

The VCP Spiritual Health Barometer (SHB)

The Spiritual Health Barometer (SHB) is a tool that evaluates 20 aspects of church life on a simple scale of one to five. We encourage evaluators to identify at least two aspects in each of the mark categories. At least two aspects should be marked “needs improvement” similarly at least two should be marked “excellent”. This is intended to help the church identify its relative strengths and weaknesses.

Various categories/levels of evaluation are encouraged:

- One: church members
- Two: deacons, elders, & departmental leaders
- Three: the pastor
- Four: denominational leaders, VCP trainers, coordinators and supervisors

Explanatory notes and factors to consider in completing the SHB:

1. Evangelism: Members burden for the lost, number of new converts in the last three months, number of members involved in personal evangelism, and special outreach programs
2. Discipleship: New believer classes, membership classes, baptism classes, catechisms, Chronological Bible Teaching programs, small group meetings, inductive Bible studies
3. Worship: Culturally and spiritually relevant worship services that bring people into the tangible presence of God. Scripturally sound hymns and choruses. Age and gender appropriate worship styles. Participatory, sharing and healing services
4. Fellowship: Members visit together and enjoy each others company and hospitality
5. Mission: The number of members actively involved in praying for and working toward the planting of daughter churches, and the financial and prayer support of missionaries and ministries involved in world evangelism
6. Ministry: The number of members actively involved in a church ministry
7. Intercession: The number of members regularly participating in prayer meetings and programs
8. Community: The number and type of active community projects such as literacy, health & hygiene, schooling, sustainable development etc. Is the church taking a leading role in transforming her community?
9. Compassion: Are churches involved in AIDS prevention and care projects; do they take care of widow & orphans; provide feeding schemes; and visit prisoners?
10. Training: Do churches provide structured training programs for deacons, elders, Sunday school teachers, departmental leaders, and daughter pastors. Is the church involved in mentorship? Are all church leaders involved in leadership training?
11. Generosity: Is their a caring generous spirit evident amongst members which attends to the needs of the poor and destitute both in and beyond their midst? Do members live frugally, and sacrificially give to the needs of God’s Kingdom
12. Persecution: Are members steadfast, faithful, longsuffering and patient in the face of persecution and suffering?
13. Spiritual Hunger: Do members hunger and thirst after God, His Kingdom and His Righteousness? Do they yearn for the intimate presence of God? Do they seek after Him with all of their heart? Are members faithful in attending worship services, prayer meetings, and small group gatherings?

14. Confronting Evil: Do members expose false teaching, false prophets, and confront evil in the church? Does the church warn society of institutional evil, collective sin, and does it confront its evil practices? Does the church pray for the Godly transformation of their village region and country? Does the church engage with and pray for civic leaders?
15. Devotion to the Word: Are the Holy Scriptures treasured as the final Word for authority and practice in the church and in holy living. Is the Word read regularly by members? Is teaching centered in the Word? Do the members check to ensure the pastor and teachers faithfully expound the Word?
16. Holiness: Does the church promote consecrated lives, holiness of heart, and purity of lives? Are members actively modeling their lives on the pattern of Jesus? Does the church have a reputation in the community for transformed lives?
17. Preaching: Do the majority of members feel that the preaching meets their needs, and has a practical application? Is there a regular evaluation of the preaching by the members?
18. Love: Does the church have a reputation for loving one another, the lost, refugees, and her enemies?
19. Tithes & Offering: Are church members faithful in tithing? In addition to tithing do members sacrificially present offerings to God? Does the church tithe her income? Is the Pastor paid a good salary in keeping with His high calling?
20. Joy: Is the joy of the Lord consistently evident in the majority of the members?

The evaluation is conducted by marking an appropriate score against each aspect. The ticks in each column are then added and multiplied by the respective weightings. These totals are then added to give a final SHB mark (percentage) for each church. (See the example below). Evaluations when done at each of the proposed levels and on a periodic basis are designed to be a tool to help the pastor grow the spirituality of the church. The SHB is designed as self-assessment guide and should be used as a corrective motivational instrument – and never as a disciplinary tool. The SHB is a tool that the trainer and supervisor can also use to assess the progress of the respective churches under their charge. We should be slow to draw comparisons between churches but rather use subsequent evaluations to monitor the development of the church.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH BAROMETER (SHB)

Aspects of Church Life		Needs Work	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Score		1	2	3	4	5
1	Evangelism		x			
2	Discipleship	x				
3	Worship				x	
4	Fellowship					x
5	Mission			x		
6	Ministry		x			
7	Intercession			x		
8	Community					x
9	Compassion	x				
10	Training			x		
11	Generosity		x			
12	Persecution					x
13	Spiritual hunger				x	
14	Confronting evil	x				
15	Devotion to Word			x		
16	Holiness			x		
17	Preaching		x			
18	Love			x		
19	Tithes/Offerings		x			
20	Joy		x			
Total Marked		3	6	6	2	3
Total Value		3	12	18	8	15
Total Score		56%				