



Spiritual Tickets!



“Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do.

Remember, the Lord is coming soon.”

The Apostle Paul | Philippians 4:4-5 (NLT)

Cruising along country roads headed home from college, the conditions were ripe to speed. Finals behind me, friends, and fun awaiting, I was ready for a break... the sooner the better! Darkness had fallen and I was pushing 75-80 mph. Suddenly I saw lights in my

mirror. Ugh. Guilty... what else could I say? Interestingly, a guy had been following me and the officer pulled him over too. His excuse? He was just following my lead because his speedometer was broken. Guilty just the same. **Ticket!**

I was pulled over again recently. Not by a police officer, this time by the Spirit of the Lord. "Where's your joy?" A quick check revealed that my "Joy Tank" was running on vapors. Guilty. Like that guy who followed me way back when, the Lord caught me following the joyless world around me instead of watching my own gauge. **Ticket!**

*Reflect: **How full is my Joy Tank?***

The Spirit continued... "What are you worried about?"

*"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand."
The Apostle Paul (Philippians 4:6-7)*

My list seemed endless... health, family, economy, crime, government, terrorism, environment... My "Peace Light" was flashing red and I'd been ignoring it. Though I'd been praying, I'd lost sight of who I was praying to, his enormity and sovereignty (is he not trustworthy?) I'd been asking and asking but never with thanksgiving... (has he not already saved me from hell?) **Ticket!**

Consider: I get Spiritual Tickets when my eyes are not fixed on the Lord's priorities.

As if hit by a one-two punch, I was deeply humbled. It never feels good to be ticketed. I remember how anxious I was after being ticketed on that drive back from college. I kept close watch on my speedometer thinking it would be horrible to be pulled over again. Likewise, I reset my gaze on what's most important to the Lord and began checking my gauges regularly. I didn't want to be pulled over again!

*"And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise."
The Apostle Paul (Philippians 4:8)*

My Joy Tank began to fill and my Peace Light edged toward green as I focused on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Ahhh... I was in a much better place than I had been in, but the Spirit wasn't quite finished with me yet...

Imagine: My "Mission-O-Meter" increasing daily.

"What have you done to advance your Mission today?" Caught again... When I checked my "Mission-O-Meter" it was clear that I'd allowed myself to become distracted. I'd lost my zeal for this good work! By

allowing my Joy Tank become depleted and my Peace Light to flash red, I was in no position to focus on advancing my Mission. I wasn't making it a daily top priority. **Ticket!**

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works." The Apostle Paul (Titus 2:11-14 ESV)

Painful and humbling, my tickets set me on a purifying course correction. My focus had drifted away from what was true, lovely, and Godly making me unfruitful. Praise the Lord... I needed to be ticketed!

What are your spiritual gages reading right now?

Remember, not wanting your life to be barren, the Lord won't hesitate to pull you over and issue...

Spiritual Tickets!

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- How full is my Joy Tank? What evidence does everyone see?
- What color is my Peace Light flashing? Am I praying with a heart of thanksgiving?
- What will I do to advance my Mission daily so that my Mission-O-Meter reading increases?
- How will I regularly track my spiritual gauges?

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Check My Gauges

“Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of genuine faith.

The Apostle Paul | 2 Corinthians 2:5 (NLT)



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