



Spiritual
Benchmarks

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Spiritual Benchmarks™

BACKGROUND

- 1 Opportunities for spiritual growth through self analysis:** Benchmark is defined as “a mark on a fixed and enduring object...” The words and concepts in the Bible are benchmarks of God’s thinking. They are marks in an enduring book. It is important to periodically benchmark God’s thinking before rather than after a problem manifests itself. This preventative approach does not necessarily eliminate the need for “discipline” by Church leadership. However, its primary purpose is to focus us on opportunities for positive growth.
- 2 All circumstances are purposeful: Kay Arthur,** the Founder of Precepts Ministries, states, “...God uses every circumstance of life to make us one with the Godhead.” Therefore, we assume that adversity and blessings in a person’s life also have a spiritual purpose.
- 3 Format for Spiritual Growth:** We propose that a close friend, small group leader or Church mentor meet with each interested disciple to complete the initial benchmarking evaluation form that follows. We then suggest that they benchmark God’s revealed truth in Genesis 1-3, John 12-17 and Colossians 1-4. Once complete, they should complete a second self evaluation to determine whether there is a change in their thinking after benchmarking God’s thinking.
- 4 Method:** In this self analysis most of the categories require a qualitative versus a quantitative response. It should be filled out with agreement by at least two parties involved in the process: a disciple of Christ and one interested person. It should be filled out, signed by the participants and filed in a confidential file. The guide should be completed annually to improve its usefulness.
- 5 Limitations:** This form is designed primarily for benchmarking through a self analysis. It should not create a legalistic format for evaluating spirituality. It provides structure for a process that often gets away from us in the “tyranny of the urgent.” It should also be used to verify the form and areas of growth spiritually over the next year. It often produces exciting conversations.

THE CORE AREAS

- 6 Authority of the Bible: We** assume that the person being benchmarked believes in the authority of the Bible as God’s truth for our daily living.
- 7 Sacrificed Life Relationship:** This evaluation assumes that the person conducting the self analysis already possesses a “salvation” type relationship with Christ. However, they may not have been disciplined into the sacrificed life described in Romans 12:1-2, John 12 or Colossians 1-2.
- 8 Abiding in the “Vine:” the personal** relationship with Christ and the Father must be sustained through what Christ himself described as abiding in John 15. There are many and varied methodologies for sustaining an in-depth relationship with Christ and the Father
- 9 Manifesting: the proactive disciple** is not passive but rather the Holy Spirit works daily through that individual to accomplish God’s plan of “...discipling the nations.”

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Next Generation Series

Name: _____

Date: _____

Where do you stand with God?

What does your life today portray about the character of God?

What does God think of you right now?

What can you do to change God's opinion?

If you died tonight, stood before God and He asked why you should be allowed to remain with Him in Heaven, your response would be:

Relationship with Christ & the Father

Sacrificed Life and Lordship—Romans 12:1-2, John 12 and Colossians 1-2. Please describe how you view the sacrificed life. Give some illustrations of how it has become a reality on your life. If this type of relationship is not a reality, what is preventing you from making this commitment? Can we pray that “God will do whatever He has to do in your life so that you can commit to the sacrificed life?”

How do you “abide in the Vine?” John 15

Describe briefly God’s expectations for us in terms of “being and doing?” Share with us how you balance these often competing perspectives?

How are Christ and the Father doing “greater things than Christ” through you? John 14:11-14.

What forms of persecution are you currently experiencing? 2 Timothy 3:12-15, John 15:18-20 and John 16:1-4. How can we pray for you and support you during this persecution?

Prayer Life

Describe your prayer life.

As you look back on the last three months, what form have your prayers taken?

Over the last three months, how have you spent your time in prayer? Be specific and provide some examples.

1. Prayer for your own needs and the needs of your family.
2. Intercessory prayer for individuals or categories of people.
3. Quiet communion listening to God.

Under what conditions do you fast & pray?

Please list your unanswered prayers.

Please briefly describe the negatively answered prayers.

Please list briefly the positively answered prayers.

Please list prayers where one or more of the Church leaders might intercede with you.

How do you interpret and integrate the following passages into your prayer life?

- Lord's Prayer

-John 14:12-14

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

-John 15:7-8

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

-John 15: 10-17

"...if you obey my commands, you will remain in my love...Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

-John 16:23-24

"In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete."

-James chapters 1 & 2

Bible Study

What is your position on the “authority of the Bible?”

How do you go about growing spiritually from God’s word?

Form—study a chapter, read the whole Bible, character study, word study, etc.

Method—Inductive or deductive, general reading, meditate on a passage, etc.

Frequency—daily, weekly, intensive workshops, etc.

Amount of time per month

Individually or in a group

What has God taught you from His Word over the last quarter?

What is God teaching you today?

Spiritual Gifts and Passions

What are your spiritual gifts?

How have these manifested themselves over the last year?

How are these manifesting themselves in your life today?

Do you feel free to say “no” to opportunities where you might be operating outside of your spiritual gifts?

Do your spiritual gifts relate to your spiritual passions?

God's Expressions In Your Life

Assuming that God expects us to integrate and manifest the Father's will in all aspects of our life on this planet, how is Christ working in some or all of the following areas:

Family

Work

Church

Ministry

School

Friends

If Christ is not manifesting himself through you in a tangible way, what might be the causes?

Is there anything else positive in your life that you should share with us so that we can rejoice with you?

Is there anything happening in your life that we need to pray about?

Is there anything in your life that would inhibit your effectiveness in the Body of Christ or ministry?

