

# Indicators and Location, Location, Location...

By B. D. Tate

For years I have been motivated to expose the hindrances in our life so that we could move from them towards God. For example, I have said, "If we don't know God's will for our life that is an indicator that we are not where God wants us." Such a statement was meant to get us to look at ourselves so that we can see the need to move forward in God; however, such a statement can leave someone feeling defeated, discouraged, heavy hearted with guilt or burdened because they do not know God's will for their life nor do they know how to find it. The very statement intended to prod in the right direction can be used to deflate and cast down in the opposite direction.

It is messages of exhortation that can leave others feeling down and discouraged about their life. Exhortation to move on, to not stay in the same place, to recognize sin, to be aware of the pit falls, traps, and deceptions, only seem to serve as reminders of how far some are from God. Instead of seeing the problem and taking steps to avoid or get out from under it, many feel beaten down, trapped, and unmotivated. Guilt and condemnation come exposing their lack of spiritual life, lack of faith, or lack of God's love. This doesn't free them it only seems to repeat a mantra of powerlessness within them to change. Many would rather focus on what they are doing right, what *is* going right, what God has done and is doing in their life **than consider the source of hindrances in their life.**

This process has been discouraging for me too. I seem very motivated to shed the light on those things that are preventing growth and fruitfulness in our lives only to see it keep others down. It is like a coach that is always criticizing the performance of his players in order to make them better so they will improve only to have it discourage them and see their performance go down. **Encouragement is far better a motivator than criticism.**

Lately I have seen a different approach that seemed to be lacking in the first effort to expose hindrances. The need to expose the hindrances is so that they can be addressed. If hindrances remain such as unbelief, our faith will be challenged within our own hearts and the results of our walk will be mixed. The truth sets us free but exposing the **hindrances without a proper perspective** seems to do the opposite and keep people down.

**What is the proper perspective? The whole purpose of exposure is not to condemn but to locate us in relationship to God.** The Law of Moses was given in essence to show us our need for a savior. The law condemns us in sin, we cannot escape from sin by our own efforts, and therefore we need help. **The more we know the law, the more we see our shortcoming, the more we see the need for a savior.** The law can be blunt, brutally truthful, exposing us to embarrassment in our self centeredness and pride. Our human response is to deny the law or to excuse our failing; yet, if we are honest we stand condemned. In our condemnation we are burdened, guilty, oppressed by our sin nature, feeling self loathing, self rejection, and not believing God will accept us— leading us to alienation. To summarize, the law was meant to

tutor us and bring us to Jesus our savior because we know we can't keep it.

**The law locates us as sinners and unacceptable to God.** It explains why our relationship to God is distant, isolated, and separated. Each area of transgression indicates our lack of something. If we confess and agree then come to God on His terms through the blood of Christ we are changed, forgiven, healed, delivered, and stand in right relationship to him.

**The law's main purpose as a tutor is accomplished when anyone comes to Christ for salvation;** yet how many avoid the law, argue against it, deny its authority, change its meanings, and interpret it so as to excuse them from it, or pretend that they are keeping it? Some go so far as to say there is no law of God only what men have created and guilt is a product of religion imprinted oppressively on the hearts of children and weak persons to control and manipulate others.

We have often preached the law in our sermons in order to expose sin feeling that the truth will profit others. What others feel is guilt and condemnation and a burden that only weighs them down. I am guilty of this I am sure. The proper perspective changes this unfortunate response and gives it the right direction. **What is the right direction? To think that all exposure to sin, recognition of hindrances, unbelief, doubt, fear, love of the world, etc. are not to beat down anyone, nor is the exhorters intent to burden, but to use these indicators to help locate our hearts so that we can move towards God.**

Indicators are helps to locate where we are so that we can see what we need to do to move us in the right direction. As

simple as this may sound I can say honestly that I have not seen it so clearly until now. I have found new vigor, purpose, and clarity to overcome the exhorter's common pitfall I've been trying to describe. There is a spiritual motivation, yearning, longing to expose our hindrances not to discourage, not to beat down, not to condemn or make others feel guilty; **but so that others will see the problem through the indicators, locate their heart and address it.**

**The purpose is location, location, location, because without it we could not see where we are in relationship to God or His will, and move in the right direction.**

