

NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP: A STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING  
THE SPIRITUAL HEALTH OF THE CONGREGATION

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## CHAPTER I

### A Theology of Spiritual Health

What makes a healthy church? If Jesus Christ were to evaluate a local congregation today in the same manner as He did the seven churches of Asia Minor in the book of Revelation, what qualities would He seek? Much exciting church growth research has been done in recent years to discover how to numerically increase a church. The false dichotomization of quality or quantity has been firmly rejected and we now understand that growth is an essential part of health. The Church has been called afresh by the Church Growth Movement to evangelize the unchurched and incorporate them into the local congregation as disciples of Jesus Christ and responsible members. In doing this, however, the approach even to spiritual realities has often been pragmatic and methodological. This is so because the pragmatic and methodological aspects of local church life have been frequently either neglected, tragically outdated, or uninformed. The time has come for a non-sectarian discussion of true spiritual vitality. Not just what makes a big church but what makes a good church needs our attention. Large or fast growing cults prove that growth itself can exist without the supportive action of the Holy Spirit.

Since this study is intended as a step toward an instrument for objectively evaluating the spiritual health of a local congregation, we will attempt to allow the New Testament itself to point us to the marks of true spiritual vitality. We will ignore controversial areas of polity and forms

of corporate worship. Rather we seek those qualities which are the most important--those qualities which the Holy Spirit indicates must be part of the life of a believer if that person is to be considered healthy. Thus our approach in developing the spiritual health of New Covenant Fellowship will be to evaluate and motivate the growth of the individual rather than to focus on the management of the corporate dynamics of the institution. Even the corporate programs which we develop later in this study are intended as models which will stimulate personal growth in these areas. We recognize, of course, that many more factors contribute to making a healthy congregation than simply the accumulation of healthy people, yet we have chosen to focus on individual health because we are convinced of a premise. While we recognize in a spiritually healthy congregation more than just the collection of healthy individuals, no church can be truly considered healthy apart from the health of those members. The sine qua non of church health is that its people are healthy.

In the latter portion of this chapter we will review some corporate dynamics of health. We do this because any theology of spiritual health must keep in view both the health of the individual and the quality of the corporate life. Yet the majority of this study concerns personal health, and when corporate health is measured this is done only on the basis of accumulated personal health. The goal of this dissertation is to develop an instrument and accompanying programs which will assist the pastor to increase the overall health of the congregation by motivating and monitoring personal health.

### A. Personal Spiritual Health

In the next chapter we will attempt to discover some of the marks of spiritual health which the New Testament most recommends to the believer. At this point we must establish a conceptual framework which will allow us to understand the interaction and nature of these personal spiritual qualities. We will do this by examining two essential questions:

1. What is the nature of personal spiritual health and growth?
2. Can spiritual qualities be measured at all?

#### The Nature of Spiritual Health

This question is undoubtedly one of those most fundamental to all human experience, and as such has been answered differently by countless people since the dawn of human existence. In asking this question, we are immediately in danger of becoming entangled in a quagmire of human speculation and conflicting opinion. So, rather than taking the time to survey the many ways it has been answered, we will simply propose a model of our own which is intended to be in accord with the teaching of the New Testament.

In a very significant article entitled, The Development of Social Indicators of Spiritual Well-Being For Quality of Life Research, sociologist David O. Moberg writes:

Spiritual well-being is not a synonym for religion. In many respects it is a much more specific concept, but in others it is even broader because it is not limited to the domain of religion. Its functional definition pertains to the wellness of "health" of the totality of the inner resources of people, the ultimate concerns around which all other values are focused, the central philosophy of life that guides conduct, and the meaning-giving center of human life which influences all individual and social behavior.<sup>1</sup>

He confirms that we are discussing questions which are not simply religious in the traditional sense of the word, but involve "the totality of the inner resources of people..." Spiritual health involves the most intimate and hidden portions of the human make-up. We are considering

the "heart" of a person. After making this point, Moberg then continues in his article to describe the great need for good instruments with which to measure "spiritual well-being" and to admit that no such generally accepted tools exist at present in the field of sociology.

The Bible throughout assumes people are at different and changing points of obedience and character development. And it admonishes us to grow by willingly yielding to God, and receiving the blessings of His Kingdom. A person is considered spiritually healthy to the degree that he or she is manifesting the presence of the kingdom of God in their behavior, emotions, attitudes, and beliefs.<sup>2</sup> In commenting on the Sermon on the Mount, which certainly might serve as a checklist of spiritual health, George Ladd emphasizes the need for a spiritual miracle to take place in every Christian before health can be realized:

It is obvious that here again is a standard of righteousness which transcends the level of human attainment. Who is free from temper? Who is pure and free from lust? Taken out of context, these words only condemn us to perdition. No man in any dispensation can fulfill them. Yet it is the righteousness which God's kingdom demands; and the righteousness which God demands of us, He must give to us, or we are lost. The only life which can be made pure is the life which knows the power of God's kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

It is vital, before we proceed with the development of a Spiritual Health Diagnosis, that we understand the above statement. If Dr. Ladd is correct, spiritual health is not the achievement of years of self-effort. It is rather the rule and power of the kingdom of God manifesting itself through us that brings us to a condition of health. In light of this, we will define spiritual health as follows: To so maintain one's personal relationship with Jesus Christ that His transforming power is at work in every area of one's character and behavior.

This instrument of self-evaluation we are developing is not meant to

produce a roadmap for increased self-effort; nor to provide an occasion for patting oneself on the back, nor to aggravate condemnation already felt for an area of failure. It is intended to encourage us to give thanks for transformation God has already brought about, and to recognize areas still in need of transformation. When a weak area is identified our hope for change should focus on increased relationship with Christ and conscious dependence on the working of the Holy Spirit at that point of need. We must avoid the futile cycle of repeatedly making promises to try in our own strength to do better next time. Listed below are three suggested steps in any Biblical process of changing areas of personal weakness.

1. Recognition--the point at which we realize our own resources have failed, or that in a certain area we are no longer drawing upon God's resource
2. Repentance--the decision to seek change and growth in this area of personality or behavior
3. Repositioning--moving to actively depend on God to work the needed change in us and to give the power to obey

#### An Analogy of Physical Health

Spiritual health may be seen as analogous to the physical health and development of a human. A human grows through several stages (infant, child, adolescent, and adult) and at each of these that person can be said to be healthy or unhealthy. A healthy baby is not less healthy than a healthy adult, though there is a developmental difference in the two. The deciding factor is whether all organs and tissues are functioning normally (as they were designed to function). These tissues and organs expand in capacity with maturation, but do not change function. For example, a healthy lung

in a baby is smaller than a healthy lung in an adult, but no less healthy for it is living tissue functioning in the way in which it was designed. Spiritual health is similar in many ways. To be healthy is to be rightly related to God and drawing upon His resources. This posture begins at "new birth" and can endure, increase, fluxuate, or wane depending on that person's character and the nurture he or she has received. Health is a relationship with God rather than a personal achievement, and as such is not necessarily a function of age or longevity. There may be those who are only days old in their Christian faith who demonstrate high levels of spiritual health, and on the other hand there can be people who have been Christians for long periods of time who no longer, or have never, manifested a significant degree of health. According to the New Testament, God is clearly the author and power behind all growth in godliness (e.g. Phil 2:13; Heb 13:21), but at the same time it insists that we must earnestly seek and willingly cooperate with His plan for our lives, or that program can, at least, be retarded (e.g. Phil 2:12; 1 Tim 6:11-14). Consequently we are told to admonish (Rom 15:14); encourage (1 Thess 5:11); serve (Gal 5:13); and bear with (Eph 4:2) one another for the purpose of stimulating spiritual growth. In other words, if we are to proceed with the development of a "spiritual health diagnosis" we must assume that spiritual health is not pre-determined in its rate of growth. In order for this instrument to be of any practical value we must consider that it is not futile to encourage another believer to exercise his or her will in seeking growth.

In the evaluation of a person's spiritual health we must examine more than just one's general disposition toward God, for it does not necessarily follow that to be healthy in one area is to be healthy in all others. A human may suffer disease in only one or a limited number of organs while all

other organs remain healthy. This is also true spiritually. For example, one might have faith without an adequate level of love (1 Cor 13:2).

Finally we must remember that though a person's growth in spiritual health is not pre-determined in terms of its rate, it certainly is pre-determined in terms of its goal--the model of full health being Jesus Christ Himself (Rom 8:29). And because the ideal of perfect health is so high, it does not seem likely that anyone reaches that point where there is no longer any room for growth. That condition will be realized only in the Age to Come.<sup>4</sup> In the present age, experience tells us even when we do grow in an area, we arrive at our new position only to find still another horizon stretching out before us.

#### Measuring Spiritual Qualities

In the next chapter it will be our purpose to identify those qualities of behavior and personal internal experience which the New Testament hails as the most significant fruit of spiritual regeneration. We refer to the evaluation of this dimension of a person as their "spiritual health," and though few pieces of information could be more useful and important, it is also true that there are few areas of human life more difficult to measure. Accordingly, it is necessary at this point to review some of the major obstacles to accuracy within the measuring process itself, and then, in light of these, consider how such a measuring instrument can still be profitable.

To begin with the Bible tells us on several occasions that it is God alone who is able to discern the motives of an individual's heart (1 Sam 16:7; 1 Chr 28:9; Luke 16:15; 1 Cor 2:11). Therefore we tread on dangerous ground when we presume to measure or judge another's interior life, or interpret the motives behind his or her behavior. In addition to this, listed below are some of the factors which make a scientifically verifiable evaluation



difficult:

1. A researcher cannot observe another's internal experience

a) ...the spiritual aspects of man's nature can be studied scientifically only indirectly. When we do so, the logical chain of relationships between our observations and conclusions is apt to be lengthy and weak. The validity of our generalizations therefore will be rather dubious.<sup>5</sup>

b) I can gain knowledge of your internal experience only if you choose to report your data to me or if I infer the substance of your experience from your behavior or circumstances.<sup>6</sup>

2. A researcher influences the test he or she develops and its interpretation subconsciously.

...the personal equation of the observer is now negligible in most physical sciences, but bulks extremely large in the social and psychological sciences.<sup>7</sup>

3. Respondents tend to exaggerate or minimize in reporting

The difficulty encountered by most questionnaire studies is the 'yea-say' effect, the tendency of respondents to exaggerate (or minimize) both religious activity and the joy of fulfillment.<sup>8</sup>

4. Searching one's own inner world of experience is an extremely subtle and difficult matter.

The problem is that searching one's own world of experience is an extremely subtle and difficult matter. How many dimensions of intensity of experience are there? Sensory intensity, degree of awareness, amount of attention, vividness, and richness of hue or tone are among the variables suggested.<sup>9</sup>

5. A commonly agreed upon method of scientifically verifying religious research has not been achieved at this time and may never be

Since common verification of conclusions is the hallmark of scientific achievement, it must be recognized that much so-called knowledge of the internal side of religion or any human activity is beyond the secure domain of science.<sup>10</sup>

There are, of course, many other contributing features to the general problems of sociological measurement.<sup>11</sup> And it is clear from even the few major categories that we have just mentioned that the Spiritual Health

Diagnosis which we develop in chapter II cannot be a scientifically verifiable tool. Yet such an instrument can still be valid. For the real question is whether this measuring instrument works effectively. In other words, can we make decisions better with its help than without it?<sup>12</sup> Does it help us to distinguish individuals in regard to some criteria?<sup>13</sup> This means of justifying an instrument is called the "pragmatic approach to validity."<sup>14</sup> According to this approach, social research of this type is valuable even if the research data cannot be scientifically verified. There must be a reasonably valid criterion with which the scores can be compared, and the instrument itself must be designed to assist people to move toward their goals.<sup>15</sup>

Clearly, it is important that a counseling tool of this type must be based on, or at least in harmony with, the personal convictions of the user. No generally agreed upon basis for defining spiritual health exists at present in the social sciences. Yet for the evangelical Christian, an objective survey of the New Testament on this subject carries with it its own validity. The Bible, since it is the Word of God, is automatically considered to be true in what it says about spiritual health. Thus the challenge before us is to accurately distil from the New Testament our definitions of spiritual health. If we can remain objective in doing this the results will be ideally in harmony with the goals of most evangelicals. The validity of our criterion will follow as a matter of course.