World View (in your own words)

A world view is the beliefs that a person uses to interpret life and form opinions about his or her humanity, purpose in life, duties in the world, responsibilities to family, interpretation of truth, social issues, etc. Everyone has a world view that dictates their actions even if they cannot describe it.

For Christians the Bible is considered their source of “absolute truth” and guide for their world view. The Bible has specific views about the nature of man, the world, purpose, truth, morality, etc., but so does the secular world. The secular world view is often in conflict with the Biblical one. For example: Where the world theorizes that man evolved, the Bible states that man was created and is ultimately responsible to God. Where the world says that morals are relative, the Bible says they are absolute. Where the world says that there is no need of salvation and redemption, the Bible clearly states that all people are in need of deliverance from the original sin in the Garden of Eden.

The contrast between a secular and Biblical world view is obvious and profound. Both cannot be true.

for more info search Google on WWW with key words: “Christian World View”

All life on earth was created by God with a design and a purpose—Gen.1:11; Gen 1:26; Ps 139:13

The Fall and restoration: “Who’s in control?”—Gen 3; Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

God’s “covenant” with mankind—Gen 9:9; 17:2; Judges 2:1-2; Isaiah 61:8-10; Hebrews 8:7-13

Man’s responsibility for planet earth—Gen. 1-2; Gen. 1:28; 2 Tim. 3:16-17

All areas of life and work are subject to God’s principles—Gen. 1:28; Matt. 28:19-20

Give a brief description of the “worldview” that you would share with others.

What is God’s purpose for your personal life?

Outline 3-5 or more core values and Biblical references from which your worldview is derived:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Christ's Gospel or Good News

Please give a description in your own words of the Gospel that you share with others.

Knowing God's Will

We talk a lot in Church about God's will. We each must find a way to know his will generally and for our daily living.

How do you go about determining God's will for your life?

What areas in your life is God asking you to be radically obedient?

From John 12-17 what are the Biblical benefits of radical obedience in your life?

What "spiritual fruit" do you see in your life?

Personal & Professional Growth

Where is God challenging you personally?

Where is God challenging you spiritually?

Where is God challenging you professionally?

How can we pray or support you in any of the above three areas?

Other

Are there other areas where we can support you?

Are there other personal or family needs that we should be aware of at this time:

Physical:

Material:

Spiritual:

Disciple date

Friend date

Church Mentor date

This toolbox includes three Biblical benchmarking guides. The first is called "Work on the Wild Side" taken from Genesis 1-3. It deals with God's purpose for mankind as well as the world of work and ministry. The second is entitled "One with the Father" and it is Christ's final discussion with His disciples in John 12-17. We call it an executive summary of Christ's and the Father's purpose. The third is the "Universal Disciple" model taken from Colossians and written by Thom Wolf, President of "Leadership Institute" headquartered in Delhi, India.

- Armed with God's original charge to mankind
- Restored to a relationship with God of power and authority
- Guided by the principles for daily living that the Apostle Paul taught the early church
- Ordinary people can be empowered to fulfill their role in turning the world right-side-up.

A hard copy of the four Spiritual Benchmarks guides cost \$3 each or \$12 total. When you print multiple copies from the PDF files, please send us \$1 for each guide or \$4 total to:

Spiritual Benchmarks
471 West Long Lake Drive
Harrison, MI 48625
989.539.1928

If you cannot afford the \$3, please download the files and share them with a friend who is interested in spiritual growth. Teens, college students or anyone seeking God's purpose in their lives along with the authority and power that fulfill that purpose are candidates.

Ordinary people are looking for real personal transformation that includes the intercessory power and authority for their world that Christ promised in the John 12-17. If "Spiritual Benchmarks" has value, please share the CD or www site with others.

Acey Martin is a graduate from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona with a B.S. Degree in Environmental Science and a minor in Biology. Since a senior in high school, he has worked with students in some form or fashion for the past 20 years. Acey spent 6 years at Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas pursuing a Masters of Divinity and Religious Education Masters. Acey has been a Youth Pastor for 8 years in Arizona and Texas and from 2000 to 2004 was the Director of Student Ministries at Mt. Pleasant Community Church in Michigan. From 1997 to 2000, Acey served on the program team at Spring Hill Camps in Michigan as the Summer Staff Recruiting Coordinator and a Program Manager. He is not the Program Administrator for Bair Lake Camp in Jones, Michigan.

Sarae Martin pioneered the "Year-In-Between" in 1989 when she attended a Chilean High School and received a second high school diploma in Spanish. Pursuing her passion for teens, Sarae completed a Degree from Alma College as a Spanish major and became a high school Spanish teacher in Ft. Worth, Texas for three years before joining the program staff at Spring Hill Camps. In 2002, she organized a women's teen retreat on the "Bride of Christ."

Thom Wolf was the Senior Pastor of the Church on Brady in Los Angeles, California from 1969-1994. Observers of the American Church have concluded and written that the Church on Brady is one model of an urban church for the 21st century. In 1994, Thom Wolf became the Director of the Kim School of Inter-Cultural Studies at Golden Gate Seminary. Currently, Thom is the President of "University Institute" headquartered in New Delhi, India. His "Universal Disciple" materials were recently translated into Chinese by Campus Crusade. One million Jesus Films are being distributed in China. The last 45 minutes on the "Jesus Film" DVD are devoted exclusively to the "Universal Disciple" model of the Apostle Paul from Colossians.

Dr. Bill Wilkie was a faculty member and Special Assistant to the President at Michigan State University before joining the W. K. Kellogg Foundation staff and later entering the automotive supplier industry world as Executive VP of Multifastener Corporation. From 1987 to 1997 he owned an executive recruiting firm in Grand Rapids, Michigan.