

SPIRITUAL HEALTH SURVEY

Steps of Action

How it will work:

A doctor would tell us that to maintain our physical health, we need regular check-ups so they can assess our vital signs—blood pressure, temperature, weight, and so on. For our spiritual health we need to regularly check and balance the vital signs of a healthy Christian life:

Loving God: You were saved to worship God.

Loving Others: You were saved to become like Christ.

Serving God: You were saved for serving God.

Serving Others: You were saved for God's mission.

The *Spiritual Health Survey* is set up to help in your growing relationship with God. It is not a tool to see how you measure up against other people; nor is it a tool to see how close you are to perfection. We all know we'll never be perfect this side of heaven. Rather, this is a tool that will help you in your spiritual health, and give you direction for developing a plan to bring God's purposes for your life into balance.

When you have selected the purpose you want to work on and the steps you want to take, we encourage you to share your decisions with a trusted friend who can help you stay the course by praying for you and holding you accountable. Don't try to do this alone. Isolation can lead to procrastination. But a loving friend can encourage you if you're feeling discouraged and help you up if you fall down.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12, NIV

How To Use The, Steps of Action

The following pages focus on the four purposes we believe are vital in fulfilling the overall purpose of Liberty...*Developing True Followers of Jesus Christ*. To get the most out of information listed on the following pages we suggest you do the following:

1. Take the *Spiritual Health Survey*.

If you haven't already taken the *Spiritual Health Survey*, stop right now and take it. The survey will give you a personal view of your spiritual health, and pinpoint purposes that may be out of balance. This will help you identify the purposes you would like to work on and those in which you are strong.

2. Find the Purpose You Want to Work On.

Find the specific purpose you would like to strengthen by reviewing your *Spiritual Health Survey*. Work on the purpose with the lowest score, or where the Holy Spirit may be nudging you to consider.

3. Choose a “Next Step” and Get Started.

You will find a section for each purpose. Pick the step or steps you want to take for the purpose you have chosen to work on. You will find a resource page for each purpose with recommended books, small group studies, and practical suggestions that will take you further in your spiritual growth.

4. Find a Friend (mentor).

Many of us start out with good intentions but may lack the discipline to follow through with our plans. Make it a point to pair up with a friend who can help you follow through on the growth steps. Select a friend who is an individual of the same gender, who is committed to helping you deal with life and all that it offers. This person should be a good friend who encourages you, helps with accountability when needed, and supports you as you take spiritual steps and face challenges unique to your life. One of your fellow Sunday School class members is likely to be this kind of friend.

Loving God

Worship Resources

Books:

The Way of a Worshiper by Buddy Owens

Up With Worship by Anne Ortlund

The Unquenchable Worshipper: Coming Back to the Heart of Worship by Matt Redman

The Air I Breathe: Worship As a Way of Life by Louie Giglio

Radical by David Platt

Crazy Love by Francis Chan

Experiencing God by Henry Blackaby

Transformational Church by Ed Stetzer and Thom Rainer

Small Group Studies:

Seven Words of Worship by Mike Harland and Stan Moser

Worship: Believers Experiencing God by Henry Blackerby and Ron Owens

Doing Life Together: Surrendering Your Life for God's Pleasure (6 wk DVD curriculum)

Surrendering to Christ Together: Six Sessions on Worship

***Other Small Group Material Available.

Suggestions:

Practicing the Presence of God: Practicing the presence of God involves looking for God in every detail of life. To do this you want to think of God as everpresent in every situation, and remember you are never alone. Look at everything you do not as something you do by yourself, but something you do together with God. Spend time speaking with Jesus as if he were right there with you. Take some time to think about him every hour of the day.

Fasting: The purpose of a traditional fast is to abstain from food in order to focus clearly on your relationship with God. You can also fast from television, entertainment, reading, or anything that distracts you from God. Those who are diabetic, pregnant, or who suffer from severe physical disorders when fasting from food should fast from other things that are not physically damaging. Remember, the goal is to develop a focus on God. In order to fast you may want to consider the following:

- What is the purpose of this fast?
- Begin with something small like one meal or one time slot.
- During the fast, commit the time you would have spent eating to prayer, bible study, worship, etc. Use it as a time to focus on God.

