

Title: The Ministry Soul-Check

Subtitle: *5 Reflections for Finding Balance in a Life of Service*

Introduction: In ministry and mission work, we often become experts at identifying the needs of others while becoming strangers to our own. We carry the weight of expectations, the "fishbowl" of public life, and the deep tensions of spiritual service. This guide is a small invitation to pause. It isn't another "to-do" list; it is a space for honesty. Take ten minutes, a cup of tea, and ask your soul these five questions.

1. The Mask Check

"Where am I performing today?" In leadership, we often wear a mask of "having it all together" to encourage others.

- **Reflection:** In which area of my life do I feel I cannot be honest about my struggles? Who is one person (outside of my immediate circle) I can be 100% human with?

2. The Boundary Check

"Is my 'yes' coming from calling or from guilt?" Service can easily turn into "people-pleasing" disguised as "faithfulness."

- **Reflection:** When was the last time I said "no" to a request to protect my own peace or my family's time? How did that feel?

3. The Physical Check

"What is my body trying to tell me?" The body often knows we are burnt out before our minds do.

- **Reflection:** Scan your body. Are your shoulders tight? Is your sleep disrupted? Are you "numbing out" with food, screens, or busyness? Your body's exhaustion is not a sin; it's a signal.

4. The Identity Check

"Who am I when I'm off the clock?" When our work is our "calling," it's hard to know where the job ends and the person begins.

- **Reflection:** If my title, my role, or my mission were taken away tomorrow, what parts of me would still bring me joy? What is one hobby or habit I have that has nothing to do with serving others?

5. The Grace Check

"Am I treating myself like a servant or a beloved child?" We preach grace to others, but often live under a law of "doing more" for ourselves.

- **Reflection:** If a dear friend in ministry came to me feeling exactly how I feel today, what words of comfort would I give them? Can I allow myself to receive those same words today?

Closing Message: If these reflections have stirred something in you, please know you don't have to navigate these tensions alone. Whether you are facing burnout, relational strain, or just need a safe place to be "off the clock," I am here to help.