

**TEN QUESTIONS TO DIAGNOSE YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH (DON WHITNEY)  
WEEK 1: #1 DO YOU THIRST FOR GOD?**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. **To diagnose our spiritual health requires us to ask ourselves questions or tests relating to our spiritual life.**
- B. **Questions which by the help of the Holy Spirit can enable us to determine how we are progressing spiritually.**
- C. We can be doing great physically, even great emotionally and still have poor health “spiritually”.
- D. **To have spiritual health, there must be OBVIOUS SPIRITUAL LIFE.**
- E. **John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.**
- F. **1Jo 5:12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.**
- G. **Simply doing the activities we will look at will NOT produce spiritual life**
- H. **Scripture implores us to continually to “confirm”, to make certain, His calling of you**
  - 1. **2Pe 1:10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.**
  - 2. **How do we confirm our calling? We continue to look at our own spiritual life!**
  - 3. **Php 4:9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me— practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.**
    - a. Practice – GK “prasso”– to exercise, to be busy with
  - 4. **1Ti 4:15 Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.**
  - 5. **God does not set us up to fail but to have victory, “that we will never stumble”, but we must practice what God has set before us.**
- I. **Questions are not meant to burden the believer but increasing the joy in the Lord by looking at how we are running the race**
  - 1. **Heb 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,**
  - 2. **When true life exists, there will be spiritual growth**

- J. **Jesus is our Standard: we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, Christ Himself** → Eph 4:15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him** who is the head, into Christ,
- K. **We look to Christ, the Author and Finisher** (Perfecter) of our Faith → Heb 12:2 **looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith**, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

## II. Q1- DO YOU THIRST FOR CHRIST?

- A. **Jesus taught in the opening of the sermon on the mountain”**
  - 1. Mt 5:6 "Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst** for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
  - 2. “Blessed” - GK “makarios” –permanently fulfilled and the application is this one is permanently filled with joy or satisfaction
  - 3. **are those**→“Only those”–that “hunger and thirst” for righteousness of God.
  - 4. **Hunger and thirst for righteousness is to be constantly seeking more of what you have already been given**
  - 5. Jesus makes a distinction “**for they [and they alone] shall be satisfied.**
- B. **This is a diagnostic question for each of us this morning: “Am I thirsty for God?” “Do I want to know Him more?”**
- C. **Regardless of how long we have walked with the Lord**, we must continually look at ourselves and ask, “Am I growing in my faith? Am I growing spiritually?”
- D. Paul wrote late in his ministry, **Php 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection**, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
- E. Ps 42:1 ¶ «To the choirmaster. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah.» **As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God**, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?
- F. One of the main differences between an idol worshiper and a Christian is the idol worshiper just looks at the item, the Christian is in “fellowship” with Christ!
- G. **Question is this: Does this describe my life?** If so, I shall be encouraged because the fact that my soul is thirsty for God is a sign that I am growing spiritually.
- H. **God did not make us to be content in this world, in our fleshly body**→ He gives us thirst for Himself.
- I. Whitney, “the difference between people is the “**kind**” of thirsty longing in their soul.”
- J. **What is it that your soul thirst for?**

### III. THREE KINDS OF SPIRITUAL THIRST (Whitney)

#### A. Thirst of the Empty Soul

1. **Natural man (unconverted) has an empty soul;** No relationship with God
2. Constantly pursuing things to fill the emptiness of life: Money, success, sex, etc
3. Augustine: "You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until it rests in you."
4. Things of the flesh continuously fail to fill that God shaped vacuum in our hearts
  - a. Empty soul is **blinded to their real NEED** --Nothing satisfies-- all in vanity
5. **World has no such thirst**→ Ro 3:11 no one understands; **no one seeks for God.**
6. Tragic truth that the one that does NOT thirst for God on earth, will certainly thirst for God in hell (Luke 16:24)

#### B. Thirst of a Dry Soul

1. Empty soul has never tasted the rivers of living water found in Jesus Christ
2. Dry soul has tasted and knows that they are missing it now.
3. **John 7:38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'**"
4. **Dry soul cannot lose the person of the Holy Spirit** → Joh 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him **will never be thirsty again.** The water that I will give him will become in him **a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**
5. **This one is safe but suffering:** John Piper, "a spring satisfies thirst, not by removing the need you have for water, but by being there to give you water whenever you get thirsty."
6. **Christians can become dry in 3 Different Ways**" (Whitney)
  - a. **Too much of the world's water- Too little of the river of God**
    - (1) **Ps 65:9 You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide their grain, for so you have prepared it.**
    - (2) water is made available by God—we choose sometimes NOT to drink
    - (3) too much attention to the sins of the world and not enough attention to communion with God.
    - (4) The true believer becomes dry and weak
    - (5) To grow in the Lord we must seek out the food and water that Christ provides
  - b. **Walking Though Valleys**
    - (1) God never leaves His child but our circumstances cause us to feel like He did.
    - (2) Not always God's will to immediately or ever remove us from a trial or valley.
    - (3) David: **Ps 143:6 I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Selah 7 ¶ Answer me quickly, O LORD! My spirit fails! Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit.**
    - (4) God at times will let us simmer in our spiritual dryness

- (5) Puritan William Gurnall pointed out that when the sun is covered by a cloud it is no less near than when it is shining.—>so is God in the valleys of life
- (6) Holy Spirit in our lives **allows us to feel this dryness of spirit** and this should bring us comfort and even point us the direction of water

c. **Physical/Mental Fatigue**

- (1) our body's condition will at times cause us to be spiritually drained and dry.
- (2) over worked, lack of rest, over committed can cause neglect of our refreshing with the Lord, we become spiritually mal-nourished.