Journaling: Sometimes it is helpful to journal in order to see God's work in our lives. You may want to start a journal that allows you to record some of the victories and struggles you are having. Record your thoughts and feelings as you go through a process of self-examination. Make it a point to review your journal annually to see how God has worked in your life over the past year.

Worship: Find a place where you can worship God privately. It may be a spot outdoors, in the privacy of your bedroom, or even in your car while commuting to work with a good worship CD. Wherever it is, make a habit of visiting this place regularly and worshipping God there.

Meditate on God: Take some time to meditate on who God is and to get a sense of his greatness. You may want to use the Psalms as a guide. Read through a Psalm and note what the psalmist says about God's character and about his experiences with God. Take some time to praise God for who he is and for what he has done in your life.

Worship as a Lifestyle: Make it a point to see every action as a worship sacrifice to God. When you wake, thank him for the day. As you go to work or school, sing praise music or adore him for who he is. Throughout the day, try to commit every word, thought, and action to him as a way of thanking him and worshipping him, realizing every breath is his gift to us. At home, bring God into every activity. Talk with others about the things God has done in your life.

Preparation for Corporate Worship: Spend some time preparing yourself for our church worship service. As you approach the building, take a moment to stop and thank God for Liberty. Before the service begins, say a prayer of thanks to God. Tell him you are looking forward to meeting him in worship. Pray that God would prepare your heart to worship him. Spend some time praying for the pastor and everyone involved in worship that day. Look around at those entering the church and pray for as many as you can asking that God would touch their hearts and souls during the service. During worship, try to picture Christ seated on the throne (read Isaiah 6:1–8) and thank him for his sacrifice.

LOVING OTHERS

Discipleship Resources

Resources:

www.crosswalk.com

www.MyStudyBible.com

www.biblegateway.com

www.daveramsey.com

Books:

Spiritual Disciplines for The Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney

Christian Beliefs by Wayne A. Grudem

What Every Christian Ought to Know by Adrian Rogers

The Life You've Always Wanted by John Ortberg

The Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozer

The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn

Forgotten God by Francis Chan

The Case for Faith by Lee Strobel

The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel

The Grace Awakening by Charles R. Swindoll

Small Group Studies:

What Every Christian Ought to Know by Adrian Rogers

Growing in Christ Together: Six Sessions on Discipleship

Practicing Basic Spiritual Disciplines by Charles Stanley (10 Week Study)

The Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn

***Other Small Group Material Available.

Suggestions:

Book Study: Choose a book of the Bible and commit to studying it in depth. Read through the entire book a few times. While doing this, get a basic understanding of how the book is structured, what the author's message is, who he is speaking to, what the book's purpose is, etc. Then start with a section of one chapter and read this through a few times asking the same questions as above. To help you in your study, you may want to pick up a commentary that helps explain things verse by verse.

The ACTS Model: The ACTS model of prayer involves breaking our prayers up into different phases or focuses. The "A" stands for adoration. The first portion of our prayers should focus on adoring God for who he is and giving him honor and glory. The "C" stands for confession. A very basic part of prayer is self-examination and coming clean before God about our sin, confessing it, and then turning from it. The "T" stands for thanksgiving. Thanksgiving involves thanking God for who he is and what he has done. The "S" stands for supplication, which involves bringing our requests before God. This model helps us stay balanced in our prayers and attuned to the will of God.

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The Lord's Prayer: When asked by his disciples to teach them to pray, Jesus gave them what has come to be known as the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a model of prayer that can be broken up into six R's. The first three R's deal with prayers directed toward God. They are: Remember the Lord is near ("*Our Father in heaven*"—Matthew 6:9), Reflect on who God is ("*hallowed be your name*"—Matthew 6:9), and Refocus our lives toward his Kingdom and his will ("*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*"—Matthew 6:10). The second three R's deal with prayers for our needs. They are: Request the needs you have for today ("*Give us today our daily bread*"—Matthew 6:11), Repent of the sins you have committed ("*Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors*"—Matthew 6:12), and Rest in God's deliverance and presence in times of temptation ("*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one*"—Matthew 6:13).

