

## A PORTRAIT OF CHRIST-HONORING SECURITY

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### **Matthew 11:28-30**

*“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart,  
and you will find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

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Have you ever noticed how insecurity takes some of the most common, innocent, and pervasive components of our life and transforms them into relational weapons or instruments of emotional self-mutilation? That might sound like a flamboyantly worded melodrama unless you have lived with insecurity.

Questions, silence, clarifications, pauses, compliments (of you or others), words of gratitude, and most other pieces of the fabric of interpersonal relationships get filtered through the lens of suspicion and self-doubt – “What did they mean by that? Are they upset? Why did they choose that word? Why did they say nothing? Did I say too much?”

Questions begin to mean that you don’t think I know the answer.

Silence always infers that you are upset with me or I have offended you.

Compliments send the message that I am this way today, but you only noticed because usually I am so obviously not.

Gratitude means I usually overlook these kinds of details or that I am awkward enough that you were just looking for something to be able to say in conversation with me.

Nothing can just be what it is. Everything has a deeper meaning. If only I were normal, popular, intelligent, or something; then people would not have to play this game with me. But I am not, so I get stuck in this game and I hate it. But that is who I am and I’m sorry... O-KAY! Sorry, I didn’t mean to go off on a tangent. I just get worked up sometimes. I know that’s weird. I hate that it made reading this article awkward for you. I will try not to do it again. But if you don’t want to continue reading, I completely understand. I probably wouldn’t either. But I have said too much already. I’m sorry.

Do you ever think like that? Does an unreturned phone call or e-mail get you spinning with scenarios of relational turmoil? Do innocent questions (if you believe there are such things) sometimes hit you with the force of an insult? How many times do you replay and consider the possible reactions to a comment in Sunday School or a joke with friends? For what kind of events, challenges, opportunities, or roles do you write yourself off out of fear?

Hopefully we can begin to see that insecurity (or the fear of man as it is more commonly referred to in Scripture) is something we all struggle with to some degree. It goes by many names in our culture: peer pressure, codependency, social anxiety, shyness, timidity, being “sweet,” people-pleasing, etc... The goal of this article is to walk you through the big three pieces of insecurity, so that you can target and reduce the piece(s) that most influences your heart.

## Defining “Biblical Security”

**Biblical security** is a disposition of stability that allows for a patient and an increasingly accurate interpretation of personal performance, interpersonal interactions, and circumstances in the midst of situations that are as yet uncertain, incomplete, challenging, or negative. Biblical security acknowledges that failure, criticism, and personal sin will occur; however, it does not allow the legitimate guilt, disappointment, or embarrassment of these events to create instability or dash hope. Biblical security defines “good (the righteousness of Christ) enough (the sufficient cross of Christ) for who (life for the glory of God)?” in biblical terms and rests in that reality personally and socially.

It is important to note that this definition of security overlaps with the concepts of identity and confidence also found in this series on a Christ-honoring alternative to self-esteem.

**Identity:** Knowing what something is provides a foundation for understanding how to use it. Knowing that people were created in the image of God to reflect His glory as God’s children provides a framework for purpose to which individuals must fill in the details.

**Confidence:** The demeanor that exhibits a positive expectation that God will enable us to accomplish any good work He calls for us to do. This demeanor results in an increasingly shorter period of hesitation and level of anxiety when attempting a task, and a greater degree of peace and fulfillment while planning, carrying out, and evaluating a task. After the task is complete, biblical confidence reduces the degree of pressure to repeat or exceed the accomplishment and the temptation to pride.

## Three Big Questions of Security

As implied in the final sentence of our definition of biblical security there are three key questions that insecurity distorts.

- What does it mean to be good?
- How good is good enough?
- In whose eyes must we be good?

In the mind of the person who struggles with insecurity the questions echoes like this, “Am I good enough for [name, group, achievement, etc...]? Am I pretty enough to have a boyfriend? Am I smart enough to get into the school of my choice? Am I worthy enough to be treated with honor? Am I funny enough to be cool? Am I bold enough to be a man? Am I consistent enough to be a good parent? Is my house clean enough to have company over? Am I interesting enough to have friends? Am I wealthy enough to be included? Am I insightful enough to be a teacher? Am I respected enough to be a leader?”

These three words dominant many of our lives: good, enough, and audience. They shape our emotions, decisions, relationships, what we say, what we hear, what we wear, self-perception, what we perceive to be risk, and our willingness to take those risks.

