

And given a choice, many of us are a little afraid of spiritual checkups as well. After all, if we check our spirit too closely, we might have to change a habit or two. We might need something like an “attitude-ectomy.”

I suggest that we get over our reluctance. With God’s guidance, let’s undergo a spiritual checkup, using Proverbs 4:20~27 as a checklist.

Ears (v.20): Are we hearing God’s Word clearly and with understanding? Are we doing what those words tell us?

Eyes (vv.21,25): Are we keeping our eyes on the teachings that will guide us toward righteousness?

Heart (v.23): Are we protecting our heart from evil?

Tongue (v.24): Is our mouth clean and pure?

Feet (v.26): Are we walking straight toward God’s truth without wavering?

How did you do on your examination? Are there areas where you need to take action? Regular checkups will help to restore your spiritual vitality.

Meditate: Create in me a clean heart, O God, Show me the way that Jesus has trod; Then I will tell of Your saving grace, Until the day when I see Your face.

Aphorism: A spiritual checkup is the key to spiritual health.

***July12(Sunday),2009**{ [Luke 19:1~10](#)}Key: The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.(Luke 19:10)“**Campaign Of Reconciliation**”Bible In One Year: [Psalms 4~6; Acts 17:16~34](#)

In Craig Nelson’s book *The First Heroes*, we read about the Doolittle Raiders who launched the first major counterattack on the Pacific front during World War II. Not all of the “raiders” returned from their bombing mission. Jacob DeShazer was among those who were captured and held in POW camps under difficult and painful circumstances.

DeShazer later returned to Japan after the war, but not to seek revenge. He had received Jesus as his Savior and had come back to Japanese soil carrying the message of Christ. A former warrior who was once on a campaign of war was now on a campaign of reconciliation.

DeShazer’s mission to Japan mirrors the heart of the Savior, who Himself came on a mission of love and reconciliation. Luke reminds us that when Christ came into the world, it was not merely to be a moral example or a compelling teacher. He came “to seek and to save” the lost (19:10). His love for us found its expression in the cross, and His rescue of us found its realization when He emerged triumphantly from the tomb in resurrected life.

In Christ we find forgiveness, and that forgiveness changes our life and our eternity—all because Jesus came on a campaign of reconciliation.

Meditate: While Jesus hung on Calvary’s cross, The devil and his demons smiled; Disciples grieved and mourned the loss, But God and man were reconciled.

Aphorism: We can go to others because Jesus came to us.

Bible study for this week 7/06/09~7/12/09

***July06(Monday),2009**{ [2 Samuel 16:5~12](#)}Key: It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will repay me with good for his cursing.(2 Samuel 16:12)“**Father Knows Best**”Bible In One Year: [Job 32~33; Acts 14](#)

Unlike David in 2 Samuel 16, we like to take revenge, silence our critics, insist on fairness, and set everything right. But David told those who wanted to defend him: “Let [Shimei] alone, and let him curse; for so the Lord has ordered him”(v.11).

It seems to me that as the years go by, we grow—as David did—in the awareness of God’s protective love. We become less concerned with what others say about us and more willing to give ourselves over to our Father. We learn humble submission to God’s will.

We may, of course, ask our opponents to justify their charges, or we may meet them with steadfast denial if they charge us falsely. But when we have done all we can do, the only thing left is to wait patiently until God vindicates us.

In the meantime, it’s good to look beyond the words of those who vilify us to the will of the One who loves us with infinite love. We need to say that whatever God permits is for His ultimate good in us or in others—even though our hearts break and we shed bitter tears.

You’re in God’s hands, no matter what others say about you. He sees your distress, and in time will repay you with good. Trust Him and abide in His love.

Meditate: Each day we learn from yesterday Of God’s great love and care; And every burden we must face He’ll surely help us bear.

Aphorism: It takes the storm to prove the real shelter.

***July07(Tuesday),2009**{ [Philippians 2:5~11](#)}Key: In [Jesus] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.(Colossians 2:9)“**Unique In All The World**”Bible In One Year Jesus: [Job 34~35; Acts 15:1~21](#)

A new Christian sent an e-mail to a Web site that answers questions about faith. She said, “I struggle with the claim of other Christians that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and to God. What will happen to those who believe otherwise?”

This kind of question challenges us to examine our view of Jesus. A scriptural review of Jesus and His uniqueness can help us stand strong in our belief that He is the only way.

Jesus is unmatched in history—His very being cries out for us to entrust our lives to Him. Jesus Christ is:

Unique in substance: He alone is both God and man (John 10:30). *Unique in prophecy:* No other leader’s life was foretold so clearly and accurately (Micah 5:2). *Unique in mission:* Jesus alone came to save us from our sins (Matthew 1:21). *Unique in birth:* Only Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23). *Unique in ability:* No one but Jesus has the power to

forgive sins (Mark 2:10). *Unique in existence*: Jesus alone existed before the beginning of time (John 1:1~2). *Unique in position*: No one else is equal with God (Philippians 2:5~6). *Unique in reign*: Only Jesus reigns forever (Hebrews 1:8).

