

New Years MOT

Yesterday I was on my drive, the bonnet of my car open and a leaky radiator and the phone rang.

It was mum. She phoned to tell me that Dad was ill in bed and would not be able to be at church in the morning and he was down to preach. Today is the first Sunday of the year 2009. Today was going to be a vision for the coming year.

We'll have to wait until next week for that, but please be praying for Dad that he will recover quickly and God will inspire him on what to bring next week.

So yesterday afternoon, I thought, hmm, **what does God want to say to us a church today.**

finished pouring the RadWeld into my radiator, hoping that it would work, we'll see over the next day or so. It probably will need a new radiator. ☹️

My delight of last weeks **MOT pass** has been slightly diminished, **as my car gets older it seems it always needs things doing to it.** Radiator Leak, Oil Leak, new battery and a few other things.

Why am I telling you this, well last week we looked back to 2008 and thanked God for what he had done for us individually and as a church. And next week we'll be looking at the vision for the coming year. **So today I think it is a good time to do a bit of a spiritual MOT**

Many people do **New year's resolutions.** Have you made any this week? How is it going so far? **Has anyone made a resolution and failed already??**

Most new years resolutions include some kind of physical aspect of life, eg losing weight, or quitting smoking, or keeping fitter.

The bible says in 1 Tim 4:8 ["For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."](#)

So what sort of shape are we in? We need to be more concerned about our Spiritual condition above our physical condition.

I'd like you to take a couple of minutes just to think "how are you doing?" Is there anything that needs fixing so you will pass an MOT?

So what does the bible have to say. We have said in the past that God's concern is not our character but our comfort.

[Galatians 5 13](#)You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. [14](#)The entire law is summed up in a single command: "**Love your neighbour as yourself.**" [15](#)If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Life by the Spirit

[16](#)So I say, **live by the Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. [17](#)For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. [18](#)But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

19The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; **20**idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, **selfish ambition**, dissensions, factions **21**and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness and self-control**. Against such things there is no law. **24**Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. **25**Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. **26**Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

1 Tim 6:11 **“pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”**

1 Peter 1

Making One's Calling and Election Sure

3His divine power has given us everything **we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him** who called us by his own glory and goodness. **4**Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your **faith, goodness**; and to goodness, **knowledge**; **6**and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**; **7**and to godliness, **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness, **love**. **8**For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, **they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ**. **9**But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

10Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, **11**and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We have seen some of what the bible says about characteristics we should possess, **what can we do to make sure we are exhibiting these characteristics?**

Firstly I'd like to say that it is not what we do that gains Gods' approval but what Jesus has done. However we **still have a responsibility to live a certain way**, and all the things we will look at now aren't things we should look at as a chore or a duty, **but as things we get to do, things we want to do, because we want to be more godly, to be more like Jesus.**

It is **Jesus that drives all we do**, It is the things he is passionate about that we are passionate about.

So what can we do to make sure we can pass our Spiritual MOT.

1. We need to assess where we are. **Do this honestly.**
2. We then need to decide what needs fixing. **Is there anything in our lives that is not working as it should?**
3. Work at these areas. **Get someone in to help**, are you accountable with someone?

James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

4. Rely on the Holy Spirit to help you be more like Jesus.

Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

We always need to remember that **our relationship with God is our primary relationship**. If this is not the case we need to change a few things. I'm afraid to say that **our familys, friends etc do not come above God in importance for us**. But **how much time do we spend with these people, and how much time do we spend with God?**

What things can we do practically to grow our relationship with God?

Spend time with him.

Talk to him – **Prayer** – Colossians 1 9For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. 10And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully

Paul is concerned about their spiritual growth. **Our prayers should be similar**, not just for temporal things.

Learn about him – **Read the Bible** - 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work."

We want to be competent, and equipped don't we?

Acts 17 11Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

How much time do we spend reading the Bible?

This year I have set myself the task of reading the whole bible, there are many ways of doing this....

Put into practice what we are learning –

Build strong relationships with others – Marriages, parents children, friends – accountability.

Serve others.

Why is this important for us?

Well as we look forward to 2009, as a people who are living lives with Godly characteristics then we will surely see God working in our lives, the lives of other people in this church, and importantly lives of people who don't yet know Jesus.

I want to be part of an effective church don't you. If we are going to be one, it starts with us, all of us individually and corporately.