Our goal in this article is to define these three concepts (to answer these three questions) in a manner that is faithful with Scripture, teaches us to treasure the Gospel, and provides us with the emotional-relational stability to patiently and accurately respond to the breadth of life’s challenges and blessings.

## What Does It Mean To Be Good?

For the moment let's forgo the theological answers (we will come to those) and just examine the question emotionally. In life we experience emotion before we consider theology. However, if we do our job well in this article, we will see that theology and experience are two sides of the same coin.

Ask yourself, "What is the particular 'good' that if I feel inadequate in that area I become insecure?"

- Appearance
- Popularity
- Wealth
- Power/Influence
- Charisma
- Acceptance by a Key Person or Group
- Humor
- Intelligence
- Family History
- Holiness/Moral Standard
- Bible Knowledge
- Athleticism
- Clear, Firm Convictions

These are the common ways by which we measure "good." Insecurity usually means that one or more of these items is very important to me and I cannot have/do/know it. Because of that fatal flaw, I consider myself to be inadequate. I may or may not measure everyone else by that single trait (my insecurity may or may not mingle with judgementalism), but I measure me by that attribute.

One problem with this is that I have become a single variable person. My logic is comparable to saying that because a lemon, a scalpel, and a rock are not sweet like an apple that they are not good. In this example "sweetness" becomes the single variable of goodness by which all objects are measured. The result is that sour, sharp, and hard become irrelevant, valueless attributes. We may not condemn them (or we may), but they are not explored and utilized with joy and peace.

There are two common quick rebuttals to this point. First, one might say, "But this variable(s) is important to me. Why shouldn't I be able to emphasize it?" This is where we must return to theology. We are saying that insecurity is rooted in our definition of good. Original sin was found in Adam and Eve wanting to define good and evil for themselves (Gen 2:9; 3:5). I believe this extends both to content (morals) and emphasis (priorities).

Our mental-emotional-relational health is directly tied to our agreement with God as to what is "good" both in content and emphasis. Sincerity in emphasis cannot be mistaken for accuracy or health. In our culture we too often mistake sincerity for holiness and genuineness for righteousness. When we demand (through pride or self-degradation) to define "good," we usurp the role of God as Creator, Designer (purpose), and Author of our lives. When we attempt to take the pen of history from the hand of our Father, insecurity is the best result we can hope for. God is the potter. We are the clay (Jeremiah 18). Security is found in allowing the Potter to define the "good" for which a pot was made.

Second, one might say, "But this is the way our culture thinks. What's wrong with just being realistic?" Honestly, this point is often true. Our culture does seek to define good by certain variables: beauty, pleasure, and wealth. Our "tolerant" culture grades people constantly, especially if they disagree with the core convictions of their world-view.

Here again we face the problem of the pen. Who is writing history? The modern proverb says, “Winners write history.” When we allow culture to define “good” (what is worth pursuing and makes one valuable), we are saying that culture is the ultimate winner who gets the privilege of defining our history. When we allow the fulfillment of God’s design (see articles on identity and purpose) to define “good” we are proclaiming God the final Victor who will ultimately write history and whose values will prevail (Psalm 9:7-10).

A second problem is that I have limited God’s potential activity to my perceived strengths. The whole point of redemption is that God can work in and through our weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9). We have a tendency to get hung up on what we have to offer God. Even if (in our eyes) our life were to amount to a mere five loaves and two fishes of value compared to a 5,000 hungry people’s worth of life challenges, that is fine.

Let us just be God’s. When we are God’s, that is “good.” Nothing more is needed. Nothing more could be added. Whatever I am or am not, is God’s. It is God who made me. It is God I serve. It is God’s kingdom that matters. It is God’s opinion that will endure. It is God’s world in which I live and move and have my being (Acts 17:28). Therefore, if I am God’s, that is the essence of “good.” Freedom! Security! Hope! Relief!

A final problem is that introspection produces paralysis. For the moment, let’s draw a distinction between introspection and fruit-inspection. Introspection will refer to the process of self-examination by which we are looking for those attributes that make us acceptable to someone else. Fruit-inspection will refer to the process of self-examination by which we are seeking to find evidences of God’s grace active in our lives (2 Corinthians 13:5).

The problem with both forms of self-examination is that they are “in process” or incomplete (this leads into the next major question heading). When engaging in introspection I can second guess and pick apart any attribute someone might find appealing. I know me more completely than anyone else does. I know my every fear, quirk, bad thought, off moment, bombed joke, oversight, and incomplete task. These points of personal awareness more than offset any complement or expression of encouragement someone might offer. After all, “they really don’t know me.”

