

What is the State of Your Soul?

A Self-Assessment for Greater Awareness

Your soul is worth caring for. Jesus asks the questions, “What benefit is it to gain the whole world but lose your own soul? (Mark 8:36, NLT).” Your soul is the integrated whole of who you are, and is of the greatest value to Jesus. We do well to be intentional about and attentive to our souls, so we don’t lose track of this deep, great gift.

So, when we speak of the human soul, we are speaking of the real you at the deepest level of your life and power as a human being. Our souls are the engines of our life; our operating systems.

The definition of “soul care” from the American Association of Christian Counselors is literally “caring for and curing the very breath that gives us life.” It is tending to the deepest needs of your person, of your soul.

The soul must be kept. (Deuteronomy 4:9)

The soul searches for God. (Deuteronomy 4:29)

The soul serves God. (Joshua 22:5)

The soul thirsts/needs. (Psalm 63:1)

The soul must be guarded. (Proverbs 4:23)

The soul is immortal. (Matthew 10:28)

The soul needs to be strengthened. (Acts 14:21-22)

Below is an exercise to help you become aware of the state of your soul. Awareness helps you notice when something doesn’t fit maybe in a relationship or in an environment. You’re able to notice the effects of life and what you’re feeling. You can then turn toward the Lord with this awareness and offer it to Him who is the “Shepherd and Guardian of your souls” (1 Peter 2:26, NLT).

Dallas Willard says, in *Renovation of the Heart*, “Fundamental aspects of life such as art, sleep, sex, ritual, family (‘family of origin’), parenting, community, health and meaningful work are in fact soul functions and they fail and fall apart to the degree that soul diminishes.”

In preparation for this exercise, consider the fruits of the Spirit in this list as conditions of soul health. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is a “dull experience” and 10 is a “vibrant experience,” where would you put your current experience of each of the fruits of the Spirit? Place each fruit on the number line given here:



“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23, NLT).”

What feelings emerge for you as you place the fruit of the Spirit on this scale? Write these feelings next to each fruit of the Spirit as they come to mind.

Some emotions we experience as negative (such as frustration, anger, worry, anxiety, fear, shame) could be related to soul neglect. When we notice peace, joy, gratitude, contentment, and excitement that centers on the Lord, these may be related to soul health. It’s okay to feel any and all of these. The point is awareness, so that we can relate with Jesus around how our soul is presently doing. It’s not so that we can fix or focus on what we can do. It’s offering the state of our soul to Jesus and allowing His Spirit to work within us.

Take some time now to consider the state of your soul. These may come from the above preparation exercise, from considering your self-worth, your sense of belonging or isolation, or your ways certain activity levels are nourishing or withering your soul. You could also consider one of the Scriptures about the soul on the previous page and ask God to use it as a mirror for your soul.

What do you notice in your soul today? Is your soul neglected or is it healthy? For the exercise below, draw 2 columns (or use ours). One column represents soul health, the other soul neglect. Take 30-45 minutes or more to list the symptoms you’re currently noticing.

After making your list in each column, circle up to three in each column that are most pronounced in your mind and heart and offer these to the Lord.

Soul Neglect	Soul Health