



ASSESSMENT PAPER
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INITIATION IN THE SPIRITUAL
FORMATION SF503

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In this assessment paper I will be discussing strengths and weaknesses in my self-awareness of spiritual reality being in Ministry Leadership. I will first discuss the influences of two books, “The Steps to Freedom in Christ” by Neil T Anderson and secondly “ Emotionally Healthy Spirituality,” chapters 2, 5-7, by Peter Scazzero. The remainder of the four assessments measure the complexity of the characteristics that comprise my spiritual gifts, emotional health, personality types, spiritual, religious, and existential well-being.

Neil T Anderson’s, “The Steps to Freedom in Christ” book discussed subjects that I had not really given much thought to. However when the concept of Counterfeit versus Real came into place, I gave it a closer look. I know that I have been a Christian most of my life, however, I have encountered some situations during my youth that could register as taking part in spiritual practices, even unknowingly with some of the games we played as a child. I verbally renounced any activities such as seeing if I could be hypnotized by looking at a coin being swung before my eyes or glancing into a flickering light. Though I thought these were harmless childhood games, they were a gateway into witchcraft or demonic practices. I remember saying “Wow,” and then I prayed for my ignorance.

A second thing I look closer at were secret covenants through a vow between myself and a person or group of people. This brought to my remembrance making a blood covenant as a child with a friend to be a blood brother or sister for life. It involved blood and a vow, even though I was not aware of the contents of this type of vow. I renounced those covenant relationships. I did not want anything between me and God, not even my own ignorance. As children we played with Ouija-boards with some of the games in our neighborhood community centers or day cares. We would allow our hands to move on their own toward objects on the

board. I renounced these practices. These things were presented to us as innocent games, in this we were dealing with ‘deception versus truth.’”

Step three registered deeply within my core dealing with bitterness versus forgiveness. It played true because to heal properly from emotional and sometimes physical wounds in our life, I continue to understand that “forgiveness is not forgetting.”¹ I have to address these issues, even when they resurface in my life to be an emotionally mature Christian. It reflects on how God forgives our sins. I needed this healing for my life and to love others better, so I forgave those who had hurt me, mentally, physically, emotionally, and financially. I continue to submit this under the blood of Jesus. In order to grow I had to submit myself to God’s word so that healing would take place. There are times that I feel this is unfair and that I have been victimized. However, releasing them from the injuries and damage done in my life, gives me room for the grace of God to abide. It can no longer drive me into depression and self-pity. It releases me into the joy of the Lord and his blessing for my life.

I was speaking to my college advisor regarding some issues I was still having concerning establishing some boundaries with my ministry, family, and job. I had to come out and say to my loved ones that sometimes I have to say no to them or will not be able to fully sustain my duties and family obligations. I learned how to say “no.” I humbly expressed that my pride has caused me sometimes to make wrong decisions that benefited others, but it hurt me. I needed time for me and God. In this I developed two avenues of corrections. I established my Sabbath and my office to be a guideline, a meter that I am maintaining my spiritual life first with God, and everything else is being assigned a place of priority. I told my counsellor that I had failed two classes because I did not want to receive a low grade on a paper, so I delayed until I missed

1 (Anderson 2017), p 27.

the deadline. As a leader I encourage others to ask for help, or to trust God and release things in faith. However, I did not follow this advice, even though I had people on every side encouraging me to do so. So I asked for prayer, and I surrendered this practice to God. I wanted to be free from this issue and never deal with it again. I am still working on it, as I am trusting God to establish good preparation practices. I see improvement and I thank God for his grace and his mercies.

Step Six: Bondage versus Freedom and Step Seven: Curses versus Blessings I combined together dealing with again forgiveness and obedience to God's word. I choose to live in freedom and in the blessings of God. Several issues of bondages and curses were dealt with during my secret time with God through prayer and fasting. I renounced several issues that would resurface at will in my life. "Also , every family has a history of issues such as mental illnesses , sicknesses, divorce, sexual sins, anger, depression, fear, violence, and abuse."² Some of the people who hurt me and misused me are my family. I chose to release their holds over my life by accepting God's redeeming power of love. Through this love I can pray for their forgiveness, even when they refuse to apologize for what was done. God's love really does cover a multitude of sin. I teach love to my children and grandchildren thereby allowing God to break these generational curses which have abused my family down through the years. I have seen great spirit growth and renewing of spiritual gifts in my life. I choose life, I choose the blessings of God and his renewing freedom. I am able to sleep and to bring freedom to those which are bound through the power of the Holy Spirit and through love.

Peter Scazzerio's "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality" emphasizes you must find a trusted friend to share your innermost thoughts with as a support system. It was reiterated strongly that

² Ibid , p 48-53

it was needed to establish an emotionally healthy spiritual life of a mature Christian who knew my true self; instead of a false-self, mask or assumed personality of being a perfect person having no flaws. “God invites us to remove the false layers we wear to reveal our authentic self, to awaken the “seeds of true self” he has planted within us.”³

Emotional maturity is established in our ability to allow God through his eminence, love and grace to teach me to emerge myself in him to endure lost humility, being numb to pain and death. To face and deal with loss of jobs, homes, everything due to disasters, deaths, life affairs (divorce, diagnosed with cancer, born handicap). We have to grieve and overcome loss even in our spiritual lives due to poor decision making, causing us to have ‘wrong ideas of God and the church,’ In evaluating our sins and evil doing without grieving these losses result in disillusionment. In my divorce I learnt to forgive my husband, myself and all those who were involved in damaging this relationship. I had to take on my own responsibilities. This account is meant to encourage us to trust the living God with the many mini-deaths that we experience in our lives.”⁴ Living with decisions made by all involved, I know that God is a healer and deliverer.