Even success in introspection only results in a building sense of pressure to “keep it up” or “raise the bar” to remain acceptable. The status quo is not good enough. Today’s success is tomorrow’s expectation. The satisfaction I get from the initial achievement will never be experienced on the same level again (to the insecure, achievement in their area of “good” is very much like a drug to an addict—the high always has to get higher to be as satisfying).

This brings us back to fruit-inspection. Fruit-inspection realizes that the “good” of my security is not me but the byproduct of God’s Spirit in my life (Galatians 5:19-26). I am broken and flawed. I have been in an abnormal condition since birth (because of my sin nature derived from the Fall). Once I place my faith in Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection as the solution for my brokenness, I am not instantly restored (Hebrews 10:14). The restoration is promised by God to be completed (assurance of salvation) but occurs slowly over the course of my life (progressive sanctification).

This realization brings great peace (security) as I examine my life. When I find an admirable attribute in my life, there is no pressure to keep it up. I must only continue to rely on God and trust in Him. Like the young child learning to swim by kicking his feet while in the instructor’s arms, when he begins to feel movement he can rest in the fact that he does not have to keep kicking in order to keep from drowning. In that case, the sense of movement creates the joy and motivation to keep kicking in order to learn to swim.

There is also no sense of failure in fruit-inspection if the attribute is incomplete or inconsistent. That is the process by which God works. For the Christian every moment of life is not a pass-fail test before the Judge of all the universe. God is our Father. He delights in the process of our growing into His image in the same way a parent rejoices in the staggering steps of a toddler. He knows the reason for which each child was created and for what purpose He will redeem each pill. The main thing is that His child is striving to be made more into the likeness of His image.

## How Good Is Enough?

Good is just a commodity to be measured. This is why we have the words better and best. Insecurity does not necessarily say I am not good, more specifically it says I am not good “enough.” You may find something admirable in me, but that doesn’t make me special. I want to be special. I want to stand out in a way that makes me unique in all the world (or at least my school, neighborhood, workplace, or family).

Have you ever noticed that celebrities are usually not happier than common folks? The rates of divorce, addiction, self-destructive behaviors, and suicide are higher amongst the elite. Why? I believe there is at least one reason that pertains to the subject of this article. People were not made to be the center of attention and marveled at. We were made to reflect the Image of One who is awe-inspiring. When you have an outstanding talent in one area, the rest of life cannot measure up. After composing a symphony, winning the Super Bowl, solving world hunger, making a million dollars, writing a best seller, winning the pageant, or some other pinnacle experience, day to day life is a let down. This is why so many people never get over high school. They can stand out in that smaller controlled environment. They then spend the rest of their life trying to live up to those four years. If we are not careful, special can become a particularly alluring and devastating trap.

This is where some people begin to despair. They begin to think, “I knew it. I’m not special.” It is as if “bad” is the opposite of “special.” I would like to propose that contentment is the opposite of special. Security involves a stable sense of satisfaction based upon an accurate self-perception. God made me for a purpose (creation). I am broken (sin). God gloriously restored me (salvation). Life is hard (suffering). God is developing me into the person to fulfill the good works He picked out for me to do (sanctification). I am okay with that (security).

In order to help us grow in Christ-honoring security, it is helpful to identify some of the common ways we emotionally say, “I am not okay with that.”

*Competing:* This is insecurity that is aggravated by the success of others. It might also be called jealousy or coveting. This is not to say that all competition is rooted in sin; just competition that is motivated to validate self in order to overcome insecurity. An evidence of security is the ability to rejoice in the success of another person. Can someone tell a story and you not have to tell a bigger one? Can someone get a gadget and you not get a newer, nicer one? Can someone offer an insight and you not offer a better, deeper one?

Competition implies that there is a limited resource of what really matters. When we define good in the ways listed above, then it makes sense to compete. Good is then something that is limited or can be upstaged. Only when we define good as the character of Christ and contributing to God’s kingdom according to the Spirit’s design is good a liberating pursuit. All other definitions of good make us a slave to some opinion, some standard, or some ever-changing performance.

*Perfectionism:* This is insecurity that is unable to respond with God’s heart to our failures. For perfectionists their identity is rooted in their performance. Success is expected (sometimes rooted in pride other times in duty). Therefore success is the expected status quo and cannot fuel satisfaction. Only failure can create significant emotional movement, because failure challenges their sense of identity (“This is not who I am.”). That challenge creates an emotional instability.

