

Spiritual Health Check

Introducing the Spiritual Health Check.

As part of our yearly rhythms, we want to encourage everyone to take a moment to pause, to reflect and review and to identify growth areas for the future. To help us all do this, we've put together a Spiritual Health Check to help you reflect and review how you're doing in your walk with Jesus. This tool isn't the only thing that can help you examine your walk with Jesus – there are loads out there! But the Spiritual Health Check can be a good place to start.

Why do we need a Spiritual Health Check?

Disciples of Jesus are called to progress in our spiritual lives, to grow and to stay healthy. Sometimes that's easier said than done. But it's the goal of our lives, nonetheless. If we're called to grow, we need things to help us keep an eye on how we're growing. Your car may need a service and MOT each year in a similar way. The MOT might flag up things that may need repairing or need some attention in the future. A Spiritual Health Check works in the same way – it gives us a way of detecting things in our spiritual lives that may need some adjustment or repair.

So, if our spiritual health and growth is the goal, what does that look like? The most spiritually healthy and spiritually alive person is Jesus. In other words, being spiritually healthy looks like becoming more like Jesus. He is the perfect image of what it means to be truly human – someone who loves God with their whole heart and loves other people.

On top of all that, we believe that God cares about our holistic wellbeing – our emotional, social, spiritual, mental and physical wholeness. These different aspects of our humanity overlap and impact each other. If one is out of whack, it can affect the others. With that in mind, we've put together this Spiritual Health Check to help us think holistically about our spiritual health.

There are three components to the Spiritual Health Check to help you reflect on how you're doing. They are: cisterns, systems, and circles. Let's look at these one by one.

CISTERNS

In the bible, a cistern was an underground water reservoir for drinking and watering crops. If the cistern is full, you can drink, you and your family will be healthy, and your crops can be watered even if it hasn't rained for months. But, if your cistern is cracked or empty, you can't store water and you won't be able to drink or water your crops. In a similar way, there are several unseen cisterns in our lives that we need to tend to. There are at least three: spiritual, physical, and emotional.

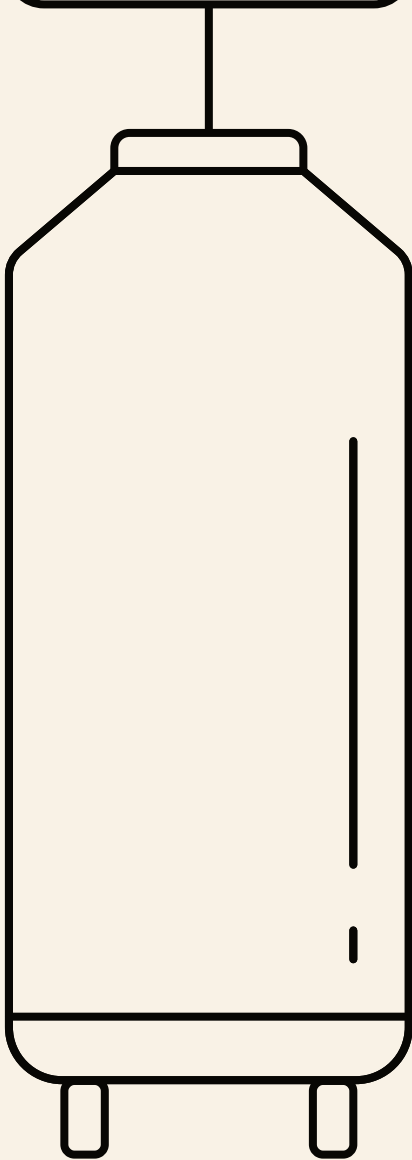
These cisterns interlock and overlap – we can't divide ourselves into spiritual, physical, and emotional categories. We're holistic beings. But, for the purpose of this Spiritual Health Check, it can be helpful to separate them out to help us think about each one in turn.

Take a moment to pause, to breathe slowly, to relax. And then, ask yourself these questions on the next page and jot down your response next to them. You may also want to draw a line to indicate how full (or empty) your cisterns are at the moment. If any of the three cisterns are low, we may start to exhibit low functioning behaviour, we may begin to feel inadequate or insecure and our relationships with God and one another can be affected.

