saying, “I do not believe God is in control and will take care of me.” Describe the level of worry in your life. What do you worry about and what does that worry say about your heart?

- Which of the following statements (choose multiple) best describe you right now...
 - I tend to make judgments of other people like a doctor – If I correct people, I do so in humility and love out of a desire for their health.
 - I tend to make judgments of other people like a courtroom judge – if I correct people, I usually do so in annoyance or anger out of a desire to have their sins pointed out and punished.
 - I tend to fearfully avoid correcting others even if they are harming themselves or other people with their sin.
 - I tend to notice and be annoyed by other people’s faults more often than my own.
 - I see grace changing my heart and I am increasingly noticing my faults more often than other people’s.

- Take a second to pause and reflect on the last day of your life. Evaluate the truthfulness of this statement: “How I want people to treat me is how I treated my spouse, friends, other people in traffic, my boss and coworkers, the cashier at the store, my children, and my church family.”

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

- Take a second to read Matthew 7:17-20 then pray and ask for wisdom before answering this question: In answering all of these questions, do you see evidence (fruit) of a changed heart?

MISSION

Galatians says that the gospel “gives us feet” – believing it produces a desire to spread it. The entire Bible is a story of the mission that God has been on since The Fall to restore a people into right relationship with himself and to use these people to restore his kingdom to earth. The church is sent into the world to join God on this mission.

These questions will help you evaluate the level at which you are joining God on his mission.

- If you're not praying for people who aren't Christians, it reveals you probably don't have a heart for the lost. Who's salvation are you praying for right now? How consistently?
- One of Jesus' great fears for his people was that they would become “hidden light” by retreating from the world into the comfort of Christian relationships (Matt 5:13-16). Are you developing meaningful relationships with non-Christians for the purpose of gospel-advancement? With whom?
- When was the last time you talked with someone about the gospel or invited someone to a house group meeting or worship gathering?

PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

- One of the most significant pieces of missional living is viewing yourself as having a “missionary identity”. To what level are you viewing yourself as a missionary in your family, neighborhood, community, etc? How is this playing itself out in your life?
- In what ways are you helping your HG function missionally and maintain an outward focus?
- Jesus said that the primary way the world would believe the gospel was by seeing our love for one another (John 17). In what ways have you practiced “inclusive community” this year by intentionally inviting non-Christians when you gather with other Christians (at HG meetings, informal hangouts with Christian friends, etc)?

A FEW ENCOURAGEMENTS UPON COMPLETION...

- Take some time to answer the question, “What did I learn about myself?” and don’t just focus on shortcomings that were revealed. Also take time to reflect on where you see grace at work in your heart and life and to praise God for it!

- If in answering these questions you’re concerned about the genuineness of your salvation, don’t ignore it. This may be unfounded doubt arising out of unrealistic expectations or legalism, but it may also be God’s Spirit lovingly revealing to you your need to be born again into new life. Talk to a godly person you trust to speak truthfully to you and fill your HG Leader in on what you’re processing.
- **THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP:** Walk in repentance by working with one or a few other Christians in your HG to develop a plan for spiritual growth in your areas of weakness. What are you going to do in response to what you’ve seen?