

Spiritual Health Check: Directed by God's Word

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[0 : 00] Good morning. I received a text message from Pastor Ken that he is doing well. Apparently he is safe.

This morning, we are continuing our sermon series, Spiritual Health Check. Last week, Pastor Ken mentioned that checkups are important.

So many areas of our lives. But why it is important to do this thing?

As Pastor Ken suggested last week, it is important to set a balance, a healthy standard upon which we can measure things in the future.

Because when we know what healthy should look like and feel like, when we recognize what normal is, we can better recognize what warning signs pop up.

[1 : 12] When things start to go off track, you can better address it. Course correct before things get out of hand.

As Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ, it is important for us to recognize that our spiritual health is even more important than our physical health.

Over the coming weeks in our series, Spiritual Health Check, we are going to take a closer look at some of the ways we can access our spiritual health and identify important things we need to pay attention to.

Pastor Ken talked about being thirsty for God last week and is ultimately God's word, the Bible. This is the perfect source to quench the longing in our soul.

That's the focus of our sermon this week. Are we directed by God? Do you direct that by God's words?

[2 : 35] My first question is, what and how do you see God's words or the Bible? Do you just see it as a book like any others?

Or do you see it as a sacred book? I remember one of my professors from seminary was illustrating what the Bible is.

He dropped the Bible off from his table and kicked it with his shoes. Then he asked how we felt about it.

Of course, being seminary students at that time, we all felt bad about it. This is what he said.

We felt bad because we know what is inside. We felt bad because we know the Bible is not just any other book.

[3 : 43] It is something else. It is a sacred book. It is the living word of God written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Do you see it as a sacred book? Since we are human beings, we may have lots of the most valuable things in our lives.

But for us, as the followers of Jesus, the Bible should be the most precious thing in our life. Many would acknowledge the Bible as a roadmap for their lives.

In fact, it is true. What does the Bible say about itself? We have on the projector.

The Bible said, you know, Psalm 119, 104, it said a lamb or a light. In Jeremiah, it said a fire, a tool.

[4 : 56] In Ephesians, it said a weapon. 1 Peter is set a seed. In Psalm 19, it said, It is perfect, trustworthy, sure, right, clear, pure, true, and righteous.

And it is sweeter than honey. To be desired more than fine gold. What it can do here?

Same thing in chapter 19. It said, It can revive the soul, make the wise the symbol. It can rejoin the heart.

It can enlighten the eyes. I don't know about you. I have never finished reading the Bible, either in Burmese or in Kichin, till I came to Canada.

I went to seminary in Manitoba for my MA educational study. Being seminary student there, I had to take a few biblical and theological classes.

[6 : 15] As I was doing my class assignments, I was able to explore more on biblical and theological study. Of course, I was able to finish reading the whole Bible multiple times in English.

In the beginning of my reading, I read it for my knowledge, for my information. Of course, it was not very encouraging.

I found more questions to ask, more errancy, more inconsistency, it was very difficult to believe if this Bible is actually a sacred book of the true record of God revelation.

However, as I read the Bible continually, I understand each time differently. The story of the people of Israel become my story.

The story of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob become my story. The story of every individual in the Bible, every situation in the Bible become my story.

[7 : 33] When Jesus teach and minister his disciple or different individual or to the crowd, I start seeing that Jesus is actually teaching me, actually ministering me, rather than Jesus is teaching to others.

There are a few times I cry when I was, while I was reading, especially on gospel. I later regretted why I didn't know about this Bible before.

Since I see it as the most important subject in my life, I continue pursuing the divinity program there. Dear church, the Bible is a true, truly a lamp, a light, a seat, trustworthy, sweeter than honey, and more desirable than gold, even the finest gold.

My point here is, not how much I read the Bible, but how the Bible has transformed my life spiritually.

The more you read it, the more you come to understand humanity, the more you come to understand the life-giving and salvation, bringing the closure of God in Christ.

[9 : 15] I'm sure some of you would have, also have stories like this, in terms of how you come to loving the Word of God, or the Bible. Dear church, the Bible, the Word of God, is indeed a living and active.

Hebrew chapter 4 verses 12 tell us, the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joy and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intention of the heart.

Ultimately, nothing on earth can even begin to compare with God's words, and nothing else provides.

What is both essential and eternal? We can ask ourselves so many questions. Do we turn to God as our first source for guidance in our life?

Many people may carry their Bible with them, but rarely dig into them. People may even memorize Scripture and know a lot about the Bible, but does it shape, govern, change their life?

[10 : 48] Has the Bible changed our heart? Or it is just information like all the other information we are surrounded by every day? Is the Bible a feature of our daily life?