This is what has been attempted with my teaching without describing this clearly when revealing the need to address our weeds. Consider this verse: (Eph 6:16) ***“...above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”*** The fiery darts are those things we have embraced in our heart that have become the weeds of unbelief. Unbelief is strictly our inability to believe God's word. We know what God promised but we don't believe it will happen. Unbelief, as opposed to doubt which essentially means we don't know God's will concerning a matter, knows what God's will is, but doesn't see it happening. These weeds produce in us fear, worry, anxiety, frustration, failure, that seems to grip us deep within. Unbelief are the thoughts, values, imaginations that are contrary to God's Word and will. Within our heart if we allow these weeds to remain, grow, and multiply, will hinder our ability to walk in faith, boldness, and productivity. We must address our weeds in order to remove them, reduce their influence, and overcome our fears. In exposing our weeds we might be overwhelmed to see so

many and that can be discouraging; however, it is the first step towards overcoming them. **We are beginning to recognize the indicators that are revealing our heart's condition.** The parable of the sower and seed speaks to this greatly. Our fruitfulness is directly related to our willingness to address those things that hinder, choke, distract, deceive, or dissuade the word of God from being planted and growing in our heart.

We are the guardians of our hearts but if we don't know what we are looking for, what the indicators are, we won't discern or exercise our authority to guard it. The problem as I see it now is that efforts to expose the indicators **have not been strongly connected to the purpose of locating our heart.** Without this connection many have been discouraged by the exposure feeling guilty, condemned, and come away burdened.

Now that the connection is made I see a renewed understanding and enthusiasm to address our weeds because that is the only way to move towards God. **We'll stop** letting guilt, fear, embarrassment, condemnation, or burdens of inferiority, keep us from exposure because we know it **locates our heart.** When we can locate our heart then we can address it with the Word of God and change what is influencing it.

When I focused on what I was afraid of, I was paying attention to the ***indicators from my heart***. I wrote down most if not all of my fears, worries, and anxieties (weeds) and discovered a great lesson as to why my faith results are so mixed. I discovered from my own heart that I actually believed things in ***defiance*** of the Word of God. I found three categories of unbelief and none of them were pretty. I found that I, a Christian born

again, filled with Spirit, a pastor for twenty years, who loved God, knew faith in many ways, preached, led others to the Lord, had experienced miracles and some healing power of God, yet was calling God a liar, committing spiritual adultery, and blaspheming the power of the Spirit. This was a rude awakening and cause of grief and tears. Each fear I wrote down penetrated deeply into my heart that's how I knew it was there and each one in essence committed sin against the one I claimed to love and trust. How is it possible? Some of these fears have been with me since childhood, some come from past failures, some come from the burden of life, and some come from hearing and valuing what others think or what the world teaches, the list goes on.

As I finally paid attention to each indicator and listed the weeds I could clearly see I was not where God wanted me to be. I could also see the difference between what my heart believed and what the Word of God says. **By locating my heart in the wrong place I could now direct it to the right place. Therefore the bad news helped locate my heart so that I could take it to the good news.** Over a period of weeks and months in reading and meditating upon the answers to my weeds from the Word of God I begin to experience a change in my believing. I woke up one morning finding myself being a **believing believer!**

I think a **practical test** is a good way to bring this location issue to light. The following is a list of statements, questions, and answers which people say; read them, and then locate them according the Word of God.

- 1) "If God wants me to speak in tongues, I will; but not everyone does."
- 2) "God is sovereign, I believe in healing, but it is up to God, sometimes God holds back."

- 3) "How do you fit dinosaurs into the Bible?"
- 4) "Why didn't God heal my father?"
- 5) "No matter what happens, you've just got to have faith."
- 6) "There is a reason for everything, that's what I believe."
- 7) "What if I lay hands on someone to heal them and it doesn't work?"
- 8) "Why is God holding back? I pray, I believe, I'm doing everything I can."
- 9) "You'll never know you just have to trust God."
- 10) "God's timing, in God's timing, I'll just have to wait."
- 11) "I'm only human; I'm doing the best I can."
- 12) "May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord give you peace."
- 13) "Lord, please come and be with us today."
- 14) "Why doesn't the Lord provide for me like He does for others?"
- 15) "God must want me to suffer, I'm sick because it's my thorn in the flesh."
- 16) "If God wants me to have that job I'll have it but if he doesn't then there is something else for me."
- 17) "Lord, I pray if it be your will that my children would be saved and protected."
- 18) "I'm afraid that God won't do it."
- 19) "If God be for me who can stand against me?"
- 20) "Maybe God didn't answer because he's testing your faith?"
- 21) "I'm afraid God won't answer because I don't have enough faith."
- 22) "I don't feel like it, I'm tired, and this faith thing is too hard."
- 23) "Nothing happens that God doesn't allow."
- 24) "God is against me, so many things are going wrong!"
- 25) "Why doesn't God move when I pray; he said whatever I ask in Jesus' name he would do?"
- 26) "Why doesn't God heal Billy Graham? If it is God's will to heal everyone certainly God would heal this man because of his great faith and love."