No one in history is like Jesus. He alone deserves our trust, and He alone is the path to God.

Meditate: No other name can save me, No other name beside, But Jesus Christ the risen Lord, Who once was crucified.

Aphorism: Only one road leads to heaven—Jesus Christ is the way.

***July 08 (Wednesday), 2009** { [2 Timothy 1:8~13](#) } Key: Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 1:13) "**An Atheist's Point Of View**" Bible In One Year: [Job 36~37; Acts 15:22~41](#)

Three young men who say they are atheists decided to "sample" and report on several churches in their city. One of these men said, "There is something other than teaching that is appealing to people. We didn't see a lot of doctrine. . . . The appeal was mostly the community. The content in most churches isn't nearly as important as the packaging." The three atheists offered this explanation for why thousands of people in their area attend church each Sunday: The attraction stems more from a person's Christian identity than from what the religion teaches.

Their experience agrees with the observation of author A. W. Tozer, who said, "Increasing numbers of [Christians] are becoming ashamed to be found unequivocally on the side of truth. They say they believe, but their beliefs have been so diluted as to be impossible of clear definition."

The apostle Paul knew whom he believed, and he instructed Timothy to "hold fast" to the truth he had been taught (2 Timothy 1:12~13). We too need to hold tightly to our beliefs based on the unfailing, God-inspired Bible. What we believe about God is more crucial than any feeling we get by being in church. Tozer calls us to stand "firm on the Word of God that lives and abides forever."

Meditate: Since by faith I have clear vision, Your blest Word is rich and new; Men with eyes by sin distorted Cannot all its treasures view.

Aphorism: Don't be a Christian in name only.

***July 09 (Thursday), 2009** { [1 Corinthians 12:26~31](#) } Key: If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. (1 Corinthians 12:26) "**Family Therapy**" Bible In One Year: [Job 38~40; Acts 16:1~21](#)

Dr. Paul Brand, a medical missionary in India, observed an unusual phenomenon with several of his patients. When they were recovering from surgery in his hospital, some family members would bring hot meals to them. At night a relative would sleep on the floor under the bed of the recovering patient. When patients awoke in pain, their loved ones would gently massage them until they went back to sleep.

At first Dr. Brand thought this was inappropriate and unsanitary. Over time, however, he began to notice that the patients receiving this loving care from family needed less pain medication. They were being soothed by people who loved them. This "family therapy" brought the warmth and care of home into an unfamiliar place.

We can learn from this example of love and care for our family. Those who belong to Christ are part of a spiritual family and need to be aware of the hurts of other members. The apostle Paul said, "If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). This principle requires that we find practical ways of soothing hurts. Do you know a Christian brother or sister who needs "family therapy" from you?

Meditate: A caring heart, a listening ear, A thoughtful word, a gentle tear Will help to lift the heavy load Of weary souls along life's road.

Aphorism: To ease another's burden, help carry it.

***July 10 (Friday), 2009** { [1 Kings 11:1~13](#) } Key: Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord. (1 Kings 11:6) "**Brains Are Not Enough**" Bible In One Year: [Job 41~42; Acts 16:22~40](#)

Why do smart people do not-so-smart things? Time after time I hear sad stories about people with high IQs who fall short in the area of moral discernment, leading to tragic results. Obviously, a good brain isn't enough to keep a person from making bad choices.

This contradicts the belief of some that better education can solve society's ills. The reasoning goes like this: "If we educate people about the dangers of _____, they won't do 'it' and thus will be spared from unpleasant, unintended consequences."

But experience and the Bible tell us something different. In fact, the smartest man who ever lived could serve as a poster boy for bad choices.

Ancient Israel's King Solomon, author of much of the book of Proverbs, wrote, "Keep your heart with all diligence" (4:23) and "Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding" (14:33). Despite knowing the connection between the heart and wisdom, the king disobeyed God by marrying foreign women who "turned his heart after other gods" (1 Kings 11:4). As a result, the Lord said, "I will surely tear the kingdom away from you" (v.11).

The ability to make good decisions demands a heart devoted to God.

Meditate: What will it profit when life here is o'er, Though great worldly wisdom I gain, If seeking knowledge I utterly fail The wisdom of God to obtain?

Aphorism: The smartest people know that God knows best.

***July 11 (Saturday), 2009** { [Proverbs 4:20~27](#) } Key: Examine me, O Lord. (Psalm 26:2) "**Spiritual Checkup**" Bible In One Year: [Psalms 1~3; Acts 17:1~15](#)

Given a choice, I'd probably not voluntarily visit my doctor for a physical exam. I'm inclined to assume that everything is okay and not

bother my doctor about it. But since my wife is a nurse, I don't have a choice. I go in for regular exams.