

HEART EXAM TIME (Grated by Jesus only)

1. How's your heart?

You may have heard this asked in a commercial. The goal is to convince you to buy a product to track your heart. If you have made Jesus your Lord and Savior, you already have a free resource that tracks the health of your heart and even shows you areas that need improvement. It is called the Holy Spirit. We have been studying His important role in our lives.

2. How's your Temple?

As temple caretakers, we have also been talking about the many ways we need to give God more control of the temple in which He dwells. Does our body, spirit and soul need some spring cleaning? Even though we want to give God control of each of those areas of our lives, we sometimes need to ask God to give us a clean heart. We often let poor attitudes, self-centeredness, or other things take the place of what God to do in our lives. How's our spiritual diet? Have you been eating living things? In an old program called FEAR FACTOR people were rewarded for eating living bugs, etc. That sounds really gross, but if we want to live a vibrant spiritual life, we are told to feed on living food and drink living water.

John 6:51 Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I give is my flesh, which I will give for the live of the world."

John 4:10 "If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that sayest to thee, give me to drink, thou have asked of him and he would have given thee living water."

Are we getting stronger or weaker?

We are often told that we are what we eat. Each day we make a choice on our food choices.

1 Cor. 10:3 "Whether, therefore, you eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Feeding our soul is just as important. Our soul is strengthened as we study and cherish God's Word. 2 Timothy 2:12, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We might call it God's exercise program. When we plant God's Word in our hearts, we are adding tools which the Holy Spirit can bring to mind in our time of need. His commandments and promises strengthen our daily lives. I love to think about the Bible being God's love letter to me. My husband used to write live letters to me on toilet paper (his only option at the time) while he was in Coast Guard training. I cherished them and reread them. I even kept them for most of our lives. When he went to be with Jesus, I needed to look to Jesus to provide spiritual love letters. I understood what it meant to lose half of myself but Jesus reminded me that "*I am complete in Him.*" Col. 2:10. What a wonderful blessing!

3.Are we getting fat?

Physically, this is a frustrating reality if we struggle with this area of our lives. But we may also need to think about how we put God's Word to use. How often do we sit in a service and hear God's Word, but don't ask God how He wants us to put it to use?

4 . How well are we following His commandments?

Yes, the 10 commandments are still very important, but the New Testament stresses the most important commandment as stated in Mark 12:30, "*And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all they heart and with all*

thy soul, and with all thy mind, and all thy strength, this is the first commandment. 31-And the second is like, namely this, thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself."

Do we love the Lord with all our soul, heart, mind, and strength? Could our neighbor be our spouse, our parents or children, as well as anyone God puts in our path? How can we better love each other? Our friendship connection is one way we can reach out to each other by getting to know each other's needs and praying for each other. We serve a loving God who wants to heal the broken hearted, (Isa 61:1 and Luke 4:18). We all have times of needing extra prayer and loving care. *1 John 4:8, "He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love".*

5. How is our praise life?

It is so easy to get overwhelmed with the many day-to-day demands of life. Sometimes we face extra challenges of sickness, trials, temptations, and discouragement because of various circumstances. Yet Paul was in prison when he wrote, *"Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God.-Phillipians 4:6.* If we want to be where God dwells, we need to enter into His gates with thanksgiving. He delights in hearts that praise Him with grateful hearts. *Ps. 100:4-Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name. Phil. 4:3, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say Rejoice.*

6. How is our thought life?

In Phillipians 4:8 & 9 Paul tells us exactly what we should be thinking about, He says, what **is true, honest, pure, lovely, of good report, and if there be any praise and the God of peace shall be with you.** Then he follows by telling us to be content. Wow, it seems to be very challenging, but then he reminds us of this well-known verse of ***"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me", Phil 4:13.*** If you have been married or in any relationship, have you ever found yourself concentrating on something other than that? God can give us all we need to change our thought-life. I have found that when I praise the Lord, in the midst of our circumstances, I can still receive comfort, peace, love and even joy in spite of my situation. God often surprises us with His answers when we least expect it.

7. Have we accepted our mission?

God loves us so much that He gave His only son for us. Unfortunately, we often don't let that sink in enough to really let it get us excited about the freedom on sin, healing through the stripes of Jesus blood, and all the abundant resources He provides, as well as the hope of eternal life with Him. He heals the broken-hearted. He sets us free. He gives us His love daily. Are we grateful enough to be excited and desire to share it?

When we get a great deal, we get excited and often can hardly wait to share it with others.. Do we excitedly anticipate what God wants to do through us in order to love others as He loves us? Do we daily ask God to let His love flow to those he puts in our path? We have a very important mission as ambassadors for Him (2 Cor. 5:20). Serve the Lord with gladness, (Ps.100:2). What a wonderful privilege it is to be a part of God's family. *Rom 8:16" The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God"* As part of God's family we get to care for our sisters and brothers through prayer and in many other ways. I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God. I have been blessed to receive care in many ways and I am especially grateful for the love we share in this group. We have a mission to care for each other. It is a great privilege and blessing. We accept this mission with **grateful hearts**. Thank you for letting the Holy Spirit check your heart.