Some Answers or Responses:

- 1) *"If God wants me to speak in tongues, I will; but not everyone does."*  
It's not up to God it is up to us; if we decide to operate, seek, and experience the gifts in greater degree we'll have to pursue it and take

the steps of faith. Everyone experiences many of the gifts of the Spirit without knowing it, God is not going to speak over your will...not everyone prays in the spirit because they don't want to.

- 2) *"God is sovereign, I believe in healing, but it is up to God, sometimes God holds back."* God is sovereign according to His Word, God healed everyone in the atonement, God has done all He can do by giving us all that He is, His love, grace, name, power, peace, joy, etc...we are the ones who don't receive it and act accordingly.
- 3) *"How do you fit dinosaurs into the Bible?"* We don't fit dinosaurs into the Bible because what we've been told about them is wrong. The Bible explains dinosaurs as land creatures that were created on the sixth day; they were in Noah's ark; they are described in Job, Isaiah, and the Psalms as dragons, Leviathan, Behemoth, fiery serpents, flying serpents... (The Word Dinosaurs is a contemporary word).
- 4) *"Why didn't God heal my father?"* God did in the cross, in Christ 2,000 years ago; the right question is why didn't your father receive it? What hindered him or others from healing Him in Jesus' name?
- 5) *"No matter what happens, you've just got to have faith."* We are not to act like doormats but subject ourselves to God and resist the devil; we are to exercise dominion and faith in the grace God has authorized us to have in Jesus.
- 6) *"There is a reason for everything, that's what I believe."* This may sound spiritual but it lacks focus and understanding that we do have from the Word; in the world there is suffering, temptations, and trials but be of good cheer Jesus has overcome the world; in Christ there is another kind of suffering; also, God wants us to know His will and be transformed by it (Rom. 12:1-3).
- 7) *"What if I lay hands on someone to heal them and it doesn't work?"* "What if" reflects unbelief in our heart; we are not convinced that Jesus has healed us all; we are not seeing that our job is to rebuke the disease and suffering because they are healed already; praying for someone might mean praying and rebuking it again and again; finally, everyone must be willing to receive, we can't override another's will.
- 8) *"Why is God holding back? I pray, I believe, I'm doing everything I can."* God isn't holding back, this reflects what we really do believe that God hasn't done his part yet; we must be convinced in the will of God that



God has done his part, healing, saving, providing, protecting, now we go in his name and in His Spirit with full confidence to overcome the rebellious circumstances by faith and grace.

- 9) *"You'll never know you just have to trust God."* Our ignorance has been our greatest problem; we are supposed to know God's will through His Word and Spirit; The Spirit knows, faith knows, the Word knows and when we do we experience His peace, His power, and His love that casts out all fears.
- 10) *"God's timing, in God's timing, I'll just have to wait."* There is seed, time, and harvest principles involved, space and time, human responses, etc...But God is waiting on us to take His Word and Spirit to overcome the world in His name...today is the day of salvation in all that it means.
- 11) *"I'm only human; I'm doing the best I can."* It is true we are only human and can do only our best but that is not the only truth! We are not without God! We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us...we are not supposed to walk like mere men anymore.
- 12) *"May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord give you peace."* This Old Testament prayer is God's Word but does not apply to the New Testament times because we are now under a better covenant wrought in the grace that comes to us in Christ Jesus. The Lord has blessed us; the Lord keeps us; the Lord provided all that we need for life and godliness... (II Pet. 1-3). Jesus said, "I give you my peace..." we already have it if we have Him! We must speak, act, and think in agreement with God's New Covenant.
- 13) **"Lord, please come and be with us today."** This prayer is very common but it lacks genuine faith because it is based in unbelief that God never leaves us nor forsakes us!
- 14) *"Why doesn't the Lord provide for me like He does for others?"* Although we are not all called in the same way to do that same things in our natural way of life; we are all called to fulfill the great commission to preach and heal the sick...regardless of our personal gifts this question denies that God has already provide (II Pet. 1-3) and accuses indirectly of God playing favorites—which God shows personal favoritism to no man...Jesus said to seek first the kingdom of God all things will be added unto us...all our needs.