Furthermore, to be valid the measuring instrument we develop must assist people toward their spiritual goals. It will be important to note when we later examine the results of the Spiritual Health Diagnosis whether the desired changes in attitude or activity can be stimulated by the proper application of the model. Sociologist Purnell Benson describes this

process of validation:

One use of the sociopsychological models in instructing students or counseling people is to have the model applied by the individual in the ongoing development of his or her own life purposes. In accordance with the model, the person makes decisions and alters activity and opportunities of experience. Then if the desired changes in activity or aptitude result as foreseen by the model, the researcher is assured that the model has worked effectively. In particular, if fulfillment of spiritual aims is experienced, this confirms the end result of the model for development.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, field testing will be the deciding factor in determining if this approach is truly profitable. Practical application and evaluation of the Spiritual Health Diagnosis will be considered in chapters III and IV of this study.

#### Personal Spiritual Health Summary

In this section of our study we have reflected briefly on the nature of personal spiritual health. First, we have determined that a congregation's growth in spiritual health means primarily the increasing health of the people themselves. The health of a body of believers rests on the foundation of the health of the individual members. Though there are corporate dynamics which go beyond the sum of the individual parts of the church, the most fundamental criterion of corporate health is still the accumulated personal health. Thus there is no escape from the time and energy consuming responsibility to nurture the individual.

Next, we likened personal spiritual health to the process of the health in the physical body. Though one's capacity for manifesting the various dimensions of health may increase with the passage of time, the state of being healthy is not necessarily a function of time. Health is an attitudinal posture toward God and an active dependence on His power within us. Health may be potentially manifested in every stage of the Christian experience. We have also assumed that human beings are so constituted by God that their

spiritual health can be effected by their will and thus stimulated to some degree.

Finally, we observed that while measuring a person's spiritual life is not a truly scientific exercise, and is inexact at best, it nonetheless holds promise of being a worthwhile undertaking. If it successfully promotes the desired results in a person, then it is of value to the one who accepts the validity of the criterion used in the instrument. And for the evangelical Christian, that validity comes only from an objective understanding of Biblical teaching.

In the next section of this chapter we will consider some of the corporate dynamics of spiritual health. As we noted earlier, the health of a congregation involves not only the health of each member, but also the quality of the members' life together and their ministry to one another and the world. Though the Spiritual Health Diagnosis (Chapter II) and the programs to implement it (Chapters IV and V) are not directed primarily to the corporate dynamics of the New Covenant Fellowship, they will necessarily effect and be effected by the quality of our corporate life. In chapter V we will design corporate programs to nurture corporate as well as individual health. So to keep the spiritual health goals of our church in proper perspective we turn now to consider the nature of corporate spiritual health.

### B. Corporate Spiritual Health

We will consider two aspects of corporate health in this section. First, we examine some of the major ingredients which the New Testament indicates should characterize our community of believers. In doing this we

do not use the same objective survey approach that we employ for personal health indicators in Chapter II, since to do so would require much more attention than is needed for our purpose in this study. As we have stated, our primary intention is to develop the health of the whole body by nurturing the health of the individual. However, to do this we must keep before us a picture of how a body of healthy individuals interacts and functions. What are the corporate goals of our pastoral care? How should New Covenant Fellowship look when high levels of personal and corporate health have been attained? We will restrict the scope of our answer to the three great metaphors to which Paul compares the corporate church in his letter to the Ephesians: building, body, and bride. And from these we extract some practical insights into the dynamics of a healthy church.

Our second look at corporate health addresses a question which is central to our whole purpose. Is it reasonable to assume that a congregation, as a collective entity, can grow spiritually? If it were not possible, then our hope to devise a means to increase the general level of spiritual health in an area of the congregation is futile. To answer this question we interact with portions of an essay on the subject by Karl Barth. Some important insights on the relationship between numerical and spiritual growth also emerge in this section, as well as a clear definition of corporate health.

#### Metaphors from Ephesians

There are few places in the Bible where the nature of the church is more carefully defined than in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Here he uses three metaphors: building, body, and bride to describe the church, and it is to these that we now turn for an understanding of collective health.

## Building

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself, being the cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. (Eph 2:19-22, NASB) (Italics mine)

As we probe each of these metaphors of Paul we find almost no end to the lessons they contain, yet several truths from each are particularly applicable to our study.

In the passage above, Paul describes the church as a living building in which God abides by His Spirit. One principle contained in this image immediately comes to mind: a building does not build itself. It is God who is the architect, mason, and sustainer. It is comforting to keep in mind that the church is not merely another human organization--a sociological phenomenon at root--or that its existence and direction depends solely on our human efforts and wisdom. We are the building; not the builder and spiritual health must begin with our acknowledgement of this fact. Moreover, we must allow the reality of it to guide and empower the church day by day. If we recognize this to be true, then we must also recognize that no amount of planning or growth principles will bring vitality to a gathering of believers until true spiritual worship is the center and focus of their fellowship. By the phrase "true spiritual worship," we mean worship as it takes place within a believer, rather than its outward expressions. Outward forms may vary greatly, but if a congregation is spiritually healthy its life together will center around the fact of a general recognition of the Person of God which results in the submission of one's whole being and personal goals to Him.<sup>17</sup>

A second principle based on the concept of the church being a living temple comes from the context in which Paul writes the passage quoted above.

In this letter to Ephesus Paul is addressing himself to Gentile believers who, as he points out, were in the past alienated from God; from "the commonwealth of Israel"; from "the covenants of promise"; and from hope (vss 11-13). His point is that through the atonement of Jesus Christ these "strangers" have now been reconciled to God and God's people; have been included in His covenant promises; and henceforth are full members of God's living temple. Herein is contained the thrust of our life as a church. God is, first of all, in people. He is at work drawing them to Himself, through Jesus Christ, and based upon this divine reunion, He is also reconciling the estrangement between people. If reconciliation is God's emphasis, then it ought also to be ours. We must come to terms with the fact that His concern is not primarily with earthly buildings or with religious ritual, but with redeeming and reconciling people. The spiritually healthy church will be marked by unity, an absence of social class prejudice, and evangelism.

#### Body

...we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (Eph. 4:14-16, NASB) (*Italics mine*)

When Paul speaks of each believer being a part of the larger Body of Christ, at least two important insights into the nature of the church suggest themselves. To begin with, unless dead or mutilated, the members of a body are intimately interrelated. There is in a human body, a mutual dependency of each portion upon the healthy functioning of the other members, and a vital, though varied, contribution that each part makes to the whole.

While this interrelatedness in a physical body could easily be further elaborated, the principle and its application is immediately obvious. True "Koinonia" (spiritual fellowship) is an essential ingredient in being the church of Jesus Christ. Our passage speaks of "being fitted and held together" and a process such as this, of necessity, includes time together where fellow believers are encouraged to know one another at a "heart level"--not just a "head level."<sup>18</sup> Dr. Donald McGavran helps us to understand this process more fully:

When I say "the church", I'm not thinking about a denomination or even a congregation of a thousand people. No one can know everyone in a congregation of a thousand people. It's impossible to get much real ingrafting at that point.

I'm talking about small, intimate groups within the Church that believing babes are incorporated into. My experience is that for incorporation, much friendship is needed. There must be a great deal of plain, human love and time and fellowship. That's the matrix in which ingrafting takes place.<sup>19</sup>

So, if a church is to function successfully opportunities must be consciously provided for believers to become truly interrelated. Face to face relationships in small groups can help provide this. Furthermore, this process of growing together has a definite purpose. Paul says, that the body is able to build itself up in love for God has gifted each member "for the work of service (ministry)." As we become interrelated in this fashion, we provide the atmosphere necessary for us to use the gifts God has given us to cause one another to grow.

In speaking of the church as a "body" we must not overlook one final truth Paul sets before us. We are not just a body, we are Christ's body, and Christ is our head. It is important to note that we are the body of Christ, not only in the mystical sense of spiritual unity with Him, but we are His body in a certain physical sense as well. God's incarnate revelation of His



love for mankind and His offer of redemption in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ did not cease at the Ascension. Based upon the atonement, the Church has now been empowered and commissioned (see: Acts 1:7,8) to continue to be a living witness of Jesus. We are the corporate continuation of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and in this truth the Church finds its clearest revelation of God's purpose for His people. The earthly ministry of Jesus has already modeled for us our corporate ministry, but even more than this, the Church must continue to allow Jesus Christ to minister through it by His Spirit.<sup>20</sup> It is, at once, that simple and that profound. If we are to be faithful to our calling as "body" and obedient to His role as "head," then we must continually allow the Incarnation to set our priorities and model our procedures.

#### Bride

...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the Church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. (Eph 5:25-27)...for no one ever ~~hated~~ his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the Church, because we are members of His body. (Eph 5:29,30)

The context of this passage is one in which Paul is admonishing and teaching the Ephesian believers concerning the nature of their relationships with one another. In the first three chapters of this letter he has magnificently demonstrated the nature of God's mercy and love toward them and now, in the subsequent chapters, he calls them to respond to God's grace by walking "in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...." (Eph 4:1). Among the specific descriptions of Christian behavior to which he draws their attention, his teaching on the relationship of husbands and wives is significant to any understanding of the Church.

In the previous section we briefly discussed the image of the Church as

the spiritual and physical body of Christ. We saw that Christ's relation to it was as its head. But here, Paul takes his reader even deeper into the mystery of this truth. Not only does Jesus function as our "head" through His example and continual guidance by the Spirit, but we have become His "body" in a dimension of intimacy and completeness that can better be characterized by the spiritual union of husband and wife.

The significance that Jesus is totally committed to His Church cannot be over-estimated. Spiritual growth in ourselves and others is often painfully slow and it is easy to become highly critical and discouraged while waiting for the process to be complete. And yet, when we remind ourselves that we are inseparably united to Him, then we find a security that allows us to endure trials and overcome obstacles.

In this passage we are also reminded that Christ is actively working to purify His Church, and that this cleansing comes largely through encountering His spoken and written word. Through this process of hearing God's voice afresh we are continually being conformed to the character of Jesus Himself, and thereby are being prepared for His second coming. A knowledge that Jesus will return for His "bride" and that He is actively at work preparing us for that day adds a note of urgency to the whole theme of spiritual health. And in light of this urgency, it is not surprising that the New Testament Church is expected to lovingly, but firmly, discipline an erring member--a mark of spiritual health only recently returning to the awareness of many North American churches.<sup>21</sup> God's concern for the vitality of His people extends beyond simply keeping us an effective agency of reconciliation in the world, it is nothing less than His desire to prepare a people who are "holy and blameless" and who will be united with Him forever (cf. Rev 19:7).

### Metaphor Summary

Out of the great complexities of truth represented by these three images, a powerful picture of God's people emerges. First, it is a people who are a worshipping community and a people who clearly understand and are vitally challenged by God's purposes for them in the reconciliation of alienated people. As His building, we are reminded of our total dependence on the active presence of God. He alone is able to fit us together to become a place suitable for His residence. Secondly, it is a people who are necessarily interrelated. God's redeeming ministry to the world is centered in us as a body--a corporate entity. This is not to say that He does not work through us individually, if He did not little would be accomplished. But, if we accept this principle of being His "body," it becomes unavoidably clear that we are mutually dependent by design in order that our resurrected Lord might continue His powerful ministry of redemption, restoration and reconciliation through us. Since our individual functions and gifts differ, without a closely cooperating group of believers, the ongoing ministry of the church in a particular community will be limited and insufficient. And thirdly, we find great security when we comprehend the intimacy and completeness of our union with Christ as His bride. We are highly valued, but along with this cherished position comes His work of discipline and sanctification to prepare us for the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev 19:7). Continued renewal and growth toward spiritual health is inevitable as long as we sincerely believe in Jesus Christ.

### Collective Spiritual Growth

Is it reasonable to assume that a congregation, as a collective entity, can grow spiritually? We must be able to answer this question in the affirma-

tive, or a main premise upon which this project is built will collapse. As we stated earlier we are convinced that the spiritual growth of an individual can be motivated. But is spiritual growth possible in a group of people as well? Do general trends in a congregation actually change, or does the spiritual level of a church in fact remain static while individuals within it may fluctuate? We will attempt to answer this question by interacting with a study by Karl Barth.

