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## A Pastoral Checkup List from Philipians

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*Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Phil. 1:27 a)*

How is your ministry going? Really? Have you ever thought and prayed about taking a self-assessment to see how you are doing so you can honestly find out if your daily activities, relationships, and teaching are lined up to Christ or to something else?

### The Importance of Ministry and self Assessment

We all have our difficult days in ministry as we have our times of joy and contentment. We have people attacking us, praising us, gossiping, and giving gifts. We need to be aware how we are in Christ and how we relate our faith to others from our interactions and from the pulpit. Pastors take heed; in whatever situation we face, we need to be a learner and examiner of our self. By this we can make sure we are operating in the right parameters. Just like when we get a physical checkup once a year, or take our car in to be serviced or check it ourselves, we also need to be checked. Our instrument is not in our own thinking, complacency, or pride, nor is it in our numbers and adorations; it is solely in His Word and the advice and accountability of godly others. So, be willing and be humble and take a look under your hood; let others peek in too. The engine of being a pastor and a Christian needs care. Don't wait for the warning light to come on because that warning could just be a loss of a family or a ministry!

Read Philipians, chapters 1 to 2

Read the passage; now, ask yourself honestly the questions below. For further help and empowerment, be in reverent and fervent prayer. In addition, seek an accountability partner, perhaps another pastor, and keep each other to this, His Word!

### Philipians Chapter One

Read the passage and ask:

1. Are you operating as *servants of Christ Jesus*, operating as Christ called us to do...
  - In our personal lives?
  - In our professional lives?
  - In our families?

- In our church relationships?
- In our teaching and preaching?

Now, continue to read each verse one by one, and ask our Lord how you are doing in these precepts. Or, look at the questions below, taken directly from the NIV text in verse order (some of the passage was shortened and some grammar changed for putting it in the form of a question).

2. Are you filled and led by the *Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*?
3. Are you a grateful person? Do you *thank God every time, remembering Him* in all you do?
4. Are you praying for your people? *In all my prayers for all of you, do I always pray with joy*?
5. Are you confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus?
6. Are your people in your heart? *I have you in my heart; ...whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel.*
7. Are you, *sharing in God's grace* with...?.
8. Are you sure that, *God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus*?
9. Are you in prayer, *my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight*?
10. Are you, *able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ*?
11. Are you filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God?
12. Are you, *advancing the gospel*?
13. Are you, as a result, it has become clear... to everyone else that I am in chains (authentic trust and obedience) for Christ?
14. Are you, *encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly*?
15. Are you, *preaching Christ out of envy and rivalry*? Or, are you doing it, out of

*goodwill?*

16. Are you *doing so* (preaching and communicating) *in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel?*
17. Are you, *preaching Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they (you) can stir up trouble?*
18. Are you aware that it *does matter?* Are you aware of *false motives?* Are you rejoicing?
19. Are you operating through *prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ?*
20. Are you *eagerly expecting and hoping that I (you) will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my (your) body, whether by life or by death?*
21. Are you operating in this paramount mindset: *to live is Christ and to die is gain?*
22. Are you operating in *fruitful labor? Yet what shall I choose?*
23. Are you torn between your will and His, *I desire to depart and be with Christ* (not a death wish but a purpose filled direction, which is better by far!)?
24. Are you *remaining in the body* (ministry and commitment)?
25. Are you *convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith?*
26. Are you operating *through ... your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow?*
27. Are you confident that *whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ? Are you standing firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel?*
28. Are you operating *without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you?*
29. Are you operating that your ministry has *been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him?*
30. Are you trusting in Christ when, *you are going through the same struggle?*

## Philippians Chapter Two

Read the passage and ask:

Are you operating as *servants of Christ Jesus* as He called us to...

- In our personal lives?
  - In our professional lives?
  - In our families?
  - In our church relationships?
  - In our teaching and preaching?
1. Are you *encouraged from being united with Christ, comforted from his love, (showing) fellowship with the Spirit, if (with) any tenderness and compassion?*
  2. Are you *making my (your) joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose?*
  3. Are you *doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider(ing) others better than yourselves?*
  4. Are you *looking not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others?*
  5. Are you operating by *your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus?*
  6. Are you *being in very nature God, (do not) consider equality with God something to be grasped?*
  7. Are you *taking the very nature of a servant (as our Lord did)?*
  8. Are you *humbled...obedient (as our Lord exemplified)?*
  9. Are you *exalting God... to the highest place (in your personal and professional life)?*
  10. Are you living and preaching that in *the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth?*
  11. Are you confessing that *every tongue (would) confess that Jesus Christ is Lord? Are you living and preaching to point you and others to the glory of God the Father?*
  12. Are you *have always obeyed...continue(d) to work out your salvation with fear and trembling?*

13. Are you operating as *it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose?*
14. Are you doing *everything without complaining or arguing?*
15. Are you operating as *blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe?*
16. Are you *holding out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ* Do you realize that I (you) *did not run or labor for nothing?*
17. Are you *being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith?*
18. Are you *glad and rejoice with me* (Christ)?
19. Are you operating in the *hope in the Lord Jesus?*
20. Are you taking a *genuine interest in your* (the) welfare of others?
21. Are you just *looking out for his* (your) *own interests, not those of Jesus Christ?*
22. Are you *as a son with his father* (he has) *served with me* (Jesus) *in the work of the gospel?*
23. Are you filled with *hope, therefore, to send* (be sent to serve) *him?*
24. Are you *confident in the Lord?*
25. Are you taking *care of my* (others') *needs?*
26. Are you *longing for all ... distressed?*
27. Are you having *mercy... sorrow...on him* (others)?
28. Are you *eager to send him* (be used by Christ)? Or are you consumed with *anxiety?*
29. Are you *welcoming him* (others) *in the Lord with great joy, and honor?*
30. Are you *working of* (for) *Christ, (taking appropriate) risks...helping* (others) and *giving* with what *Christ has given* you?

You can do the same with the rest of Philippians and Colossians. In

Colossians, pay close attention to the keywords, such as *faith, love, hope*, and the *centrality* and *supremacy* of Christ and ask these same questions:

- Are you operating as *servants of Christ Jesus...* as Christ called us to...
- In our personal lives?
  - In our professional lives?
  - In our families?
  - In our church relationships?
  - In our teaching and preaching?

These questions are not just for the pastor or church leader; they can be used by any or all Christian(s) who want to live a life of uprightness and significance. If you struggle with pride or fear, these questions will help you deeply, as they are from His Word. But, be warned: if you refuse to hand over your personal and ministerial life to Christ as LORD, you are headed toward failure in what matters most. So, make sure you have someone hold you to them; if not, Satan will have a foothold in your life and then in your church. The failure to assess yourself or have someone else do so, or to have accountability will produce sin. At that point, it is not a question of **if** you may fall from your church or ministry, but, **when**, and in so doing you will destroy everything in your life that you have worked for and built.

We have to see assessment as a paramount thing to do. Our fears, apprehensiveness, busyness, and dignity must not get in His Way of working in us; if it does, we just can't function. These questions will take time. It will not happen all at once nor will we obtain perfection, which is why we need to keep going back to them. How often? Take one or two a day in prayer. And, at least once a month, preferably once a week, be in an accountability relationship and take on a few of these at a time. Also, make sure you are using our "accountability questions" too!

Remember, pastoring is not just a job; it is a call that we are to take seriously, with passion and conviction, and always teach in clarity and in truth!

Be blessed as you serve Christ as LORD!

*Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. Colossians 3:11*

(Scripture is taken from the 1978 *New International Version*, Zondervan, and International Bible Society; it is then modified to be in a question form.)

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