

GLIMPSE

Statistics Class

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It is normal to want to know how we're doing. We often ask people in greeting just how they are doing. They normally do not give you anything but a standard flat answer of being "pretty good" or "could do better", or a sassy "Depending on who's asking". We love grades, scores, read-outs, balance sheets or anything which tells us something good.

Measuring is one method of self-discovery. There is a term, "Standard Deviation" which anybody who has suffered through the Statistics course knows very well. One Standard Deviation would mean, they say, would include a third of the group's being a third above the average or norm and a third below. So sixty-six percent fall within that standard grouping. Amazing I can remember that, well at least I got something out of that course. This means that half of the remaining third are above and a half of the remaining third are below the first Standard group, that's enough. We like knowing where we standardly stand.

Here's a way of figuring out something else about ourselves. About what in our lives would we grade ourselves as an A-Double-Plus? About what would we give ourselves an A, or B, or C, or D, or failure? This can apply to everything and anything. Allow me to suggest a list.

1. Pencil-sharpening
2. Opening doors
3. Washing dishes
4. Playing cards or board games
5. Answering emails, texting
6. Listening
7. Friending, spousing, parenting
8. Loving and forgiving
9. Praying
10. Self-acceptance

The first few items would put us all with good grades and the final few we probably were in the bottom S.D. and we wonder why. The closer an action is to our identities, our hearts our meaning, the less we will think well of ourselves. We would wish others to be thinking more highly, but because we want more good of ourselves the less we think of ourselves. Amazing, but true, as it is said.

Now we have a religion, Christianity, which has very lofty ideals and invitations which can often sound like laws and commands. Here's a fun-one. For which teaching of Jesus would you give yourself an A-Double-Plus? Take any one of the many, especially from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew five, six and seven. "Turn the other cheek" is a good one, or "give away your coat." The things which are close to us we would wish we were better and best. So all this so easily results in a sad religion and sad or de-graded judgers of how they are doing.

The Gospels are "The Good News" so there is the conflict. How is there good news when the results are judged as bad news by the doers who are also the judgers. The "Good News" is that the teachings are not the Good News, the person and mission of the Teacher is the Good News. His teachings are not demanding laws, but invitations to living the good life within the frailty of what is revealed as we respond to those invitations. The second part of the *Good News* is that the Teacher is not the judger, grader or depressor; He is the Savior of all the Deviators. What is closest to our hearts is not expressed perfectly in how we are doing or revealing. It is only a glimpse. I give it a C-Plus, because of how much better I wish and want and hope and long.....