In an essay entitled, "The Growth of the Community," Karl Barth affirms that a community of believers can be said to grow spiritually.

That the community as the communion of saints grows like a seed to a plant, or a sapling to a tree, or a human embryo to a child and then to a man, is the presupposition of the divine as well as the human action by which it is built. It grows--we may venture to say--in its own sovereign power and manner, and it is only as it does this that it is built and builds itself. The fact that the saints become, that they are conceived therefore in mutual communio, is something which from first to last is primarily and properly a growth.<sup>22</sup>

He proceeds in his discussion to argue that this growth must primarily focus on spiritual health, a concept which he encapsulates in the phrase, "the Kingdom of God." Spiritual health necessarily involves numerical growth and will produce numerical growth, but such quantitative growth is not a sufficient end in itself. Health must be sought for its own sake:

If it [spiritual health] is used only as a means for extensive renewal [numerical increase], the internal will at once lose its meaning and power. It can be fulfilled only for its own sake, and then--unplanned and unarranged--it will bear its own fruits.<sup>23</sup>

This flies in the face of much that is considered church growth strategy, but we include it here not to plead against numerical growth, but to establish the priority for spiritual health over numerical growth. It is important to note the proper relationship between the two. These words of Barth should stand before us as a warning to keep first things first.

The answer to our question of whether a congregation can grow spiritually receives an emphatic "yes" from Barth. Spiritual development must be sought as an end in itself, not as a means to numerical expansion. When this is done, it follows that the congregation will in time demonstrate the life they proclaim. Such a church does not just speak of the "kingdom" to others, they become the witness of the kingdom. In this way a foundation is laid for a Spirit-empowered numerical expansion of the Church. We conclude with this warning from Barth:

Thus it can never be healthy, if the Church seeks to grow only or predominantly in this horizontal sense, with a view to the greatest possible number of adherents; if its mission to the world becomes propaganda on behalf of its own spatial expansion... (This) cannot become an end in itself. It knows of only one end in itself--the proclamation of the kingdom of God. And it has to achieve this, not merely in its words, but in its whole existence. In the service of this end in itself it will necessarily also be an end to win new witnesses and by their addition to increase extensively.<sup>24</sup>

#### Summary: The Healthy Church

What qualities are present in a healthy church? To begin with, it is one that is earnestly and joyfully moving toward these ideals of building, body, and bride. Many factors will be present in such a church, but in this brief study we have recognized at least the following: worship, fellowship, preaching, gifted ministry and service, discipline, an absence of social class prejudice, evangelism, unity, and a sincere submission to Christ as head. Other New Testament indicators of corporate health which we might add to these would include: a people-centered emphasis (rather than program-centered), concern for social justice and corporate expressions of compassion, and personal liberty of conscience in non-essential doctrines and practices. Such a congregation does not have to achieve some high standard of performance to be accounted as healthy, though clearly there are standards by which it will be judged; rather health is best evidenced by growth in the Spirit of

Christ. The dynamics of church life ought to remind the observing world of the personality and ministry of Jesus Christ.

What we have discovered to be true of individual health is also true of collective health. For both, health is defined relationally to Christ. Therefore, the spiritual health of a church is not a function of the familiar "success" indicators of attendance, budget, or buildings, but rather is healthy people collectively carrying on the ministry of Jesus.

In the next chapter our task will be to survey the personal qualities of attitude and behavior which the New Testament most persistently endorses, and then to translate those qualities into a series of practical questions from which a health measuring instrument can be made.

## ENDNOTES

## CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup>David O. Moberg, "The Development of Social Indicators of Spiritual Well-Being for Quality of Life Research," in Spiritual Well-Being-Sociological Perspectives, ed. David O. Moberg (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), p.2.

<sup>2</sup>George E. Ladd, The Gospel of the Kingdom (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1959), p.93.

<sup>3</sup>Ladd, Gospel of the Kingdom, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup>Ladd, Gospel of the Kingdom, p. 39.

<sup>5</sup>David O. Moberg, as quoted by Purnell H. Benson, "New Testament Concepts For a Sociopsychological Model of Personality Development," in Spiritual Well-Being-Sociological Perspectives, ed. David O. Moberg (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1979), p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>Purnell H. Benson, "New Testament Concepts For Sociopsychological Model of Personality Development," in Spiritual Well-Being, p. 53.

<sup>7</sup>Benson, "New Testament Concepts," p. 52.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>10</sup>Benson, "New Testament Concepts," p. 57.

<sup>11</sup>For a more thorough discussion of the general problems of sociological measurement see: Claire Selltiz, Lawrence S. Wrightsman, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations, 3rd edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), pp. 160-197.

<sup>12</sup>Selltiz, Wrightsmand, and Cook, Research Methods, p. 171.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Benson, "New Testament Concepts," p. 61

<sup>16</sup>Benson, "New Testament Concepts," p. 60.

<sup>17</sup>See: "Worship," Chp. II, pp. 46-47.

<sup>18</sup>Lawrence LaCour, the distinction between communication at the "head" and "heart" level was made in class lecture, Fuller Theological Seminary, MN 706, 1/11/78.

<sup>19</sup>Donald McGavran, "Grafted For Life," Pastoral Renewal, Vol. 2, No. 9, 3/78, p. 72.

<sup>20</sup>Ray S. Anderson, "A Theology For Ministry," unpublished, Fuller Theological Seminary, p. 7: "To say that all ministry is God's ministry is to suggest that ministry precedes and determines the Church. The ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ gives both content and direction to the Church in its ministry."

<sup>21</sup>See: 1 Cor 5; Matt 18:15-20; Gal 6:1.

<sup>22</sup>Karl Barth, "The Growth of the Community," in Theological Foundations For Ministry, Ray S. Anderson, ed., unpublished, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, p. 214.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 215.



## CHAPTER II

### Development of a Spiritual Health Diagnosis

In the previous chapter we reflected on the nature of spiritual health, both in the gathered congregation, and in the individual believer. We now turn to the important task of specifically identifying those attitudes and behavioral patterns which the New Testament appears to recommend most as evidence of personal spiritual health. Any claim to total objectivity in selecting these categories is futile. As we noted in the previous chapter, "a researcher influences the test he or she develops and its interpretation subconsciously." Undoubtedly the author has introduced some categories and overlooked others because of the subconscious influence of his own spiritual training. Nevertheless, a sincere attempt has been made for objectivity in both the selection of the categories and in allowing the most representative Scriptural passages to define each indicator of spiritual health. The criteria used in selecting these categories is discussed in the next section.

Furthermore, the author has tried to produce a very practical definition of each health category--one which a pastor using the instrument, or the person taking the evaluation can understand and recognize at work in daily life. Then a set of self evaluating questions are distilled from the definitions and selected Scriptural passages in each category. And finally, from these questions the Spiritual Health Diagnosis is drawn.

As we approach the fundamental question of this study, what are the

Biblical ingredients of spiritual health?, we could be easily overwhelmed with the complexity of this subject. There are numerous important dimensions of spiritual health that ought to be considered. However, to keep our study useable we have chosen to limit ourselves to sixteen indicators of spiritual health which are divided into two major categories--eight indicators in each. The two major categories are as follows:

1. Subjective: These are the most important qualities of our Christian lives and the most difficult to measure. They are the deep attitudes and motivations of an individual's internal experience. They are the inclinations of our will and emotions. They are the ingredients of the character of Jesus Christ being worked into the attitude of the believer, and as such can only really be known by God Himself (Luke 16:15) and to a lesser degree by our own spirit (1 Cor 2:11).
2. Behavioral: What sorts of habitual action mark a healthy Christian life? Here we catalogue the ingredients of healthy outward behavior.

### Criteria for Identifying Major Spiritual Qualities

In order to speak with any measure of confidence of what the New Testament considers to be the ingredients of personal spiritual health, we must first carefully determine the criteria by which we select these ingredients. We openly acknowledge that there are students of the Bible who would consider several assumptions made in this study to be scholastically unacceptable. The idea of asking what the New Testament says of any subject, as though it were a unified

literary work, would be considered naive by those with a low doctrine of inscripturation. However, those issues raised by higher critical studies of the New Testament will not be addressed. Our concern is to produce a practical instrument based on the New Testament canon which will assist a pastor to evaluate the health of a local congregation. Thus, from the outset, we assume the New Testament to have a literary unity, to be composed by the Holy Spirit, and that none of its human authors can be said to doctrinally contradict another.

In order to provide as impersonal a scientific basis for this study as possible, the following four categories were selected as criteria for determining which qualities the New Testament most highly recommends as evidence of spiritual health in a believer and a body of believers:

1. Those qualities mentioned with greatest numerical frequency
2. The extent to which a quality is emphasized by different authors and the extent to which it is represented in different books
3. Those qualities which are selected for special treatment in extended passages
4. Those qualities listed in classic texts which intend to teach or describe the nature of the church

The statistical information used in this study is based upon the third edition of the Textus Receptus published by Robert Stephanus in 1550. This text is used simply because it is the basis of J.B. Smith's Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament which has provided the author with the most readily available statistical information of this kind.<sup>1</sup>

SUBJECTIVE INDICATORS

SUBJECTIVE

It is impossible to speak of a spiritually healthy church apart from the spiritual health of the individual believers who compose it. While it is true that our life together is extremely important, and in many ways God deals with us corporately, it is nevertheless true that the most important factor of all is what God is doing in people's lives, one by one. David Watson emphasizes this well:

God loves people, individual people created in his own image. Consequently, whoever they may be, each is of infinite value to him. No one can read the gospel records without being impressed by the attention Jesus gives to individuals: a thief, a prostitute, a fisherman, a blind man, a rich young ruler, a religious leader, a child, a housewife, a mother, an invalid--he cared for each one.<sup>2</sup>

In this first section of our study it is our purpose to identify those qualities of personal internal experience which the New Testament hails as the most significant fruit of spiritual regeneration.

As we have noted earlier this dimension of human life is extremely difficult to measure. The Bible warns us on several occasions that it is God alone who is able to discern the motives of an individual's heart (1 Sam 16:7; 1 Chr 28:9; Luke 16:15; 1 Cor 2:11). Therefore we tread on dangerous ground when we presume to measure or judge another's interior life. Nevertheless, we will attempt to identify observable attitudes and behavior which corresponds to each subjective quality.

## FAITH

A. Occurrence on the New Testament

		occurrences	(#/27) #of NT books	(#/9) # authors
ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩ	verb	248	21	9
ΠΙΣΤΙΣ	noun	244	24	9
ΠΙΣΤΟΣ	adj.	66	19	6
		558	26	9

B. A Practical Definition

In the New Testament, "faith" refers to the firm conviction which comes to a person through hearing God speak in some form to him or her.<sup>3</sup> The inner persuasion of God's trustworthiness which results, must be profound enough to move a person to the appropriate behavior, if faith is to be considered valid. But the accompanying behavior is not faith--only its fruit. The ultimate basis of faith is our surrender to and trust in the Person of God.<sup>4</sup>

C. Important Texts

1. And Jesus answered and said to them, 'Truly I say unto you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it shall happen.

And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.  
(Matt 21:21-22)

Faith requires confidence in God's ability and willingness to do the miraculous. Faith releases God's mighty works.

2. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.  
(John 3:16)

Christian faith is uniquely centered on the person and work of Jesus

Christ. Confidence that Jesus is the unique incarnation of God and that His death was our vicarious atonement is the emphasis of John's gospel.

3. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law. (Rom 3:18)

Paul teaches that saving faith is our trust that God's action in the death and resurrection of Jesus is completely sufficient in itself. This means that at the same time we have turned away from trusting in our own good behavior in order to gain acceptance with God.

4. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul. (Heb 10:39)

Perseverance is a quality inherent in faith. It means we are able to patiently wait for God to act on our behalf.

5. Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (Jas 2:17)

Real faith is a transforming and productive power within the believer that will invariably result in a life of increasing service and morality. (Jas 1:27)

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Based upon our definition and the different aspects of faith which we have noted, its presence in my life would be demonstrated by most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

1. Having a positive and expectant attitude toward God's ability to miraculously provide for my needs and to move obstacles.
2. Being singlemindedly loyal to the person and work of Jesus Christ as opposed to all other religious leaders

3. Being confident about my acceptance by God
4. Being able to patiently trust God in adversity
5. Living a life of increasing service and morality
6. Doing something that others consider foolish because God promised me something

### LOVE

#### A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		occurrences	(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # of authors
<i>ἀγαπάω</i>	verb	142	21	8
<i>ἀγάπη</i>	noun	116	24	7
		258	26	9

#### B. A Practical Definition

Though there are numerous Greek terms which are translated into English as "love," the concept of agape is unique and of utmost significance in the New Testament. This dimension of love is totally unnatural to the human personality apart from the work of God. Thus, it can be said that the presence of this love proves a person's true relationship with God and its absence proves the relationship is void. (1 John 4:7,8). Agape is that worshipful decision to so prefer the betterment of others that we gladly sacrifice our own advantages even to the point of being willing to die.<sup>5</sup> Such love begins as a deliberate choice rather than an emotion for it does not depend, for its existence, on the excellency of its object.<sup>6</sup> Instead it arises from the



knowledge of God's love for the individual and is patterned after His ultimate example in sacrificially giving His Son. It is joyfully doing what is costly and necessary for those who would appear unworthy of such sacrifice.

### C. Important Texts

1. This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for a friend. (John 15:12-13)

Agape is demanded of every Christian and involves sacrificial preference for other believers.

2. But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8)

This love can be seen by what it does, and is not based on the worth of the loved ones. Love which refuses to act cannot be considered agape.

3. But now abide faith, hope, love these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor 13:13)

Love is the foremost Christian virtue and is undying in its nature. Christian love endures in spite of obstacles and the passing of time.

4. ...and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men....(1 Thes 3:12)

This sacrificial love is to be directed to unbelievers as well as other believers. It is not selective, it is a general posture toward other people in general.

5. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. (Col 3:14)

One evidence of the presence of this love in a church is an atmosphere of unity (harmonious relationships and agreement as to purpose).

D. Measurable Evidence

This special dimension of Christian love, called agape, is the single most important indicator of spiritual health in both the individual believer and a church. This love within me will give evidence of itself in, at least, the following ways:

1. Living without self-centeredness and the tendency to protect my personal rights
2. Making costly sacrifices for unpleasant sorts of people
3. Continuing to serve another's needs long after the task has become tiresome to me, or in spite of continued negative feedback
4. Having a deep desire to continue to introduce unbelievers to Jesus Christ
5. Finding it easy to form warm and supportive relationships with other Christians

FORGIVENESS

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		occurrences	(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # of authors
ἀφίημι	verb	47	7	6
ἀφεσις	noun	17	7	5
χαρίζομαι	verb	12	4	2
		76	17	7

## B. A Practical Definition

In New Testament usage, ἀφίεναι basically means "to let go," "to leave," or "to send away."<sup>7</sup> Based on these root concepts it is not difficult to see how the idea of forgiveness is derived. There are two directions involved in New Testament forgiveness. The individual must have found forgiveness from God, and then in turn freely give forgiveness to those in his or her debt.

To forgive someone is to release them from an incurred debt. C. S. Lewis gives us a clear look at the spiritual application of this:

Real forgiveness means looking steadily at the sin, the sin that is left over without any excuse, after all allowances have been made, and seeing it, all its horror, dirt, meanness, and malice, and nevertheless being wholly reconciled to the man who had done it. That, and only that, is forgiveness; and that we can always have from God if we ask for it.<sup>8</sup>

Forgiveness is the undeserved cancelling of another's debt, whether financial, moral or spiritual. All thought of punishment is removed, and the original relationship restored.

## C. Important Texts

1. For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. (Matt 6:14-15)

The importance that Jesus put on our need to forgive others is shocking. The implication here is that one of the manifestations of saving faith is the disposition to forgive others.<sup>9</sup> The free flow of forgiveness toward others and the absence of harbored resentment is, like love, an absolute indicator of spiritual life. Without it the genuineness of the new birth may be questioned. Just as we must believe, we must also be willing to forgive to enter God's Kingdom.

2. Then Peter came and said unto Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (Matt 18:21-22)

This statement makes it clear that there is no limit to the number of times that we are to forgive. Incessant daily provocations are perhaps the most difficult for us to handle, but in the parable of the unmerciful servant which immediately follows (Matt 18:23-25), Jesus points out that even the sum total of the offences we suffer is miniscule compared to the debt God has forgiven each of us. Therefore continuous forgiveness is expected and this generous disposition toward others is the fruit of our thankfulness for ourselves being freely pardoned so great a debt.

3. ...without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." (Heb 9:22)

The spiritual foundation for all forgiveness, our forgiveness by God, and even our forgiveness of one another, is the death of Christ. The person who is able to endure in this disposition to forgive will be continually looking to the Cross as the reason to forgive others and to be personally forgiven.

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Forgiveness is an essential ingredient for spiritual health. Its absence is an alarming danger signal. Evidence that this dimension of faith is at work in a person will include these general characteristics:

1. Having the conscious determination to forgive those who offend me
2. Having no signals of harbored resentment in my conversation

3. Living with a deep awareness of the enormity of what God has forgiven me
4. Being unusually patient and good-humored when slighted or dealt with dishonestly
5. Maintaining a generous disposition toward others over a long period of time

## HOPE

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

			(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # of authors
ἐλπίζω	verb	31	14	6
ἐλπίς	noun	54	15	4
		85	22	6

B. A Practical Definition

Hope, in general, is simply the happy anticipation of something good in the near or distant future.<sup>10</sup> In this sense it can be said to be an emotion. It is the excitement we feel because we believe a positive event is in store for us. However, there is a great difference between "human hope" and "divine hope." This difference lies in the basis for the hope. Human hope is a subjective assessment of the future whose content arises from what a person considers to be his own possibilities.<sup>11</sup> It is my own "educated guess"

about my future, based on little that is objective. Divine hope, on the other hand, carries with it great assurance, for it is not based on any human achievement, but instead on the divine act of salvation accomplished in Christ.<sup>12</sup> Thus, it is a confident excitement about the future based totally on what God has done and promised.

### C. Important Texts

1. In the New Testament the term "hope" is tied to various phrases that form the basis for hope<sup>13</sup>

- a. "The hope and resurrection of the dead" (Acts 23:6).

This refers to the hope of the physical resurrection of believers in Christ

- b. "The hope of the promise made by God to our fathers" (Acts 26:6).

The confident expectation that God will fulfill his promises to the generations of faith

- c. "The hope of righteousness" (Col 1:23). The hope that all the promises in the gospel will be fulfilled

- d. "The blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus..." (Tit 2:13). The second coming of Christ

2. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees. But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. (Rom 8:24-25)

Hope is the eager anticipation of that which is future and unseen.

Christian hope allows us to retain our enthusiasm even when we must patiently persevere. Those who mock the eschatological longings of Christians as

"pie in the sky" forget that God himself has established this future gaze.

3. ...rejoicing in hope. (Rom 12:12)

Divine hope is a major foundation for individual or corporate joy. There is a spiritual chain reaction involved: Real faith believes God's promises; these promises awaken a confident excitement about the future (hope); this confidence makes people happy (joy).

4. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:3)

The anticipation of the return of Christ causes us to cease to desire and pursue the lusts of the world. What God offers is so much better that these short-term pleasures lose their appeal. Hope has a cleansing effect.

5. But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do the rest who have no hope. (1 Thes 4:13)

Physical death is no longer seen as a cessation of existence, but rather a stepping up higher for those in Christ. Death is a temporary separation.

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Though there is an overlapping of terminology in the New Testament to describe the various workings of the Holy Spirit within the human personality, a person who has "divine hope" will in some way exhibit most of these features:

1. Feeling a happy anticipation of good things God is going to do for me in the future, both in this realm of human life and in the age to come

2. Feeling joy rather than fear when contemplating the coming judgement of God
3. Maintaining a lively expectation of the soon return of Christ
4. Living without a dread of death for myself, and having muted grief at the death of other believers
5. Seeing moral purity as a privilege rather than great personal sacrifice
6. Seeing physical aging no longer as a great tragedy because I anticipate a new body at the resurrection
7. Having an abiding sense of well-being, even happiness, in spite of difficult or tedious circumstances.
8. Considering the rewards of this life as meager compared to those of the next life

### HUMILITY

#### A. Occurrence in the New Testament

	occurrences	(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # of authors
ταπεινῶν verb	14	6	5
ταπεινός adj.	8	6	5
ταπεινότητων noun	1	1	1 (1 Pe 3:8)
ταπεινοφροσύνη noun	7	5	5
	30	10	5

#### B. A Practical Definition

The root meaning of this family of words is to be "low," "flat."  
 It is used figuratively to mean "lowly," "insignificant," "weak," or "poor."<sup>14</sup>  
 The concept in the New Testament has a paradoxical quality. The person who



is humble is one who takes the posture of a servant toward others, and it is this person who God will choose to highly honor. Conversely, the person who seeks to be served and honored will find God esteeming him poorly.

In this connection it is worth noting that Jesus neither practices nor demands the visible self-abasement in life-style, gesture, or clothing which was familiar and customary in the world around. Indeed, He is critical of such practices (cf. Matt 6:16-18; 11:18f; Mark 2:18f).<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, to be humble according to the New Testament is to understand that we have no intrinsic worth apart from God. This realization does not destroy our self-worth, but rather rightly bases it. Our true worth, seen Biblically, arises not from our own accomplishments, but from two important facts. First, that God is our maker and that we humans are the supreme act of His creation. And secondly, though sin had ruined us, His grace in Jesus Christ has redeemed us and now gives us great privilege and position in the universe. So, humility is the convergence of two truths: that without Him we are nothing, yet because of Him we have great value.

Finally, humility also involves our sense of continual dependence on God and on other believers in the church. There is an absence of pride and self-assertion, with no attempt to disguise our need.<sup>16</sup>

### C. Important Texts

1. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted. (cf. Matt 20:25-28; Phil 2:3)

Humility is the decision to invest ones efforts and resources for the upbuilding of others, rather than directing these towards increasing one's own position. To be humble, then, is to take the role of serving, rather than being served.

2. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. (Matt 18:4)

To be humble is to be child-like, that is, free to receive without being self-conscious. Children do not purport to have any sufficiency of their own. They freely acknowledge their need. The man or woman who does not hide his or her spiritual poverty and is willing to freely receive what God will give has met God's requirements for greatness.

3. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. (Heb 18:14)

This is the most fundamental expression of humility and the most vital for the individual. The tax gatherer of this parable openly acknowledged his need for forgiveness and called on God for mercy, not justice. A self-justifying attitude before God is a disease that is fatal.

4. Do nothing from selfish or empty conceit, but with humility of mind (ταπεινοφροσύνη) let each of you regard one another as more important than himself. (Phil 2:3)

The Greek word used here literally means a "lowliness of mind" which describes a person who seeks out and gladly accepts God's superior wisdom. In this particular passage God's wisdom teaches us to prefer others; and to recognize our responsibility to care for one another in the church.

D. Measurable Evidence

Christian humility is not the process of publicly degrading myself; denying my strengths or emphasizing my weaknesses. Instead, true humility is first the recognition that God is the source of everything good in me, and that by nature I continue to need his forgiveness and enablement. And, second, that I follow the example of Jesus Christ in choosing to be a servant to others. Practical expressions of these attitudes will look something like this:

1. Feeling sincere joy when others excel or are promoted to a position I wanted for myself
2. Meeting regularly with other Christians
3. Taking the time to pray and listen to God before beginning a new endeavor
4. Refusing to make excuses to God about my failures or sins
5. Working well with others who have different spiritual ministries (gifts) than mine
6. Looking for opportunities to serve or pray for others

OBEDIENCE

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		occurrences	(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # authors
ὕπακούω	verb	21	11	6
ὑπακοή	noun	15	5	3
ὑπήκοος	adj.	3	3	2
		39	13	6

## B. Practical Definition

The New Testament word for obedience literally means "to hear."<sup>17</sup> A person who has indeed heard God's command or promise knows that it is true and is therefore under obligation to obey its conditions.<sup>17</sup> Underlying the many singular acts of obedience in a person with this quality is a general decision to trust God's will rather than to fear it. This person will be convinced of God's desire to do good for him or her, His superior wisdom, and His authority over them as their creator and redeemer. Obedience then becomes the natural desire of the heart.