The perfectionist views God’s grace as a back up plan when all else fails. They treat God’s grace (not just forgiveness, but also sustaining grace) as an emergency fund, something they never want to have to touch. The key for security in the life of a repentant perfectionist is to learn that God’s grace is needed as much in our success as for our failure (Isaiah 64:6). It is God’s grace that sustains us moment by moment. God’s grace is not just a precious, special-occasion perfume we put on to eliminate the odor of our sin. God’s grace is the daily deodorant that changes and gives life to our sin-perspiring hearts.

*Perpetual Flaw-Finding (Self-Degradation):* This is insecurity that defiantly resists encouragement in order to protect itself from disappointment, embarrassment, or hurt. Sometimes insecurity is where we are most comfortable. To be less than insecure would be to hope for something good and that runs the risk of disappointment (Proverbs 13:12). As long as I talk myself down and refuse to believe anything positive, I cannot be disappointed. In this case, I fear disappointment more than I desire hope.

For the perpetual flaw-finder “goodness” is a myth. The question of “good enough” is as ludicrous as trying to find the unicorn with the longest horn. If every good aspect of my character and activity is partially flawed, then security is a myth and teaching someone how to become secure is a bunch of positive thinking lies. But again, this is assuming a world without a forgiving and redemptive God. True, lasting security must de-center off of self. It is what God has done and will do through our flaws that allows us as broken people to have security.

*Fatalism:* This is insecurity rooted in an overt belief that I am bad to a degree that redemption cannot penetrate. If flaw-finding finds holes in every piece of Swiss cheese, then fatalism is both lactose intolerant (allergic to dairy products) and vegan (refuses to eat any product derived from animals). Flaw-finders play Eeyore to the conversation of security; fatalists give the silent treatment. Honestly, if you have fatalist tendencies I would be surprised if you are still reading this article.

It takes great courage to believe something exists when you have not experienced it. This is the first struggle of many who struggle with insecurity. They have been so berated and abused that it was easier to deny security existed. Heroic faith is required to even entertain the question we have been discussing for seven pages now. A spectrum of emotions erupt by even asking the question: embarrassment that I don’t know, anger that I don’t have it, fear/shame that its absence is my fault, and longing that the possibility exists. This courage cannot come from within, but only from above. Pray for the courage to believe. Pray, “I believe, Lord, help my unbelief (Mark 9:24).”

## **In Whose Eyes Must I Be Good?**

Here we engage the question of our “life audience.” Whose applause, affirmation, or approval makes our effort worth it? Conversely, it is the absence of whose applause, affirmation, or approval makes everyone else’s praise irrelevant? For some who struggle with insecurity the question is neither a certain definition of good nor a certain quantity of that “good.” Rather insecurity is simply about the response (or perceived response) of one individual, group, or social ideal.

This returns us to the nagging desire to be special. The problem is that by definition the vast majority of people are ordinary, common, and average. If they were not, then the word “special” would have no meaning. Yet in our deep longing to be good enough we strive to attain what is statistically improbable. So what do we do? We reduce the size of our audience. We begin to live life for a person, a group, or an institution that we believe we can stand out for. We define ourselves by this person, group, or institution. Our security is placed in their hands and measured by their words. We are the gymnast; they are the judge.

As we seek to examine this aspect of insecurity let’s examine four audiences our insecurity can live for.

*One Special Person:* This person could be a mother, father, husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, best friend, teacher, coach, pastor, boss, peer, or just about anyone. Once you identify who this person is, you can begin to ask yourself some important questions.

- What does this person represent to me?
- What would their approval do for me?

- What form would I most like for their approval to take?
- When did their approval become so important (time or event)?
- Is there anyone similar to them (role) whose approval I value significantly less?
- What has been my response when I have gotten approval from this person?
- Whose love and encouragement have I discounted or rejected in pursuit of this person's approval?
- How have I organized my life or certain social situations to gain this person's approval?

These questions should help you see more clearly the impact of this person on your life. Often the pursuit of something can blind us to the sacrifices or compromises we make in that pursuit. Like a gambler, all we see is the prize not the cost.

As you answer these questions, hopefully you will begin to see the roles you have begun to bestow upon this person: Judge (one with the final say), Savior (the one who can make everything OK), Peace-Giver (Prince of Peace), Security-Giver (Rock or Refuge), or Shepherd (desired companion in difficult times). Hopefully this does more than create a sense of guilt (for the idolatry of deifying an individual) or embarrassment (from putting the impossible request into words).