- 15) *“God must want me to suffer, I’m sick because it’s my thorn in the flesh.”* We are called to suffer in the same way that Christ did (Phil. 3:10)...resist temptations, deny our sinful nature, and obey God (Phil 2:5-7); yet, Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law and overcame the world for us, we are not supposed to suffer for our sins; Paul’s thorn in the flesh was a **messenger of Satan** to disrupt his ministry trying to keep the apostle from being so successful...it was not sickness or disease but persecution and tribulations for the gospel’s sake.
- 16) *“If God wants me to have that job I’ll have it but if he doesn’t then there is something else for me.”* The word if means we don’t know, that places us in a position of doubt...James tells us that if we are double minded we’ll receive nothing from God. We need to seek God in order to know His will, our first job isn’t what we do for a living it is to fulfill the two fold commission to make disciples and heal the sick...God cares about what we do and how we do it, but our first priority is the kingdom of God.
- 17) *“Lord, I pray if it be your will that my children would be saved and protected.”* There is no prayer in scripture where we are instructed to pray “if it be thy will.” We are to know God’s will and certainly the protection and salvation of our children is already stated. God is not willing that any should perish, including our children, but that all should come to repentance. Psalm 91 is all about protection from the Old Testament and the New Testament position is far better.
- 18) *“I’m afraid that God won’t do it.”* This is unbelief sometimes from a wounded spirit, hurt from trying to trust God but not receiving the answers sought. Fear that God won’t comes from past failures, not understanding that God is also limited by our heart’s condition, rebellion in this world, demonic obstruction, people, fear, and doubt. God has already heard, already done, He is not slack concerning His promise as some count slackness, but is longsuffering towards us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. This quoted verse speaks to the fact that God is waiting on us to believe him.
- 19) *“If God be for me who can stand against me?”* This is a verse in scripture, and one of the times that the word is used in a positive way

bringing our attention to the truth that God is for us in Christ Jesus. The issue then becomes are we in Christ? Are we in agreement with God's Word and promises? For God to be for us we need to be in Christ (In the Spirit, obeying the Word).

- 20) *"Maybe God didn't answer because he's testing your faith?"* God doesn't test our faith our faith is tested by the world. Persecution is coming because of the word we are standing on. God has already answered even before we call by His grace being poured out in Christ. Trials, struggles, temptations are coming and will prove whether our faith is from the heart or not. God isn't holding back He's already pour out His Spirit in full.
- 21) *"I'm afraid God won't answer because I don't have enough faith."* Fear is not from God's Spirit it come from believing something we don't want to happen. God's answers are in Christ Jesus and we have been given the very faith of Christ. We don't have a faith problem we have an unbelief problem. If our answers are not forth coming it is being hindered here on earth; it is a receiving problem.
- 22) *"I don't feel like it, I'm tired, and this faith thing is too hard."* We don't walk by feelings but by faith, if we are dominated by our senses (flesh) we are going to find faith a hard thing. It reflects a harden condition from neglecting the things of God. Jesus said my yoke is easy and my burden light that is true in the Spirit not the flesh.
- 23) *"Nothing happens that God doesn't allow."* Jesus taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." If God were in control then His will would be done everywhere on earth. We are to submit to God and then resist the devil which means not everything coming our way is from God. God has given us a spirit of discernment so that we will know what is from God and what is not.
- 24) *"God is against me, so many things are going wrong!"* God is against the proud, against rebellion, and sin nature; but in Christ, God is for us, and in Him the wrath of God has been satisfied; God is not angry with us any longer. If things are going wrong it is not God's anger but the curse, sinful man, demonic obstruction, lack of repentance, etc...we need to stand and speak to the mountain in Jesus' name and stay faithful.

- 25) *“Why doesn’t God move when I pray; he said whatever I ask in Jesus’ name he would do?”* Our faith doesn’t move God; it’s supposed to move us. God has done everything He’s going to do in His Son and our needs are already provided in His Son. When we pray according to God’s Will, like a menu, we are asking for something already provided. By faith we maintain praise, thanksgiving, and hold on until it becomes manifest in our life.
- 26) *“Why doesn’t God heal Billy Graham? If it is God’s will to heal everyone certainly God would heal this man because of his great faith and love.”* God’s grace is not according to our goodness, works, and piety, there is nothing we can do to earn it and there is nothing we can do to lose it. However, even though we don’t get what we deserve what we do get is based on what we believe. If Billy Graham or anyone else neglects to learn faith and grace in healing, he will miss what God provided in the atonement like anyone else as far as this world is concerned. God shows favoritism to no man. When we act in faith according to His grace we’ll receive just like everyone else who does.