7. Regardless of why, the cure will always be crying out for the water of Christ

**C. Thirst of Satisfied Souls**

1. Fact of Christian life in this world that we will never be completely satisfied in our thirst for God.
2. Ps 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
3. Paul: Php 3:8 Indeed, **I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.** For his sake I have **suffered the loss of all things** and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 10 **that I may know him** and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
4. Mt 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
  - a. This is not something that just occurs at the point of salvation—> a present and ongoing reality of life.
5. Whitney: "Communion with Christ is incomparably satisfying also because there is no disappointment in what you find in Him. Moreover, the spiritual gratification you find in Jesus initially is never ending."
6. We desire to be more and more like Him, but we will never be completely like Him until we see Him face to face.
7. Fellowship with Christ and the Father today produces great joy, which produces the thirst to know Him more.
  - a. 1Jo 1:4 **And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.**
8. Jonathan Edwards: ". . . the more we experience, and the more we know this excellent, unparalleled, exquisite, and satisfying sweetness, the more earnestly we will hunger and thirst for more."
9. **Has your fellowship with Christ left you with a thirst to know Him even more? This thirst is a mark of a thriving and growing child of God!**

#### IV. BLESSINGS OF SPIRITUAL THIRST

- A. Isa 30:18 ¶ Therefore the **LORD waits to be gracious to you**, and therefore **he exalts himself to show mercy to you**. For the LORD is a God of justice; **blessed are all those who wait for him**.
- B. Mt 5:6 "**Blessed are those** who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- C. No one ever thirst after God until Holy Spirit takes up residence in believer..
  - 1. Rom 3:11 **no one understands; no one seeks for God**.
- D. Holy Spirit causes us to be “spiritually minded” → Rom 8:6 **For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace**.
- E. Holy Spirit causes us to be thirsty for God → Rom 8:15 **For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"**
- F. **Thirst for God is a demonstration that the Holy Spirit is working in you**.
- G. C. Spurgeon: “. . . the unrenewed man pants after anything sooner than God . . . it proves a renewed nature when you **long after God**; it is a **work of grace** in your soul, and you may be thankful for it.”

#### V. WHY DOES GOD INITIATE SPIRITUAL THIRST?

- A. He initiates spiritual thirst **so that He can satisfy it in you!**
- B. Ps 107:9 **For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things**.
- C. But the longing for more will continue throughout this physical life.
- D. Created to desire to be joyful and fulfilled only by a relationship with Jesus Christ
- E. As believers we can rejoice in the Lord in this world→ only completely satisfied in eternity.
- F. Satisfaction and joy that God gives to believers creates a fire and thirst for more of God in the next.
- G. Ps 84:1 ¶ «To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.»  
How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! 2 **My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD**; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. . . . Ps 84:10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor. **No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly**.
- H. Jonathan Edwards, “true gracious longing after holiness are no idle ineffective desires”
  - 1. **IE IF YOU TRULY LONG FOR GOD, YOU WILL PURSUE HIM!**

## VI. PRACTICAL STEPS TO THIRST FOR GOD

### A. Meditate on the Bible

1. Not just read, but contemplate what the Lord would be saying to you
2. Whitney, "I believe meditation is the greatest single devotional need of most Christians"
3. Bible is God's word not meant for just information but for application.
4. "Read big but meditate small"
5. Spend 25-50% of Bible time meditating on a verse or some part of it.
6. Ask questions of it:
  - a. What does it say about Christ?
  - b. How does this apply to my situation currently, my life today?
  - c. How can I apply one thing in it to my life today?

### B. Pray the Bible

1. How does your prayers go? Same thing every day or is it a conversation?
2. Solution is to read and then pray part of the passage back to God
3. Psalms are mostly conversations between the writer and God
4. They deal with all fears and emotions we have each day
5. Ex. Ps 46:1 ¶ «To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamoth. A Song.» God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Ps 46:2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, Ps 46:3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah
  - a. God, you are my Father, my protector. I praise you for guarding over me, for leading me by still waters. God, you alone are my help. Help me today. As You are mighty, I will not fear in this situation that I am walking through today, etc

### C. Read Good Books by Solid Authors

1. Bible is the number one source of our wisdom from God as it is inspired by Him
2. Are spirit filled authors who give insight and encouragement in their work
3. Pilgrims Progress, Morning and Evening, Valley of Vision
4. Biographies: John Gill, Charles Spurgeon, John Owen, Thomas Watson
5. Puritan writers: Watson, Owen
6. Contemporary: Jerry Bridges, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, John MacArthur, Steve Lawson