The desired outcome is to chart a path to freedom. When we realize that we are “looking for love (more specifically, security) in all the wrong places,” we can begin to identify the right places. Insecurity from seeking validation from one individual is a condition of asking more from an individual (who bears the marks of the fall: sin, selfishness, fickleness, and finitude) than they can do.

“But is it wrong to expect people to treat me nice and want to be encouraged? Is it wrong to want to be loved and noticed? Are you saying I am so wretched that I should enjoy being ignored or considered second rate?” These are the common rebuttals to this position. Among other things they confuse security with special-ness and morality with love. Security is not about standing out. It is about emotional and identity stability. Standing up to being sinned against is not about self-worth or affection. It is about legality, decency, and truth.

The rebuttal does merit a more thorough consideration. I believe the words of C.S. Lewis (1966) in *Letters* gives good perspective:

When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now. In so far as I learn to love my earthly dearest at the expense of God and instead of God, I shall be moving towards the state in which I shall not love my earthly dearest at all. *When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased* (p. 248, emphasis added).

The point being made here is that when secondary sources of security are relied upon as the primary foundation of our security, they inevitably fail. When we root our security in the only sure primary source of security (the Blessor) then the secondary sources of security (the blessings) are increased in effectiveness not decreased.

The same evaluation questions listed in the bullets above can be asked of each of the following points for fruitful reflection and insight.

*A Group/Class of People:* When the source of our identity becomes plural the measure often becomes more ambiguous and fluid. When I want the approval of a friend instead of a team, it is usually clearer when and how I am to succeed. However, with a group (unless they are kind enough to give achievable, objective entrance standards and they honor each achiever with equal attention, celebration, and reward) things can be less clear.

Within a group usually only the elite are acknowledged. This creates a dilemma for those seeking security from a group. Either I can identify with a “lower” group in which I am more likely to be elite, or I identify with the “higher”

group and face the prospects of failure with perpetual competition with my peers. In the lower group I feel shame. In the higher group I feel fear. Both shame and fear are enemies of security.

It is a Catch-22 you cannot win when you play the game of seeking security through a group or class of people. The goal of this article is not to teach you how to win the impossible game, but to encourage you to opt out of the empty pursuit. When you hear your heart say, “If only I could..., then I would feel secure” and the blank is filled with being part of a certain organization or achieving a certain status, know you are hearing a lie. You cannot buy/achieve security and security cannot be bought/achieved. They are two different currencies that operate in two different economies.

*A Social Ideal:* Women have to be thin. Men have to be tall. Everyone should be smart. It is always good to be funny. Men hunt and fish. Women talk on the phone using lots of words. Guys like sports, grunting, and scratching themselves. Good moms have spotless houses, serve balanced meals, and never get tired. Leaders and those that get ahead do not take time off work. People who live in our neighborhood drive nicer cars than I do. When you say “I don’t know” that means you’re stupid. Feel free to add your favorite to the list and take a moment to have a private rant. [Pause] Feel better?

Security is rooted in wisdom not expectation. Expectation changes by person, social setting, geographic region, and generation. The kind of security I am advocating in this article emerges when we prayerfully and biblically assess our top priorities and season of life, then wisely do what we realistically can. God only requires of me what can be done in an 168 hour week! God understands the differences that exist if you have no kids, toddlers, teens, a blended family, empty nest, ailing parents, or health limitations. God is the one who gave us our intellectual capacity, physical strength, health, social connections, and family history. We are only called to be stewards not competitors.

The question is not “am I measuring up to a social ideal?” The question is “am I living wisely given my current circumstances?” If the answer is yes, I should have a growing sense of security. It may be that my sin or the sin of those around me means that I am righteously dissatisfied with my current circumstances. Security and satisfaction are different things. When we try to make these the same thing, it means our every longing to do better (i.e., live more wisely and effectively) mutates into a sense of insecurity. When we differentiate satisfaction and security we can be ambitious without being insecure.

*My Own:* Sometimes it just boils down to the fact that I am not satisfied with me. If the issue is confusion or personal dislike, then please read the articles on purpose or identity. If the issue is perfectionism then we must consider aspiration and ambition run amuck. For better or worse we know ourselves more completely (not always better) than anyone else. I know my every failure and fear. I am with me 24/7/365. I am talking to myself constantly and that talk is building a story. That story shapes and defines everything I know about me. I only see the glimpses of other people’s lives as they chose to present themselves, and I only hear their well-censored thoughts in conversation. I’ll lose that comparison every time.