Do we cherish what is said and search for answer to the circumstances of our life? The Bible also talks about actually loving God's words.

The word of Psalm 119 describes it over and over again. It said, verses 47, I find the light in your commandments, which I love.

I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes. Verses 48.

And verse 97, it said, Oh, how I love your Lord! It is my meditation all the day. Verses 113, I hate the double-minded, but I love your Lord.

[12 : 08] Verses 119, it said, All the wicked of the earth you discard like a dose, therefore I love your testimony. Again, 127, Therefore I love your commandment above goal, above fine goal.

Verses 163, I hate and uphold the falsehood, but I love your Lord. There are some here I know who love God was.

You find the light in studying or reading the Bible. You just don't know why, but you just love it.

Regardless of how many times you have read the Bible cover to covers, you enjoy studying and reading the Bible. Probably a couple weeks ago, I was able to visit one elderly from this church in the care center.

I was very encouraged to see how much she loved the Bible. I'm sure she must have read the Bible cover to cover many times.

[13:27] This time, she's determined to copy some books from the Bible to her notebook while she's in the care center. When I was there, she showed me her walk.

Very encouraging. Very, very encouraging. She can just sit and stay in her bag while she is not well.

But she chose to be active in engaging with the Bible. I believe this is how she meditate as she loved God was.

My wife, Grandpa, who was that time 93, 94, when I met him, he could just sit and do nothing at his age.

But day and night, he read the Bible. He read the Bible as it was his ever first time. I had to bring a magnifying glasses for him from here.

[14:40] He was being quenched for the word of God daily. We all know that Jesus knew scripture intimately and not simply because he is God and God inspired those words.

But he is a man. He had memorized the word of God and has been immersed in them since he was a child. We can recognize through his ministry that Jesus often said things like, have you not heard, or it is written before he calls scripture as his source of truth and direction.

Following the example of our master, we should also study the word of God and be guided and governed by them.

As committed followers of Jesus, we need to learn to ask the question, what does the Bible say?

Whenever we have a question, about anything, we should start with the Bible to seek answer.

Believe it or not, the Bible can give you a perspective on most common questions, such as, how should my child be educated?

[16:14] What are the correct reasons for choosing a church? Is this person qualified to be pastor or a church leader?

How should I or our church reach people with the good news of Jesus Christ? What change should I make to be more Christ-like parents or spouse?

How much time should I spend at work? Or what should I do with my life when I retire? of course there are many, there may not always be specific answers to specific questions found in scripture, but we can learn a godly perspective to help guide us in the way we should go.

we are not only going to make the best choice in our life, we will make mistakes, but as long as we seek to follow the guidance of God's word in our life, we will ensure we're growing closer in relationship with God and his will for our life.

dear church, are we directed by God's word in the choice we make our life, in how we speak and act and serve others?

[17:49] One thing I notice of many who love the word of God dearly, their lives are very different.

They are just different in how they speak, how they act, how they see and how they serve others.

They see every situation differently.

They see the world differently. I have never seen someone who loved the Bible dearly and complained about the life he or she has.

They just have no reason to complain about this or that. Their lives are governed by the word of God. Their lives are guided and shaped by the word of God.

How can we take steps to ensure our lives are guided and shaped by God's words? God's love. As Pastor Kent said last week, we can't have spiritual growth without spiritual food.

[19:02] And the Bible is the best food for our hungry soul. If you're thirsty for God's presence, you will want to connect with him to the world.

God's world will change us in the world. God's word is not just good talk, but spiritual food that is grounded in the word of God with practical application for our lives.

Let's make time for the God words and walk toward making that a daily habit in our life. spending time in God's world will change us from inside out.

But we need to invest the time for that to happen. I had a privilege having a class with one of the wisdom literature professor, Dr.

Tramble Longman, he suggested even if we cannot read the whole Bible or even if we don't have to read the Bible every day, he suggested to take time to read each chapter of the book of Proverbs.

[20 : 30] It can make you wise or it can make you more closer to God. That's how he suggested that. And I have been doing that if I don't have time to read the whole books.

Let's read the Bible every day. Don't stop reading the day until you know at least one thing God would help us to do in response to what we have read.

We have seen Psalm 119 here before. let's read that chapter and let's meditate from there.

It's a beautiful reflection of the richness and value of God's word. It will breathe fresh life into our thirsty soul. We have some homework from Pastor Kent.

he suggested we should take some time this week and at least five areas in our life that we have not recently considered from a biblical perspective.

[21 : 49] And he wanted us to choose one and take some time to see what we can find that the Bible said about it. God created us to be governed by his spirit and through his word.

So, seek to live a life that is truly directed by God's words. Amen. Amen.