Flash Prayers: Frank Laubach talked about "flashing" prayers at anyone you meet. He explained how he would pray silently for those he came into contact with and ask for God's joy and presence in their lives. He would "flash" these prayers at anyone he saw, people on the bus, the street, in a plane, etc. Take some time to experiment with this approach to prayer. At church you may want to flash prayers at those you pass by or see in the sanctuary. In every instance ask for God's joy and presence in the person's life. Then look for the response. Do you notice a difference in them?

The Bible as a Story: For many people Scripture can become dry because it is read like an encyclopedia. Take some time to read the Bible like a novel. Start at the beginning and read it straight through. Instead of looking for something to apply that day, look for overall themes and indications of what God is like and how he interacts with people.

Money Management: Take some time to look over how you manage your money. If you don't have a budget you may want to establish one. Spend some time praying over what God wants you to do with the money he has given you. This will then help you budget with God's priorities in mind. If you need help with this it may be a good idea to see a Christian financial counselor.

SERVING GOD

Ministry Resources

Resources:

Free Spiritual Gifts Test: <http://www.lbcchelsea.com/serve/>

Books :

If You Want To Walk On Water, You've Got To Get Out Of The Boat by John Ortberg

Cure for the Common Life by Max Lucado

The Volunteer Revolution by Bill Hybels

The Call by Os Guinness

Improving Your Serve by Chuck Swindoll

It's Not About Me by Max Lucado

Small Group Studies:

Doing Life Together: Developing Your Shape to Serve Others (6 wk video curriculum)

***Other Small Group Material Available.

Suggestions:

Join a Ministry: Join an existing ministry at Liberty that best fits your spiritual gifts, interests, passions, talents, abilities, personality type, and experiences.

Jump in Anywhere: You discover your gifts by getting involved in ministry. If you don't know your gifts and abilities yet, then just find something that sounds interesting and get involved. You'll never know what you're good at until you get started. If it doesn't work out, call it an experiment" and try something else.

Start a New Ministry: You may have an idea for a ministry that does not currently exist at Liberty. Spend some time in prayer to determine if this ministry idea is something you would like to pursue. If it is, then contact your pastor or church leader who is in charge of ministries.

SERVING OTHERS

Missions/Evangelism Resources

Resources:

Shelby Baptist Association – www.shelbybaptist.org

Alabama Baptist Convention – www.alsbom.org

North American Mission Board – www.namb.net

International Mission Board – www.imb.org

Books:

Becoming a Contagious Christian by Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg

Divine Appointments by Bob Jacks & Matthew R. Jacks

Evangelism For The Rest of Us by Mike Bechtle

Just Walk Across The Room by Bill Hybels

3:16 The Numbers of Hope by Max Lucado

Small Group Studies:

Go Fish by Andy Stanley

Becoming a Contagious Christian by Bill Hybels & Mark Mittelberg

***Other Small Group Material Available.

Suggestions:

Be Ready to Care: Be ready to *Serve Others* wherever you go. Carry a Liberty “You Are Invited” card and be ready to invite someone to a weekend service. Carry the numbers for local shelters and food services with you so you can help others.

Community Compassion: Look for opportunities to care for the needs of your community. Simple “Acts of kindness” are great ways to start. Get involved at a local school. There are many community programs that help share the love of Jesus through meeting the needs of others. Look for ways to take your faith outside the walls of the church.

Deliver Food: Set aside some time to volunteer at Shelby Baptist Associations food bank with your family or small group. Make it a special day or evening out. Go out for a meal or dessert afterwards and talk about how it felt to serve others. How was Jesus seen through your actions?

Short-Term Mission: Choose to go on a short-term mission trip. Through these mission trips you get a better understanding of other people's need for Jesus, and a better understanding of the heart of God. Be mindful of short-term mission trip opportunities that are available at Liberty.

Count Conversations: Often we can put too much pressure on ourselves to "convert" someone or have all the right answers. It is the Holy Spirit who converts, not us. All you have to do is talk about the Gospel (see Matthew 28:19, 20). Instead of counting the number of people you have led to Christ, start counting the number of conversations you have with others about Jesus. You may be shocked to find how easy it is to talk naturally about Jesus when you don't pressure yourself to convert them.

Pray for Your Friends: Make it a point to pray specifically for people you know who don't know Jesus. You may want to write their names on a bookmark in your Bible, or in a prayer journal. Set aside a regular time in your day to pray for them.