In Chapter 6, Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath has had a crucial effect on my life. “What is more important than the number of offices each day is that our time with God be unhurried so that what we read or pray has time to sink deeply into our spirits .”⁵ The practice of the daily office and Sabbath, allowing God to have his time with me, a time set aside to grow and be restored into a covenant relationship with my Lord and Savior. Jesus demonstrated to me through the scriptures the importance of the Sabbath, how to rest and quiet

3 (Scazzero 2017), p 62

4 Ibid, p136

5 Ibid, p 147

times before the Lord trusting him to do what he promises in our lives. “We wanted to move people from defensiveness, reactivity, and fear to openness, empathy, and vulnerability.”⁶ This practice has aided me in my personal walk with God and with counselling families, marriages, and the youth. Truth on the inward part and being able to bare your soul at times, opens up the gateway to issue in the spirit of God, by demonstrating his love and grace being expressed in our current circumstances. “The great, buried gift in a Rule of Life is its goal of regulating our entire lives in such a way that we truly prefer the love of Christ above all things .⁷”

The Spiritual Gifts test analysis revealed several gifts that are currently active in my life. Prophecy, teaching, and wisdom are listed as the first three. In reality, these are the strongest gifts that engulf the call that is on my life. Looking at the remaining scores there are several other gifts that are a constant part of my life. I am dedicated in faith, healing, Pastoring, administration, tongues interpreting, and helps (humbling gift). These qualities are an active part of a born-again Christian. Several of the gifts are manifested by demonstrating both God’s love and grace. I notice that as I use the talents God has given me, I am humbled to see the qualities God has birthed in my heart to serve and love in the fear of God. We continue to preach that the world is looking for the manifestation of the sons of God. Working to bring forward deliverance in someone’s life, by presenting the word of faith. I understand that it is my mission as a missionary to prayer for my fellow men. I have heard many people state the quote, “The gift comes without repentance” (Roman 11:29). This is a testimony to the church that the promises of God to Abraham, is still active today in our lives, a promise for salvation. Jesus is still alive bringing forward our deliverance, and salvation, fulfilling the promises of God in his word.

6 Ibid, p 178

7 Ibid, p 193

Learning Modalities showed my strengths as being first Visual (7), Auditory (2) and finally Tactual-Kinesthetic (1). My facial expressions show my emotions, I do not believe in putting on a mask, even at times when it can be interpreted as being indifferent. It can at times be a conversational piece, giving me leave to express my opinion and even clarifying my true feelings on matters. I call it being real. I am saddened at other people's calamities, sickness, loss, and I do not see this as a weakness. I smile and laugh to reveal joy and enthusiasm at people's accomplishments. It is hard sometimes to not show my displeasure when someone is being harsh or hurtful to someone. However, when I speak my position, it still radiates in God grace and love. Reminding myself and others that we all have sinned and require the grace of God in our lives.

The Spiritual Well Being (SWB) Scale revealed a strong spiritual overall well-being (110). It showed I have a positive view of my relationship with God (60). The SWB scale also showed that I am highly satisfied with my life and look with expectation on my future walk with God. The questions asked on evaluation caused me to do a full evaluation of my true feelings toward my walk with God in a way that it helps me to pray even more for a deeper view of questionable insecurities still present in my life. I want to draw even closer to God. It can also be used to identify areas I need growth in. Honest evaluations are another tool of humility to keep us grounded.

I took the accurate Enneagram test to differentiate my three top types out of 9 personality types. My personality types were the Helper (2), the Reformer (1), and the Enthusiast (7). These three personality types register well in my self-evaluation. I was taught from a child the benefits of helping others. My parents and grandparents have taken in children and sometimes families to aid them in transitions. Through salvation, the principles that Jesus and his disciples

demonstrates strength in stabilizing families and communities. I had a strong support system and strive to be a strong support system to my family and others. I have seen through salvation and deliverance, how God can restore homes, relationships and even people's very lives. So I strive to teach my children, grandchildren and others strong moral values, faith and responsibility to themselves and their families. As a parent I am a good listener and established a trusting and loving relationship with my children, my love for them is unconditional. This is the grace and love God shows to us, his grace is sufficient, and love covers all sins.

As an Enthusiast I am optimistic, outgoing, and sometimes adventurous in trying to make a difference in the world. I believe that one person showing the love and grace of God can motivate others to seek after the kingdom of God for these values in their lives. I am open to conversation and even criticism to give me a greater insight on how to make the world a better place. I sometimes take on too much, until my own desires and wants become secondary to others.

So in reviewing this process as detailed as it has been was beneficial to me and my ministerial duties. Using these different resources to evaluate my spiritual gifts and emotional spiritual health in the presence of the Lord reassures me that I am on the right path to a closer more effective spiritual walk with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The assessments identified much of my current and desired spiritual gifts, identifying strengths and weaknesses.

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