

Loris First Baptist Church
“Twelve Marks of a Mature Disciple of Christ”

TEST SEVEN OF DISCIPLESHIP MATURITY

Characteristic #1 - “A Heart for Christ Alone”

A careful study of the transformation of the Apostle Paul, from a brand new Christian (Acts 9) into a mature disciple of Jesus Christ (Acts 28), reveals that there were six key “Christ-like” characteristics he exhibited which were developed through his spiritual growth after his salvation. The failure for a Christian to have and work on these characteristics will severely hinder his or her ability to display Christ-likeness as has been commanded by The Word of God (Luke 6:40; Matthew 16:24; 1Peter 2:21; 1John 2:3-6).

The first characteristic to be considered regards your “HEART”. Jesus said the greatest of all of God’s commandments was to “love the Lord your God with ALL YOUR HEART...” (Matthew 22:37). A mature disciple of Jesus Christ has such a heart for Christ that he values his relationship with the Lord above all other relationships on earth (Luke 14:26-27). When God looks to see if we truly love Him, he does not trust what we say with our “lips”; rather, He searches our HEART to see how much we value our relationship with Him (1Samuel 16:7; Proverbs 21:2). God knows that we cannot love Him and the things of the earth equally. We will always make priorities in our relationships (Matthew 6:24). God wants your love for Him to exceed your love for anyone or anything else. So, do you have a HEART FOR CHRIST ALONE?

Directions: Please circle the number that best represents how you would rate yourself in response to each of the 12 questions and corresponding Scripture provided.

Scripture #1: *In his HEART, a man plans his course... (Proverbs 16:9)*

...For out of the overflow of the HEART the mouth speaks. (Matthew 12:34)

Question #1: I understand that many times when the bible refers to the “heart” it is referring to my inner thoughts and feelings which lead to me making good or bad decisions.

I Don’t Understand this Concept	I Sort Of Understand This Concept	I Totally Understand This Concept
1	2	3
	4	5
		6
		7

Scripture #2: *Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the HEART. (1Samuel 16:7)*

All a man's ways seem right to him, but the Lord weighs the HEART. (Proverbs 21:2)

Question #2: I understand that the Lord is constantly searching my "heart", so I purposely try to keep all of my thoughts, feelings, and decisions as "pure" as possible before Him.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #3: *Search me, O God, and know my HEART; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me.... (Psalm 139:23-24)*

Question #3: I love God so much that I don't want even my hidden thoughts or feelings to come between us. Therefore, I pray regularly for God to reveal to me anything that is "offensive" to Him in my HEART so that I can repent of it.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #4: *"Love the Lord your God with ALL YOUR HEART and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." (Matthew 22:37-38)*

"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:26)

Question #4: Because God is my creator, sustainer, provider, and savior, I owe Him everything...especially all my love.. Therefore, my love relationship with Him is my "primary" relationship. So, compared to my love for Him, the relationship I have with my parents, my spouse, my children, my friends, my employer, or anyone else could almost be described as "hate" because of how much more I love my Lord and Savior. He always comes first in my devotion.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #5: *I will give you a NEW HEART and put a new spirit within you... (Ezekiel 36:26)*

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW CREATION... (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Question #5: I am aware that I was born with a “sinful heart” that does NOT want a love relationship with God. I had to be “born again” (John 3:3-7) through faith in Christ so that I could get a NEW HEART that wants to love God and make Him first in my life.

I Don't Understand this Concept		I Sort Of Understand This Concept			I Totally Understand This Concept	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #6: *“...For out of the HEART come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, and slander.” (Matthew 15:19)*

The HEART is deceitful and beyond all cure. Who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

“FLEE THE EVIL DESIRES OF YOUTH, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure HEART.” (2Timothy 2:22)

Question #6: I recognize that I was born with a sinful heart which is the source of the sinful thoughts, feelings, and actions in my life. To maintain my love relationship with God, I concentrate daily on trying to avoid allowing my sinful nature to control my thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #7: *Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. (Proverbs 4:23)*

I have hidden your word in my HEART that I might not sin against You. (Psalm 119:11)

Question #7: Because I know how hard it is to protect my life from being controlled by my OLD HEART, I read and memorize scripture regularly so that my thoughts, feelings, and decisions will be in obedience to God’s Word.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #8: *Do not love the world nor anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM. (1 John 2:15)*

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. (Matthew 6:24)

Question #8: If I love anyone or anything on earth more than my Father in heaven, I understand that it will cause me to act like I hate God...because it will lead me to sin against Him.

I Don't Understand this Concept		I Sort Of Understand This Concept			I Totally Understand This Concept	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #9: *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO.” (Matthew 6:19-21)*

Question #9: Because the material things of this earth are only temporary, but the spiritual riches of heaven are eternal, I focus most of my efforts on earth in pursuing a deeper love relationship with God so that the “treasures” that control my Heart come only from Him.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #10: *If you OBEY MY COMMANDS, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. (John 15:10)*

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. (John 15:12)

Question #10: Jesus defines that a love relationship with God is based on your OBEDIENCE to His commands. His primary commands is that we love God and other believers with all of our heart. That is why I focus on obeying God’s commands and loving other people.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #11: *Each man should give what he has decided in his HEART to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2Corinthians 9:7)*

Question #11: I know that God loves me and is the source of all my blessings. As proof of my love and trust in Him, the Lord has asked that I give back a portion of what He has given me so that He can use it to bless others through the work of the church. I cherish my love relationship with God, and I want others to be blessed as I am, therefore I am a “cheerful” giver to the Lord’s work.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Scripture #12: *For it is with your HEART that you believe and are justified... (Romans 10:10)*

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving HEART that turns away from the living God. (Hebrews 3:12)

“Dear friends, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. WHOEVER DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW GOD, because God is love.” (1 John 4:7-8)

Question #12: I know in my HEART that I am a true believer in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. One proof of that is how much I love other people with a “sacrificial” (Christ-like) love.

Not Very Often (I struggle with this; not sure How to)		Usually (I am trying to, but need to improve)			Almost Always (I concentrate on this daily)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How to Grade Yourself on “Who is Your Lord”?

- 1) Add up all of the numbers you circled for the 12 questions above. (Max score “84”).
- 2) Compare your scores to the scales below and take action as the Lord leads you:

- 84 – 56** *You have a “heart” for Christ alone. Continue to seek and serve Him.*
- 55 – 29** *You have a “divided” heart. You have a love and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, but your heart is being “choked” by the cares of the world (Matthew 13:22). Repent and seek Him whole “heartedly” (Revelation 2:5).*
- 28-7** *Are you sure you are really saved? If you are, you are in danger of severe “discipline” by Jesus if you do not repent and seek Him with your “heart”! (Hebrews 12:4-6)*