

I really hate medical checkups. I know, “hate” is such a strong word and we shouldn’t use it, **right?** Get over it – I **hate** medical checkups! You know why I hate them? Because they always reveal what I know, or mostly know, already! Can I get an Amen? Am I preaching to the choir?!

See, moving to Saratoga Springs meant we had to find a new family doctor, and that meant that we had to make appointments to see the doctor, and that meant seeing the doctor, and that meant blood work and physicals, and that meant seeing the doctor again for the follow-up appointment, and that meant one more co-pay (to be paid at time of appointment). And that means I **hate** medical checkups! Phew! Got that off my chest – I feel better now...

So as I’m listening to the doctor, he’s telling me things about me that I already know, like: overweight, cholesterol (although my good cholesterol is good – go figure?) my triglycerides are too high, my blood sugar is elevated – *“Okay doc, I get it, I’m a walking corpse! Let me go pick out my plot at the cemetery now...”*

Okay, so maybe that’s all a little bit dramatic – But the results of my medical checkup have a lot of room for improvement. And although I knew that these issues were most likely there, I wasn’t willing to face them until someone got in my face and showed me the data. So now I have a choice: A). either heed the doctors’ instructions and make some life adjustments, or B). face the medical consequences that are sure to come as a result. Hmm, I think I’ll chose option A!

Here’s the thing – It’s the same for our spiritual health. I’ve been around long enough to realize that I pretty much have a good idea where I stand spiritually as it relates to my relational health with God – But, often I don’t wanna face reality... It’s times like these that I am desperate need of a “spiritual checkup” and the greatest place I know to get that is through extended times spent in God’s Word followed up with extended times on my face before God, allowing the Holy Spirit to exam my heart, my mind and get a clear picture of where I’m at. It’s hard and sometimes painful, but oh so necessary for us to become the masterpiece that God intended for us to become...

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10)

There’s an awesome video that my daughter Stephanie sent me a few weeks back – It’s found at www.tangle.com and if you scroll down the homepage you’ll find a video titled “God’s Chisel.” I would highly recommend you watching that video.

Furthermore, what a perfect opportunity summer affords us to allow God the Holy Spirit to examine our lives and reveal our conditions so that we can make the changes necessary to be His masterpiece. I’m dedicating the month of August to doing just that – Extended times in the Word of God and on my face before Him.

By the way, I have a follow-up with my doctor in early September, so I also need to spend the month of August putting into practice some of the things that he and I talked about to correct some of the health issues that are creeping up on me.

Be Strong, Be Courageous, Be Fearless – and remember...

Christ **IS** All!

Pastor Mark