Rather than extending this discussion further, it draws us back to “what does it mean to be good?” How we define good is the entrance to the trap of personally-critical insecurity. If you find yourself struggling with an insecurity rooted in your own criticalness as the life audience, return to the first section (What is Good?) of this article and read the material again.

*God’s:* I do not understand why God would tolerate me. I read Scripture, hear the commands, agree with the truth, and fear because I come up so short. Maybe God loves me, but He will be much more excited to allow others into heaven than me. God loves me because He has to. He made promises and cannot go against His Word, but does He really like me? Is He for me?

Again, this aspect of insecurity draws us back to the questions, “what is good enough?” The enough aspect is where we begin to debate God’s standard and favor. If you find yourself wrestling with an insecurity rooted in doubting your ability to please God, return to the middle section of this article and read that material again.

## Conclusion

Feel better yet? Probably not. Hopefully you do have some insights that help you see how you could try so hard for so long without seeing much consistent progress. The goal now is to make application of what you have learned without growing impatient (a hard task).

- Review the article and highlight the sentences or sections that spoke most directly to your struggle with insecurity.
- On the back of each page explain what you should do/think differently in light of what you highlighted.
- Share what you have highlighted and written with a trusted, mature Christian friend who can encourage you and hold you accountable.
- Consider your upcoming week/month. Identify the points where you foresee that opportunity to make application of what you have learned.
- Pray that God will give you the awareness and grace in your moment of struggle to live more securely in light of what you have learned.

The final two pages are meant to provide you with additional exercises to make application of this article.

## REFERENCES:

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## Checklist for A Portrait of Christ-Honoring Security

For each item place a check in the blank if you can provide evidence that you regularly exhibit this attitude, behavior, or character trait. If you struggle to be able to give a fair self-assessment of an item, ask people who know you well

- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely distort compliments to imply something negative about myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rarely assume something is wrong when there is silence or a pause.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I evaluate my life with balance instead of according only one variable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to see others succeed without feeling insecure or threatened.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to engage in tasks outside my areas of strength without fear.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I know my strengths and enjoy blessing others in those areas of gifting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to accept how God made me and seek to serve Him as I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to do well at something without creating a mounting sense of expectation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to enjoy life without having to be special or stand out.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to be content with the rate of my spiritual growth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am aware of and rest in my daily need for the grace of God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to accept a compliment or word of encouragement without awkwardness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I like the person God created me to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rely on one person for my sense of well-being, peace, and joy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I rely on being a part of a certain group for my sense of well-being, peace, and joy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am able to accept forgiveness for my sins and mistakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I resist defining myself by one significant sin or mistake.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I resist the urge to limit my social circle in order to be less known.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I resist the urge to replay a sin or mistake multiple times in my mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am reasonable in my expectations of myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not accept the expectations of others as my own moral standard.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am free to share any part of my story with someone if it is for their benefit.

**Biblical security** is a disposition of stability that allows for a patient and an increasingly accurate interpretation of personal performance, interpersonal interactions, and circumstances in the midst of situations that are as yet uncertain, incomplete, challenging, or negative. Biblical security acknowledges that failure, criticism, and personal sin will occur, however, it does not allow the legitimate guilt, disappointment, or embarrassment of these events to create instability or dash hope. Biblical security defines “good (the righteousness of Christ) enough (the sufficient cross of Christ) for who (life for the glory of God)?” in biblical terms and rests in that reality personally and socially.

\*\*\* The items left unmarked are your agenda items for developing Christ-honoring security.

## Reflection Section

What would be the ten marks of a good day in your current life? Often we are insecure because we have not defined success in a balanced, functional way. We make life a pass-fail test and neglect to define the questions. Prayerfully think through a “good” day given your various life roles. Write them down in the blanks below. Again, you may want to consult with a trusted friend who knows you well. At the end of each day, take time to score your performance on each item.

Your goal is not to ace the test daily. Your goals are to (1) bring a balanced evaluation to each day; (2) grow over time in effectively living out your life priorities; (3) become more intentional in praying over and studying your areas of weakness; (4) praise God and rejoice in your areas of strength or growth; and (5) rest in God’s promise to grow you into the person He created you to be.

1. *Enjoy Bible study, prayer, personal examination, or seeing God’s majesty in nature.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. *Find practical ways to love and serve my spouse, kids, parents, friends, or co-workers.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. *Rest, eat, and exercise in a way that is a good steward of the body God has given me.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. *Engage my mind or body in an activity that is enjoyable to me.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10