Cisterns

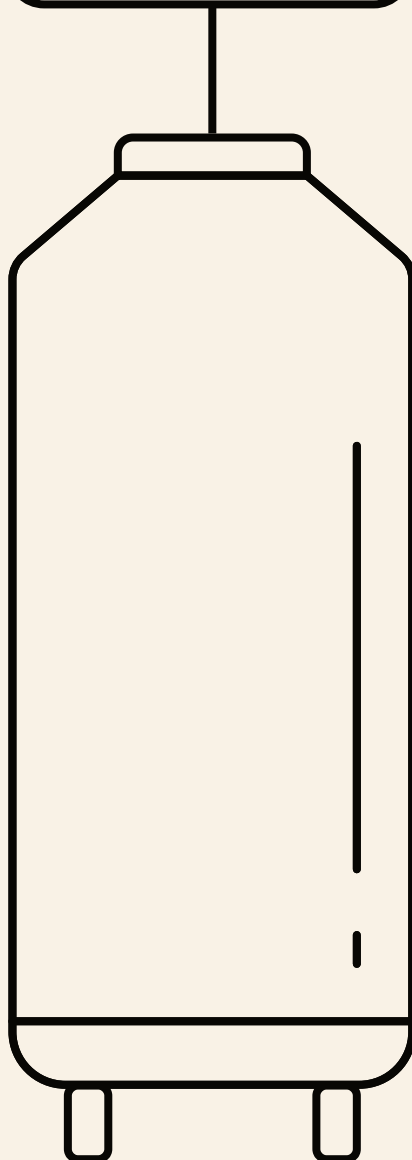
EMOTIONAL CISTERN

How is your mental health? How are you emotionally? How are your relationships with your family and your co-workers?



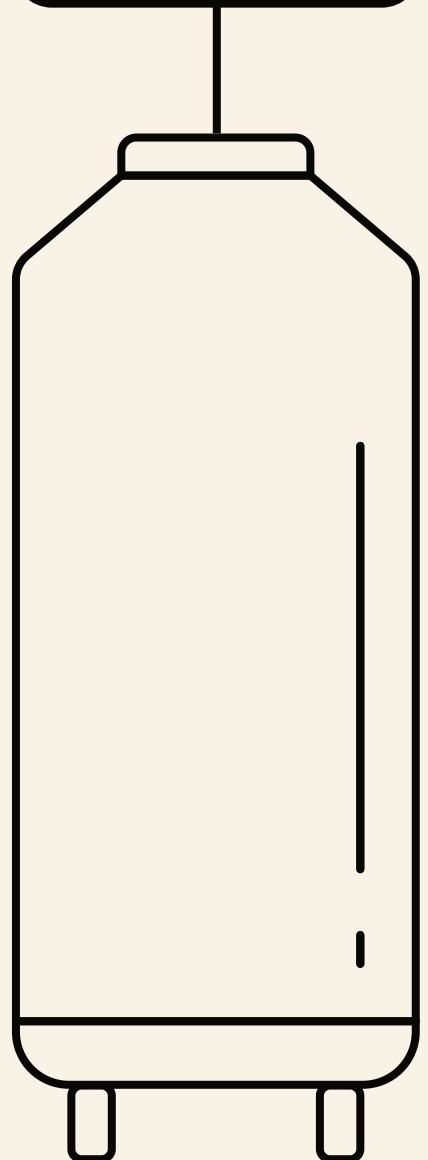
PHYSICAL CISTERN

Do you feel healthy or run down?



SPIRITUAL CISTERN

How would you describe your relationship with God? How are you doing in your walk with Him?



SYSTEMS

The systems in our lives are the habits or routines that either drain or fill our cisterns. James Clear who has written several books on habits once said that, 'we don't rise the level of our goals, we fall to the level of our systems.' In other words, James is suggesting that unless we have systems that project us towards our goals then we will never meet any of our goals.

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JAMES CLEAR

In the New Year most of us tend to make a 'New Year's Resolution.' According to ABC News, 80% of people who make a New Year's Resolution have lost their motivation for it or given up altogether by mid-February. Why do so many of us fail to reach the goals we set for ourselves? We fail because we fall to the level of our systems.

The issue is our systems, not our goals. That said, the goal is big, and we can't do it on our own. The ultimate goal of the Christian life is to grow in Christlikeness - someone who increasingly loves God and loves people.

What habits or systems are going to help you fill those cisterns? This question is at the heart of our thinking behind Grow - the way we do discipleship at Bay Church. This is a good moment to encourage you to revisit the Grow Guide if you haven't for a while. Take some time now to reevaluate your daily, weekly and monthly habits - are they helping you fill and maintain the levels in your cisterns?

CIRCLES

How do we maintain our systems? We think the best environment to maintain our systems is in the right circles. Our circles are the people we invite to speak into our lives, to encourage and challenge us.

The theologian A.W Tozer has a book about seven rules for self-discovery. The sixth rule is all about 'the company you keep.' You may have heard the saying, 'show me your friends and I'll show you your future.' The scriptures also refer to the quality of the company that we keep. In Proverbs 11:14 the writer says, 'where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in an abundance of counsellors there is safety.'

Who are the people in your life who will encourage and challenge you? Have you been intentional about who those people are? Do they know that they have permission to speak into your life in this special way?

We think it can be helpful to be intentional about who these people are. How we engage with people who encourage and challenge us may look different from person to person. But one of the ways that we're trying to encourage relationships like these at Bay Church is through Tables. Tables are groups of three who meet once a month to check in with one another and encourage and challenge one another. For more information about Tables and how to join one, head over to bay.church/tables

How are the circles in your life? Are there people in your life that can keep you accountable to the systems you have in place to help you reach your goals? How can you be more intentional about inviting the voices of others into your life who will encourage and challenge you?

Circles