The truly obedient Christian not only declares his submission to God in word, but also can be observed doing the things God asks. The person who decides not to obey what he or she hears from God will quickly forget the lessons He sends and remain notably immature. (Jas 1:22-25)

## C. Important Texts

1. Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (Matt 7:21)

Outward expressions of submission to God are meaningless, if not accompanied by obedient behavior. Without the intention to do what God asks of us, we cannot rightly relate to Him in this life or at the Judgement.

2. Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock. (Matt 7:24)

An obedient Christian is not only one who regularly reads his Bible or

listens to good preaching, but is one who is progressively acting upon what he or she reads or hears. This obedient action enables a person to withstand difficult circumstances.

3. Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness. (Rom 6:16)

Obedience, for the individual Christian, is not the process of deciding whether or not to obey as each issue surfaces, but rather an overall decision to become a "slave" (perpetually obedient) to God. Obedience is a foregone conclusion. It is a posture of the heart. Therefore as revelation is heard and understood, insofar as the person is in control of his or her behavior, that behavior alters to correspond to God's instructions.

4. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. (Heb 5:8)

Jesus has modeled obedience for us. He did the will of His Father though it led Him into much hardship and finally the loss of His life. God calls for complete obedience, even to the point of death.

5. ...and be subject to one another in fear of Christ. (Eph 5:21)

The New Testament exhorts us to be obedient to God in our relationships with other people. We are to accept direction from those people who God has placed in leadership positions so long as that leadership does not lead us counter to the will of God. Governments, employers, parents, husbands, and elders are all recognized as valid categories of leadership.

D. Measurable Evidence

A life submitted to the leadership of God is essential for spiritual health. If I am a truly obedient person I will consistently attempt to do what God has asked. My life will exhibit most, or all, of the following characteristics:

1. Refusing to entertain the possibility of deviant behavior when God's will is finally clear in a matter
2. Cooperating gladly with programs in the church which are clearly Biblical
3. Doing things I don't want to do because I know God wants it
4. Accepting correction from a leader gladly
5. Refusing to withdraw from relationship when disagreement arises with leaders
6. Continuing to trust God in times of personal hardship
7. Maintaining noticeable and steady growth in my spiritual wisdom

JOY

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

			(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # authors
<i>χαίρω</i>	verb	74	16	7
<i>χαρά</i>	noun	59	18	8
		133	20	8

## B. Practical Definition

Joy is a feeling of present well-being and celebration, and as such, it is an emotion. However, New Testament joy does not have the fickle, subjective foundations of "mere human emotions." Human emotion is our response to what we perceive to be happening, good or bad. But Biblically based emotion is our response to what God is doing. Our emotional nature is, by design, good, for it has been created by God. Yet, like every other part of us, it needs God's redemptive touch. Divinely caused joy is one such act of God's redemption of our emotional nature. A New Testament believer finds joy in several ways: by spiritually perceiving God's good news in its various aspects; as a result of our personal relationship with Christ; as a paradoxical outcome of sufferings for Christ's sake; and as a dynamic inner miracle produced by the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup>

## C. Important Texts

The New Testament presents at least five general areas which cause joy in the heart of the believer:<sup>19</sup>

1. Joy is the believer's response to good news. In the New Testament it is produced by:
  - a. The Savior's birth (Heb 2:10)
  - b. Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:9f)
  - c. The Resurrection (Matt 28:8)
  - d. The gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:52)
  - e. Miracles (Acts 8:8)
  - f. The Lord's supper and the fellowship of believers (Acts 2:46)
  - g. A report of spiritual progress in other believers (1 Thes 2:19f)

2. Jesus Himself declares that joy is to be the result of a deep fellowship between the church and Himself. (John 16:22-24).

There can now be perpetual joy for a believer, because of a perpetual relationship with Jesus.

3. ...but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing... (1 Pet 4:13)

Paradoxically, joy may be the outcome of suffering and even sorrow for Christ's sake. (see also: Col 1:24; 2 Cor 6:10; Phil 2:17; Heb 10:34; 12:2)

4. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy.....(Ga 5:22)

Joy is described here by Paul as a supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit within a believer. To have the Holy Spirit within you, is to potentially grow in joy.

5. Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice. (Phil 4:4)

Every believer is called upon to share in the joy of Christ by a daily practice of deliberately rejoicing in the knowledge of Him and His salvation. (See also: 1 Thes 5:16; Phil 3:1; 1 Pet 1:8)

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Joy is the believer's sense of present well-being and celebration, which looks beyond the outward circumstances at hand and views them from the divine perspective. It is the supernatural perception of the good things God is doing now. God is both the source and object of this joy. It will be expressed in my life as a believer in some of the following ways:

1. Maintaining a persistent sense of well-being in spite of circumstantial hardship



2. Focusing my attention on what God is doing in the daily events of my life
3. Being aware that God is present with me each moment of the day
4. Responding without cynicism when a miracle has occurred
5. Having an ever-growing appreciation of the great redemptive events of Christ's life
6. Having suffered rejection because of my belief in Jesus Christ

### PEACE

#### A. Occurrence in the New Testament

	occurrences	(#/27) # of NT books	(#/9) # of authors
εἰρηνεύω verb	4	4	2
εἰρηνοποιέω verb	1	1	1
εἰρήνη noun	92	26	9
εἰρηνικός adj.	2	2	2
	99	26	9

#### B. A Practical Definition

Peace is the sense of inward rest which comes to an individual when he or she is free from strife.<sup>20</sup> Apparently the human personality is so constructed that the absence of harmonious relationship brings persistent fear and mental agitation. When discordant relationships occur our security is threatened and we assume an emotional readiness to fight or flee. When harmony is restored, our security returns and we are able to rest. This "rest" is one of the most positive and pleasant of human conditions.

Peace is lost when our survival is threatened; physically or spiritually. Numerous things can cause this loss of peace: civil strife; war or the threat

of war; sickness; unaccepting or hostile relationships with important others; failure to rightly fulfill societal roles; the sense of chaos instead of order; the threat of death; and most importantly, strife with God.<sup>22</sup>

So, it is no surprise that peace is one of the most highly prized conditions in the New Testament. Biblically, the most significant area of peace is that which results from an individual being reconciled with God. From the restoration of this spiritual fellowship flows a sense of order, right relationships, physical and spiritual security, and victory over death; all of which bring increasing emotional and mental peace.

#### C. Important Texts

1. Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful. (John 14:20)

Peace is a spiritual gift which comes through our relationship with Jesus Christ. Inward fear is removed by it. (cf. Heb 2:14)

2. Therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 5:1)

Through faith in Jesus Christ our relationship with God has become harmonious and we need no longer see God as a threat to our physical or spiritual security.

3. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall...that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace... (Eph 1:14-15)

The cross of Christ has brought the possibility of harmony to human relationships.

4. Finally brethren...live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. (2 Cor 13:11)

Peace is to be normative to Christian relationships, and is an essential dimension of God's character, as is love.

D. Measurable Evidence

Peace is a very significant indicator of spiritual health. First of all, there will be an absence of fear in my relationship with God, and then a melting down of fear in my relationship with others. New Testament peace can be partially described by some of the following statements:

1. Living with a restful confidence about my condition after death
2. Seeing God as a source of blessing rather than judgement
3. Remaining unshaken by the threat of war or domestic violence
4. Maintaining harmonious relationships with other people
5. Having a growing understanding of God's order for every area of my life

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

## BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

Though the New Testament boldly declares that no one is made acceptable to God on the basis of what one does, nevertheless a believer's behavior is considered very important. In fact, it is assumed that in the long run, a person's actions will give indisputable evidence of his or her true inward condition. (Matt 7:16-18; Jas 2:26, 3:12). In this section, then, it is our intention to glean from the New Testament those qualities of an individual's outward behavior which are most highly recommended as evidence of spiritual health. In the previous section we emphasized what a healthy Christian experiences, now we turn to consider what a healthy Christian will habitually do. It is helpful to remember that throughout this study we are considering the appropriate "role" or generalized behavior rather than special "gifted" ministries. <sup>22</sup>

In several instances in this section a general term will be selected to represent a cluster of related terms. For example, our first category is "prayer" which includes a variety of related terms which are more specific, such as intercession, supplication, petition, and thanksgiving.

## PRAYER

A. Occurrence in the New Testament (#/27) (#/9)

		occurrences	# of N.T. books	# authors
<u>ΠΡΟΣΕΥΧΟΜΑΙ</u>	verb	87	16	8
<u>ΠΡΟΣΕΥΧΗ</u>	noun	37	15	7
		124	18	9

B. A Practical Definition

There is a great deal to be learned from a careful study of the New Testament on the subject of prayer. Our attitudes and privileges in approaching God and His expectations of us are all taught by the New Testament and especially by Jesus Himself. However, for our purposes in this study, it is enough to recognize that prayer is considered to be vital to all areas of spiritual life and is an essential ingredient to spiritual health.

Prayer is most basically, communication in the spiritual dimension between a human being and God. This communion is intended to be a dialogue. We humans speak to God, and God speaks to us.

C. Important Texts

1. Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who art in heaven, (Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil..... (Matt 6:9-13)

From this example we learn several important lessons about New Testament prayer:

- a. We recognize our closeness and privileged relationship to God as our Father
- b. We understand our great ontological distance from Him. Our response is adoration
- c. The goal of our prayers should be the extension of His Kingdom. We submit ourselves to His will
- d. Only after the above do we petition the Father. We are encouraged to ask for our practical needs, like food; our continual need for forgiveness; and our need for God to give us victory over temptation and spiritual evil

2. ...pray without ceasing... (1 Thes 5:17) (Also see: Col. 14:2)

New Testament prayer differs from the scheduled formal prayers of Judaism. It now becomes a constant ingredient throughout the day. A healthy Christian will be living in an almost perpetual awareness of God and communication with Him.

3. And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive. (Matt 21:22)

This remarkable statement by Jesus points to our need for faith in our praying. We must confidently assume God is capable of doing the impossible.

4. If you then, being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him. (Matt 7:11)

Jesus presents a picture of the Father which shows Him to be willing and able to provide generously for us. Here we are encouraged to boldly approach Him with our requests.

## MORAL PURITY/HOLINESS

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

			(#/27)	(#/9)
		occurrences	#of N.T. books	# authors
ἅγιος	adj.	229	23	8
ἁγιασμος	noun	10	7	3
ἁγιότης	noun	1	1	1
ἁγιωσύνη	noun	3	3	1
		243	23	8

B. A Practical Definition

Paul S. Rees, in Baker's Dictionary of Theology, defines holiness as "The moral quality of the character and actions of those who through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit share Christ's nature and consent to be ruled by it."<sup>23</sup> This statement emphasizes the developing behavior patterns and character of a Christian. There is, of course, in the New Testament a prior understanding of imputed holiness through the death and resurrection of Christ, but the concept that a person could receive this imputed holiness without a corresponding desire for practical holiness is not found.

C. Important Texts

1. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. (Matt 7:18)

There is a direct correlation between the interior nature of a person and the outward behavior. It is impossible for a person who has received Christ's new nature to continue, unabated, to behave and speak in wicked ways.



2. ...knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. (Rom 6:6-7)

In the death of Christ the powerful human tendency to rebel against God was broken in those who believe, making obedience to God now possible. Paul goes on to encourage us to choose to live in the holiness that Christ has made potential. Holy behavior is possible and must be willed by the believer.

3. Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor 6:9,10)

Unrepentent, ongoing behavior such as this disqualifies any claim to possessing the inner nature of Christ. (other such lists: 2 Tim 3:1-5; Gal 5:19-21).

4. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Cor 7:1)

Practical holiness is a matter of earnest concern to the healthy Christian.

5. ...but like the Holy one who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior. (1 Pet 1:15)

The goal of our life is to become like Jesus Christ himself in all our motivations and actions.

6. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin; because he is born of God. (1 John 3:9)

A new nature is implanted within each believer which will transform the character of that life.

#### D. Measurable Evidence

The New Testament emphasis on holiness is not intended to imply that I must attain absolute perfection to qualify as a "saved" person, but it is consistent in declaring that those who are saved will increasingly reflect the personality of Jesus Christ. Growing holiness is an essential ingredient in a healthy Christian. The process of becoming "holy" will include these features:

1. Having a strong desire to please God
2. Feeling frustration over the difference between the way I want to behave and what I still do
3. Demonstrating a noticeable maturity toward Biblical behavior over the long term in such areas as:
  - a) Controlling my temper when provoked
  - b) Maintaining a pure sexual life
  - c) Speaking without using swear words or dirty jokes
  - d) Being completely honest in what I tell people
  - e) Being completely honest in the ways I handle money

#### WITNESS/PUBLIC IDENTIFICATION

A. <u>Occurrence in the New Testament</u>		(#/27)	(#/9)	
		occurrences	# of N.T. books	# authors
μάρτυς	noun	34	13	6
μαρτυρία	noun	37	9	4
μαρτύριον	noun	20	12	6
μαρτυρέω	verb	79	15	5
		170	22	8

## B. A Practical Definition

A witness is someone who either by what he or she speaks or things he or she does, serves to provide corroborating evidence concerning a fact which is being established. A person may "bear witness" by solemnly testifying to what he or she has seen or heard or done.<sup>24</sup>

According to the New Testament a healthy believer will not be reticent to publicly identify himself as a follower of Jesus Christ, nor will one be hesitant to encourage others to believe in Him when the opportunity presents itself. The New Testament assures that the changed manner in which a Christian lives also serves as a silent witness to the reality of the work of Christ.

## C. Important Texts

1. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. (Matt 28:19-20)

This commissioning of the eleven disciples seems to go beyond these initial disciples to include a charge to all followers of Christ. In that case, witnessing is in the universal obligation of all Christians.

2. And we are witnesses of all the things He did... (Acts 10:39-43)

The testimony to be given centers in the facts and the meaning of the earthly ministry of Jesus...and to his saving power.<sup>25</sup>

3. Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. (Matt 10:32-33) (see also Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:23-26)

A believer must be willing to give testimony without regard to embarrassment, shame or personal safety. The clarity of Jesus' language;

and the force with which he speaks in these passages listed, make this a most significant ingredient to health.

4. ...God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. (Heb 2:4)

Christian witness is to be attended by supportive manifestations of the Holy Spirit. God miraculously confirms the truth proclaimed about Him.

5. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance... and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. (Heb 12:1)

The heroes of faith presented in the Bible ought to serve to stir us to lives which also bear untiring witness.

6. Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. (1 Pet 2:12)

Our behavior, as well as our words, is an integral part of witnessing.

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Speaking and living in such a way that unbelievers are drawn to Christ in an indispensable ingredient to spiritual health. The New Testament would expect me as a healthy believer to "witness" in the following ways:

1. Believing that as a Christian I bear the personal responsibility to represent Jesus Christ before unbelievers
2. Having the things which I say about God always center around the ministry and person of Jesus Christ
3. Considering the opportunity to lead another person to faith in Jesus Christ as more important than my own comfort or safety

4. Being confident that God is supernaturally working with me when I represent Him to others
5. Understanding that my behavior (morals, speech, business practices, generosity, etc.) is silently witnessing to others about Christ

### FELLOWSHIP

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		(#/ 27)	(#/9)
	occurrences	# of N.T. books	# of authors
<i>κοινωνία</i> noun	20	10	4
<i>κοινωνός</i> noun	10	8	5
<i>κοινωνέω</i> verb	8	7	4
<i>συκοινωνέω</i> verb	3	3	2
<i>συκοινωνός</i> noun	4	4	2
	45	17	5

B. A Practical Definition

The term "fellowship" includes not only the practice of regularly gathering together with other believers, but also the deep family-like commitment which underlies our relationship to other believers.<sup>26</sup> The New Testament makes it clear that a "healthy" believer must not stay aloof from other Christians for an important aspect of our coming to Christ is being spiritually joined to His people.<sup>27</sup> Though conflict may arise, a person with this mark of spiritual health will quickly seek reconciliation through dialogue, repentance, and forgiveness. In this way fellowship is

allowed to continue undisturbed.

When we recognize the degree of commitment the New Testament expects of Christians in our life together, it is only natural to ask upon what theological basis this new relationship is built. The following are some of the New Testament truths which mandate koinonia:

1. All believers have within them a new nature which draws them together in love. (Eph 4:24ff; Rom 6:11; 2 Cor 5:17; 2 Pet 1:4; 1 John 3:9)<sup>28</sup>
2. All believers have become a permanent abode for the Holy Spirit who functions in such a manner as to cause them to compliment one another and to need one another. (1 Cor 6:19; 12:13-27; 1 Pet 2:5)
3. All have a common spiritual destiny. (1 Pet 1:3-5; 1 Cor 15:22)
4. All are joined to the same spiritual family governed by the Father and the Son. (Rom 8:15-17)
5. All are called to unity by Christ. (John 17:21)

#### C. Important Texts

1. But whoever has the world's good, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in Him? (1 John 3:17)

New Testament fellowship involves a sharing of money, food, and goods with others in need. (See also: Acts 2:44-45; Rom 12:13; 2 Cor 8:1-2; Jas 2:15-16)

2. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. (Rom 12:15)

Among healthy believers there will be emotional and spiritual care for one another. (Rom 14:1; Heb 10:24; Gal 6:1-2)

3. ...not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some... (Heb 10:25) (Also Acts 2:24)

Being aloof or apart from other believers is considered unacceptable by the New Testament. The Bible constantly pictures Christians coming together "In order to meet with God in the company of each other and to meet each other in the presence of God."<sup>29</sup>

4. If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there...first be reconciled to your brother... (Matt 5:23-24) (See also: 1 John 2:9-11; 4:20-21; John 13:34-35 Matt 6:14-15)

There is to be regular resolution of inter-personal conflict through repentance, forgiveness, and communication.

5. There is neither Jew nor Greek...slave nor free man...male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:28)

Spiritual health manifests an absence of social or racial discrimination. (See also: Jas 2:1-9; Rom 12:16; Col 3:11; Eph 2:14)

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Clearly, it is not possible in the New Testament to love God and at the same time ignore His people. True koinonia will manifest itself in at least the following ways:

1. Being willing to share money, food, or goods with other Christians who have needs
2. Recognizing that I am part of a spiritual "family" to whom and for whom I am responsible
3. Wanting to encourage other believers who have grief or depression
4. Gathering joyfully with other Christians even though they have faults

5. Regularly forgiving people who offend me
6. Repenting quickly when I have offended another
7. Feeling glad when different kinds of people come to our church
8. Attending church every week

### MINISTRY/SERVICE

<u>A. Occurrence in the New Testament</u>		(#/27)	(#/9)
		occurrences	# of N.T. books
			# authors
<i>Siakovéu</i>	verb	37	12
<i>Siakovia</i>	noun	34	11
		71	16
			7

### B. A Practical Definition

In many areas of the church the idea that every believer is gifted by God to minister is something that is being only recently rediscovered. Yet the New Testament plainly states that every believer has been given at least one gift with which to serve others on behalf of Christ (1 Pet 4:10). A healthy Christian will be serving in harmony with the other ministries in the church. Paul uses the analogy of the human body to illustrate how each member of the church has something to contribute to the overall working of God in that place and that the gifts with which each ministers will differ from person to person. (1 Cor 12:12ff)

By compiling the various gifts in the New Testament we find that there are some twenty-seven gifts mentioned, and it is obvious from the nature of these lists that even they do not mean to be exhaustive.<sup>30</sup>



So, every Christian has been specially gifted by God to serve as some part of the church. Just as we need to take in spiritual nourishment to be healthy, so too we must let God give to others through us if we are to remain healthy.

C. Important Texts

1. But the greatest among you shall be your servant. (Matt 23:11)

Choosing to serve others rather than seeking to be served is a fundamental mark of spiritual health and maturity.

2. ...he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father. (John 14:12)

Jesus clearly promised that His followers would be equipped to carry on an expanded form of His ministry.

3. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. (Rom 12:4-5)

God has designed His church to function in unity though there is great diversity in the ministry of individual believers. (See also: 1 Cor 12:18-20)

4. As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (1 Pet 4:10)

Every believer is gifted by the grace of God to serve in the overall ministry of the Church, and it is also expected that each believer has identified his or her gift(s) for ministry. (See also: Eph 4:7)

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Since God has equipped each Christian to minister effectively in some way, He expects us to identify that potential and invest in it portions of our time and resources. A healthy believer will be someone, then, who recognizes that he or she is not called to passively observe others minister but has also been called and equipped to minister as part of a team called the Church. Moreover, it is important that each believer understand how his or her gifting coincides with the gifts of others. Such understanding will manifest itself in some of the following ways:

1. Having a prevailing attitude which seeks to be a blessing to others
2. Being confident that the Holy Spirit is really at work in my life to minister to others
3. Recognizing that every Christian does not have to minister in the same ways I do
4. Realizing that as a part of the church God wants me to be a good team player rather than a "superstar"
5. Being confident of at least one gift for ministry that God has given me

## GIVING/MERCY

A. Occurrence in the New Testament (#/27) (#/9)  
 occurrences # of N.T. books # authors

ἑλεέω	verb	31	10	6
ἑλεος	noun	28	13	8
ἑλεήμων	adj.	2	2	2
		61	17	9

B. A Practical Definition

We have already seen in our study of "fellowship" that to share our material resources with those in the Body of Christ is one expression of that area of behavioral health. However, we are now considering the topic of "giving/mercy" separately since the willingness to sacrificially give to others in the New Testament goes beyond the bounds of our fellowship circle and includes unbelievers.

This section entitled, "giving/mercy" is actually a compilation of several Biblical terms: mercy, compassion, alms, pity, kindness, and hospitality. Though each term has a different emphasis, there is a common underlying thought contained in each which can be summarized: We should be people who feel concern for those in physical need and respond by helping in whatever tangible way we can.<sup>31</sup> The form our assistance takes depends on the need; whether food, shelter, money, clothing or a helping hand. There are, of course some who are specially gifted in this type of service, but nonetheless, all believers are intended to express this attribute of their Heavenly Father.<sup>32</sup>

C. Important Texts

1. But love your enemies; and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. (Luke 6:35)

We are to give to anyone who needs our help, particularly to those without claim to favorable treatment.<sup>33</sup> And we are to give generously without expecting repayment.

2. Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

Our giving is to be like God's, "not only in being without respect of persons, but also in that it is expressed in deeds which may involve personal sacrifices."<sup>34</sup> (See also: Luke 14:12-14)

3. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. (Matt 25:35-36)

Taken in context, these verses primarily refer to caring for Christians (Christ's brethren, vs. 40), but surely it would also be true to say that this type of care should be extended to unbelievers in the name of Christ. We are to be merciful toward people who are hungry, thirsty, unsheltered, insufficiently clothed, sick and imprisoned.

4. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers... (Heb 13:2)  
Be hospitable to one another without complaint. (1 Pet 4:9)

A mark of spiritual health is the willingness to show hospitality to strangers and those in our church. (Also see: Rom 12:13; 1 Tim 3:2; 5:10; Tit. 1:8; 3 John 5).

5. Let each one do just as he has proposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor 9:7)

In a healthy believer, giving is done willingly and joyfully.

6. In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus...  
"It is more blessed to give than to receive..." (Acts 20:35)

Paul encourages believers to work hard in order to have a surplus to share with those in need. (See also: Eph 4:28)

#### D. Measurable Evidence

There are innumerable practical ways in which believers can express their compassion for those in need. Such acts of mercy should always be done willingly and joyfully. If I am a generous person; one who is merciful, I will in some way exhibit the following:

1. Giving money to those in need often
2. Giving generously to someone who does not have a prior right to expect help from me
3. Giving something I need to someone who needs it more
4. Thinking of my giving to people in need as a means of indirectly giving to God
5. Choosing not to be annoyed when something I have lent someone is not promptly returned
6. Thinking immediately of some way to help when I see someone in need

## PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY/TEACHING

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		occurrences	(#/27) # of N.T. books	(#/9) # authors
<i>διδάσκω</i>	verb	97	17	6
<i>διδασκαλος</i>	noun	58	12	7
<i>διδασχη</i>	noun	30	12	6
<i>διδασκαλια</i>	noun	21	8	3
		206	18	7

B. A Practical Definition

The New Testament makes it clear that gaining knowledge is not a sufficient end in itself. When pursued for its own sake knowledge can lead to arrogance, (1 Cor 8:1) and does not alone insure doctrinal purity (2 Tim 3:7). Nor does the New Testament consider the acquisition of knowledge a guarantee of right behavior. "It is possible to know every jot and tittle in the Scriptures and still lack the conviction and motivation to live out one iota of its truth," says Gene Getz.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, gaining knowledge is basic in arriving at maturity. A healthy believer will be continually gaining knowledge through one or both of two important sources: personal Bible reading and public Bible teaching. The New Testament records a variety of methods and approaches to this, so there are no absolute guidelines or stereotypes that everyone must follow. Where literacy is high, and low-cost printing available, healthy believers will enjoy the rich experience of personal Bible devotions and study, and in areas where the Scriptures cannot be read or obtained, public reading or recitation will bring the important

foundation of the Apostles' doctrine. But that there must be a continual growth in knowledge of God's written word is assumed in both Old and New Testaments.

C. Important Texts

1. ...Everyday I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. (Matt 26:55b)

When opportunity allowed Jesus would teach daily.

2. And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)

Continual learning was a pattern for the early church.

3. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. (2 Tim 4:13)

Paul instructs church leaders to keep the Scriptures before the people for their spiritual growth.

4. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15)

Bible study is acknowledged to be work, yet the absence of a thorough knowledge of God's written Word is a shame for a mature Christian,

5. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction; for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Knowledge of Scripture is essential to producing right behavior and spiritual ministry in believers.

6. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. (Heb. 5:12)

It is expected that every Christian will enter a process of learning which makes him or her thoroughly familiar with the basic truths of the Christian faith.

7. ...like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation... (1 Pet 2:2)

We must earnestly desire to hear what God has spoken to us if we are to grow to Christian maturity and thus experience full benefits of salvation.<sup>36</sup>

#### D. Measurable Evidence

Whether able to read or not, a healthy believer will naturally hunger to hear the Scriptures on a regular basis, and thereby will continue growing in the knowledge of proper doctrine and right behavior. In those cultures where literacy is high and Bibles readily available, it would be a normal sign of health for an individual Christian to desire regular study and meditation upon Scripture.

Some of the following attitudes and practices would mark a healthy program of learning God's word in western culture:

1. Owning my own copy of the Bible
2. Reading some portion of Scripture on a daily basis
3. Believing that God speaks to me when I read the Bible
4. Having a hunger to learn what the Bible says about the way God wants me to live
5. Listening to someone teach from the Bible at least once a week
6. Believing that God is the real author of the Bible



## WORSHIP

A. Occurrence in the New Testament

		(#/27)	(#/9)
	occurrences	# of N.T. books	# authors
ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΕΩ verb	60	8	6
ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΗΤΗΣ noun	1	1	1
	61	9	6

B. A Practical Definition

Of course there are several Greek verbs used in the New Testament to describe the practice of worship, each with a different emphasis of meaning. However, (ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΕΩ) is the most frequently used and general in its application so we have selected it to represent this category.

To begin with, worship is the deep, heartfelt recognition of the Person of God which results in the submission of our whole being to Him.<sup>37</sup> Then, during those times in which we are consciously involved in a "face-to-face" encounter with God, (such as a public church service, prayer meeting, private devotional time, etc.) a worshipper will express praise, thanksgiving, love and even repentance to God in numerous physical and verbal forms.<sup>38</sup> And finally, the general tenor of a worshipper's life will evidence sacrificial giving of things and service to others.<sup>39</sup>

There are a great variety of religious forms through which people express worship to God when they gather corporately, but though the forms may vary, there can be nothing more fundamental to the spiritual health of a believer than worship.

C. Important Texts

1. ...You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.  
(Matt 4:10b)

God's command for every believer to worship Him, and Him alone, is reinforced by Jesus.

2. And day by day continually with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house... (Acts 2:46a)

In the first flush of its youth and health, the early church worshipped the Lord together daily.

3. I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Rom 12:1)

The basis of worship is a complete submission of self and personal goals to the purposes of God.

4. ...for we are the true circumcision, who worship the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh... (Phil 3:3)

That a person can worship God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gives important evidence that he or she is in spiritual health.

5. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:24)

Worship must emanate from the deepest level of a person; outward actions alone are not sufficient.<sup>40</sup> And "all worship must be in conformity with the divine reality as revealed in Jesus."<sup>41</sup>

6. And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Heb 13:16)

Serving and sharing goods with others is part of a life of worship.

#### D. Measurable Evidence

We have recognized in our study that there is a difference between what worship is as it takes place within a believer, and how worship is expressed outwardly. Outward forms may vary greatly, but if I am spiritually alive my desire for true worship will be the first and clearest evidence of it. It can be difficult, if not at times impossible, to determine whether or not a person is a sincere worshipper, but if I am a true worshipper my life will necessarily evidence some or all of the following attitudes and actions:

1. Regularly telling God of my love for Him
2. Attending church regularly to worship God
3. Having decided to live my whole life for God's glory
4. Turning often to God during the week to tell Him thanks
5. Wanting to let God help people in need through me
6. Enjoying getting together with other Christians to praise God

SPIRITUAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS

### SPIRITUAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS

This Spiritual Health Diagnosis\* is an exercise to help you determine your own spiritual development. Major attitudes and areas of behavior are considered in light of New Testament teaching.

Here is how you do it:

1. Fill in the biographical information sheet on page 79 .
2. Read the list of definitions on page 80. Some of the questions in this exercise will ask about a general attitude you may have; some will ask how you tend to respond when an unplanned event occurs; and some ask about actions you may feel should be done on a disciplined basis (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly, etc.). Refer to the definition list and choose from any of the options which you feel best fits for you.
3. Go through the list of 80 statements. For each one ask yourself the question:  
"To what degree is this statement true about me: Always, Often, Sometimes, Seldom, or Never"?  
To mark your answer, put a check mark in the appropriate box.
4. When you are finished, turn to page 81 and write in the numerical values in the boxes corresponding to the question number.
5. After filling in your totals on the chart (page 87 ), add the five numbers in each row, placing the sum in the total column.
6. Then turn to the next page ( page 88) and mark your sum for each "health indicator" with an "X" on the line graph provided for each between 0 and 20. After all 16 scores have been marked, connect each "X"

with a line to the "X" below it, which will leave you with a graphic profile of your results.

7. Remember, your scores are relative to the way you evaluate yourself. So, the range of scores (highest to lowest score) will vary from person to person. Look to see which indicators are high and low in comparison to your other scores to discover which areas are stronger or weaker.

8. Definitions of each quality and Scripture references for review are provided on pages 89-91.

\*This Spiritual Health Diagnosis is patterned in many ways after the Modified Houts Questionnaire, Pasadena, California: Fuller Evangelistic Assn., 1978.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ AGE \_\_\_\_\_ Male/Female

FAMILY RECORD:

Single \_\_\_\_\_ Engaged \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Remarried \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES AND AGES OF DEPENDENTS (include spouse)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT STATE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

When were you BORN AGAIN? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you BAPTIZED IN WATER? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT? \_\_\_\_\_

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:

1. Religious Orientation of your Father \_\_\_\_\_
2. Religious orientation of your Mother \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was your religious upbringing? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long have you been attending this church? \_\_\_\_\_

DEFINITIONS:

- 1) NEVER: I do not ever do this, feel this, or believe this.
- 2) SELDOM:
  - 1) Most of the time I am not willing
  - 2) When the opportunity arises I usually will not or do not.
  - 3) Though I believe I should do this discipline on a (daily, weekly, monthly) basis, I actually do it far less often than I feel is right.
- 3) SOMETIMES:
  - 1) This action, feeling, or attitude is present in me about half the time.
  - 2) When the opportunity arises I do this as often as I don't do it.
  - 3) I usually do this discipline about half as often as I feel would be God's will for me.
- 4) OFTEN:
  - 1) This action, feeling, or attitude is done, felt, or believed by me more times than not.
  - 2) When the opportunity arises I almost always do it.
  - 3) I come close to doing this as often as I feel God wants me to.
- 5) ALWAYS:
  - 1) This attitude, or feeling is present in me at all times.
  - 2) When the opportunity arises I always respond.
  - 3) I never fail to do this as often as I feel God has asked me to.



SPIRITUAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS

○ To what degree is this statement true about you,  
NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, ALWAYS?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
	0	1	2	3	4
1. Believing God can and will do miracles.					
2. Willing to make personal sacrifices for people I don't know well.					
3. Choosing to forgive people who offend me.					
4. Expecting God to do good things for me.					
5. Feeling sincere joy when someone gets a promotion or honor I wanted for myself.					
6. Doing what God tells me to do even when I don't want to.					
7. Feeling glad to be alive.					
○ 8. Being confident about my eternal condition after death.					
9. Being aware of God's presence with me during the day.					
10. Controlling my temper when provoked.					
11. Willing to be known as a committed Christian.					
12. Sharing money, food, or goods with other Christians who have needs.					
13. Looking for the opportunity to serve others.					
14. Taking the time to help a friend or neighbor.					
○ 15. Reading some portion of the Bible daily.					
16. Telling God I love Him.					

To what degree is this statement true about you,  
NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, ALWAYS?

	Never 0	Seldom 1	Some- times 2	Often 3	Always 4
17. Being loyal to Jesus Christ as opposed to all other religious leaders.					
18. Continuing to serve others long after the task has become tiresome.					
19. Refusing to say things that are unkind about someone who has offended me.					
20. Looking forward to heaven.					
21. Taking time to pray and listen to God before beginning a new endeavor.					
22. Being able to gladly accept correction from a leader.					
23. Recognizing God's hand guiding me during the day.					
24. Seeing God as a source of blessing rather than judgement.					
25. Asking God to help me in seemingly insignificant matters.					
26. Pure sexual life (thoughts and actions)					
27. Speaking to others about the ministry and saving work of Jesus Christ.					
28. Attending Church					
29. Using the spiritual gifts God has given me.					
30. Giving generously when I see someone with a genuine need.					
31. Being aware of God speaking to me when I read the Bible.					
32. Pleasing God is the most important priority in my life.					

To what degree is this statement true about you,  
NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, ALWAYS?

	Never 0	Seldom 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3	Always 4
33. Confident that God is pleased with me.					
34. Having a deep longing to see the unbelievers I know turn to Jesus Christ.					
35. Feeling thankful for all that God has forgiven me.					
36. Expecting Jesus Christ to return to this earth soon.					
37. Being honest before God about my failures or sin.					
38. Continuing to trust God in times of personal hardship like illness, unemployment, or family strife.					
39. Confident that what the Bible says about Jesus is all true.					
40. Getting along well with family members and those I work for.					
41. Praying immediately when a problem arises.					
42. Speaking without using swear words or dirty jokes.					
43. Leading another person to faith in Christ at the risk of my own comfort or safety.					
44. Enjoy having people of different social or racial backgrounds in our church.					
45. Ministering spiritually to another person or a group.					
46. Lending something to someone who may not promptly return it.					
47. Changing the way I do something because of what I read in the Bible.					
48. Stopping to thank God when I recognize a blessing from Him.					

To what degree is this statement true about you,  
NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, ALWAYS?

	Never . 0	Seldom . 1	Sometimes . 2	Often . 3	Always . 4
49. Patient when I must wait for God to answer my prayer.					
50. Making friendships easily with others.					
51. Asking God to do good to a person who has insulted or cheated me.					
52. Feeling unafraid of death.					
53. Working with other people without becoming angry or getting my feelings hurt.					
54. Submitting myself and my personal goals to the will of God.					
55. Aware of God's presence with me during the day.					
56. Living without fear of the threat of war or domestic crime.					
57. Being firmly convinced that God can and still does perform miracles.					
58. Being completely honest in what I tell people.					
59. Telling others about what God has done for me.					
60. Overlooking faults in others.					
61. Enjoy working closely with others in ministry.					
62. Visiting someone who is sick or in prison.					
63. Listening to someone teach from the Bible.					
64. Giving up something I want to do in order to help someone else.					

To what degree is this statement true about you,  
NEVER, SELDOM, SOMETIMES, OFTEN, ALWAYS?

	Never 0	Seldom 1	Sometimes 2	Often 3	Always 4
65. Doing something that others consider foolish because I believe God told me to.					
66. Being so concerned with the needs of others that I forget my own.					
67. Continuing to forgive someone who has offended me many times.					
68. Feeling excited about my future.					
69. Looking for opportunities to help other people.					
70. Seeing noticeable steady growth in my spiritual life.					
71. Have been rejected by people because of my belief in Jesus Christ.					
72. Being protected by God from physical harm or disease.					
73. Seeing answers to my prayers.					
74. Being completely honest in the way I handle money.					
75. Being careful that my behavior is a witness to others about Christ.					
76. Asking forgiveness when I have offended someone.					
77. Seeing the Holy Spirit minister through me to others.					
78. Giving something I need to someone who needs it more.					
79. Memorizing a verse of Scripture.					
80. Getting together with other Christians to praise God.					

In the grid below, enter the numerical value of each of your responses next to the number of the corresponding statement on the previous pages.

NEVER=0 SELDOM=1 SOMETIMES=2 OFTEN=3 ALWAYS=4

Then add up the five numbers that you have recorded in each row and place the sum in the "Total" column.

Rows	Value of Answers					Total	"Health Indicators"
Row A	1	17	33	49	65		Faith
Row B	2	18	34	50	66		Love
Row C	3	19	35	51	67		Forgiveness
Row D	4	20	36	52	68		Hope
Row E	5	21	37	53	69		Humility
Row F	6	22	38	54	70		Obedience
Row G	7	23	39	55	71		Joy
Row H	8	24	40	56	72		Peace
Row I	9	25	41	57	73		Prayer
Row J	10	26	42	58	74		Moral Purity/Holiness
Row K	11	27	43	59	75		Witness Public Identification
Row L	12	28	44	60	76		Fellowship
Row M	13	29	45	61	77		Ministry/Service
Row N	14	30	46	62	78		Giving/Mercy
Row O	15	31	47	63	79		Personal Bible Study Teaching
Row P	16	32	48	64	80		Worship

SPIRITUAL HEALTH PROFILE...NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FAITH

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

LOVE

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

FORGIVENESS

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

HOPE

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

HUMILITY

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

OBEDIENCE

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

JOY

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

PEACE

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

PRAYER

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

MORAL PURITY-  
HOLINESS

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

WITNESS/PUBLIC  
IDENTIFICATION

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

FELLOWSHIP

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

MINISTRY/  
SERVICE

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

GIVING/  
MERCY

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

PERSONAL BIBLE  
STUDY/TEACHING

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

WORSHIP

. . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \* . . . . \*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

↑  
S  
U  
B  
J  
E  
C  
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V  
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B  
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## REVIEW DEFINITIONS OF SPIRITUAL HEALTH AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

The following pages ( 89-91 ) contain suggested definitions of the qualities of Spiritual Health. While not meant to be dogmatic or final, these definitions and supporting Scriptures do correspond to characteristics of the qualities as expressed in the Spiritual Health Diagnosis.

A. Faith. The firm conviction which comes to a person through hearing God speak in some form to him or her. The inner persuasion of God's trustworthiness and power which results must be profound enough to move that person to the appropriate action.

Matt 18:21-22; Rom 3:18; Heb 10:39; 11:1; Jas2:17

B. Love. The decision to so prefer the betterment of others that we gladly give up our own advantages, even to the point of death. Such love begins as a deliberate choice rather than an emotion for it does not depend for its existence on the excellency of its object. Instead it arises from the knowledge of God's love for the individual.

John 15:12-13; Rom 5:8; 1 Cor 13:4-8; 1 Thes 3:12; 1 John 4:7,8

C. Forgiveness. The undeserved cancelling of another's debt, whether financial, moral, or spiritual. All thought of punishment is removed, and the original relationship is restored when possible. The person who is able to endure in the practice of forgiving will be continually looking to the Cross as the reason to forgive others and to be personally forgiven.

Matt 6:14-15; 18:21-25; Heb 9:22

D. Hope. The happy anticipation of something good God is going to do in the future, both in this realm of human life and in the age to come.

Rom 8:24-25; 1 John 3:3; 1 Thes 4:13

E. Humility. The recognition that God is the source of everything good in us and that we by nature continue to need this forgiveness and enablement. There is an absence of pride or self-assertion with no attempt to disguise our need. The person who is humble is also one who takes the posture of a servant towards others.

Matt 20:25-28; Phil 2:3; Matt 18:4; Heb 18:14



F. Obedience. The decision to do what God asks of us. God's will is trusted rather than feared. The obedient person will be convinced of God's desire to do good for them, His superior wisdom, and His authority over them as their creator and redeemer. Also involved is our ability to accept direction from those people God has placed in leadership positions, so long as that leadership does not lead us counter to the will of God.

Matt 7:21-24; Rom 6:16; Heb 5:8;

G. Joy. The sense of present well-being and celebration which looks beyond the outward circumstances at hand and views them from divine perspective. It is the supernatural perception of the good things God is doing now.

John 16:22,24; 1 Pet 4:13; Gal 5:22; Phil 4:4; 1 Thes 5:16

H. Peace. The sense of inward rest which comes to an individual when he or she is free from strife. There is an absence of fear in our relationship with God, and in our relationships with others.

John 14:20; Heb 2:14; Rom 5:1; Eph 1:14-15; 2 Cor 13:11

#### BEHAVIORAL

I. Prayer. Communication in the spiritual dimension between a human being and God. This communication does not often fall into routine formalized patterns, but consists largely in daily conversation with God.

Matt 6:9-13; 1 Thes 5:17; Col 4:2; Matt 21:22; Matt 7:11; Luke 18:1

J. Moral Purity/Holiness. The character and actions which are produced in the believer who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit and who consents to be ruled by his or her new nature.

Matt 7:18; Rom 6:6-7; 1 Cor 6:9,10; 2 Tim 3:1-5; Gal 5:19-21; 2 Cor 7:1; 1 Pet 1:15; 1 John 3:9

K. Witness/Public Identification. Speaking and living in such a way that unbelievers are drawn to Christ. The person with this quality will not be reticent or unwilling to publicly identify himself or herself as a follower of Jesus Christ, nor hesitate to encourage others to believe in Him when the opportunity presents itself.

Matt 28:19-20; Mark 10:32-33; Acts 10:39-43; Heb 2:4; Heb 12:1; 1 Pet 2:12

L. Fellowship. This term includes not only the practice of regularly gathering together with other believers, but also the deep family-like commitment which underlies a Christian's relationship to other believers. There is emotional and spiritual care for one another and even the sharing of money, food, and goods with others in need.

1 John 3:17; Acts 2:44-45; Heb 10:25; Matt 5:23-24; Gal 3:28

M. Ministry/Service. The recognition that every believer has been called and equipped to minister as part of a team called the Church. A decision to serve others rather than to seek to be served is matched with the confidence that the Holy Spirit is really at work in each believer's life to accomplish ministry.

1 Pet 4:10; 1 Cor 12:12ff; Matt 23:11; John 14:21; Rom 12:4-5; Eph 4:7

N. Giving/Mercy. Feeling concern for those in physical need and responding by helping in whatever tangible way is possible. The form this assistance takes depends on the need; whether food, shelter, money, clothing, or a helping hand. The giving is done without regard to the merit of the person receiving so long as the need is genuine and without expecting repayment.

Luke 6:35; 10:25-37; 14:12-14; Matt 25:35-36; Acts 20:35; 2 Cor 9:7  
Heb 13:2

O. Personal Bible Study/Teaching. Though a person's ability to learn through reading may vary, regular study and meditation upon Scripture is essential to the development of proper doctrine, right behavior and spiritual ministry. It is expected in the New Testament that every Christian will be continually gaining knowledge through one or both of two important sources: personal Bible reading and public Bible teaching.

Matt 26:55b; Acts 2:42; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:16-17; 4:13; Heb 5:12; 1 Pet 2:2  
1 Cor 8:1

P. Worship. The deep heartfelt recognition of the Person of God which results in the submission of our whole being to Him. This inner attitude may be expressed during those times of conscious "face to face" encounter with God by a variety of physical and verbal forms. The general tenor of a worshipper's life will evidence sacrificial giving of things and service to others.

Matt 4:10b; Acts 2:46a; Rom 12:1; Phil 3:3; John 4:24; Heb 13:16

## ENDNOTES

## CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>J.B. Smith, Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament, with an Introduction by Bruce M. Metzger (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1955)

<sup>2</sup>David Watson, I Believe in Evangelism (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 98.

<sup>3</sup>W.E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, with Foreword by F.F. Bruce, reference library edition (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1940), p.71.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>See: David Watson, Evangelism, p. 138.

<sup>6</sup>W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup>W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, eds., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p.125.

<sup>8</sup>C.S. Lewis, "On Forgiveness," Fern-seed and Elephants and Other Essays on Christianity, ed. Walter Hooper (Glasgow, Great Britain: William Collins Sons and Co., 1975), p.42.

<sup>9</sup>William Hendriksen, The Gospel of Matthew (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1973), p. 335: "...this clause does not indicate the ground upon which God bestows forgiveness, but that which must be complied with for us to enjoy God's forgiveness of our own sins.", n. 320.

<sup>10</sup>W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary, p.232.

<sup>11</sup>Karl H. Rengstorf, (ἘΛΤΙΣ), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiky, 9 vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 2, p. 527.

<sup>12</sup>Rudolf Bultmann, (ἘΛΤΙΣ), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 2:527.

<sup>13</sup>W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary, pp. 232-3. For additional phrases see: 1 Thes 5:8; Eph 1:18; 4:4; Tit 1:2; 3:7; Acts 28:20.

<sup>14</sup>Walter Grundmann, (καταεινός), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 8:17.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, 2nd ed., S.V. "humility."

<sup>17</sup>Robert B. Laurin, "obey, obedience," Baker's Dictionary of Theology, ed. Everett F. Harrison. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1960), p. 383.

<sup>18</sup>Westlake T. Purkiser, "joy", Baker's, p. 300.

<sup>19</sup>S.S. Smalley, "joy", New Bible Dictionary, ed. J.D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1962), p.666.

<sup>20</sup>Werner Foerster, (εἰρήνη), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 2:416.

<sup>21</sup>Charles L. Feinberg, "peace," Baker's, p. 399.

<sup>22</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow, (Glendale, California: Gospel Light Publications, 1979), pp. 90-92. Note the distinction between "roles" and "gifts."

<sup>23</sup>Paul S. Rees, "holiness," Baker's, p. 270.

<sup>24</sup>W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary, p. 225.

<sup>25</sup>Fred L. Fisher, "witness," Baker's, p.555.

<sup>26</sup>David Watson, I Believe in the Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1978), pp. 362-3.

<sup>27</sup>David Watson, Evangelism, p. 135.

<sup>28</sup>Wick Broomall, "fellowship," Baker's, p. 219.

<sup>29</sup>David Watson, Church, p.66.

<sup>30</sup>C. Peter Wagner, Spiritual Gifts, p. 58. For lists of gifts see: Rom 12; 1 Cor 7, 12, 13-14; Eph 3,4; 1 Pet 4.

<sup>31</sup>W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary, p. 60.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>33</sup>J.W.L. Hood, "Mercy, Merciful," New Bible Dictionary, p. 809.

<sup>34</sup>J.W. Meiklejohn, "Compassions," New Bible Dictionary, p. 246.

<sup>35</sup>Gene Getz, Sharpening the Focus of the Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), p. 78.

<sup>36</sup>Alan M Stibbs, First Epistle General of Peter (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 96-7.

<sup>37</sup>David Watson, Church, p. 184.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., pp. 184-197.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>40</sup>Leon Morris, Gospel According to John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 270.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 296

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