

Indicators of my dedication and spiritual development

It's difficult to quantify spiritual development and dedication. Nonetheless, here are some indicators that I took the Gospel and my spiritual development very seriously:

- Read the scriptures virtually every day of my adult life. Read the Book of Mormon over 40 times.
- Gave out dozens of copies of the Book of Mormon as an adult—each with my heartfelt testimony inside—to labmates, friends, and acquaintances. Even as a professor at BYU I continued to give copies to friends who came to visit.
- Listened/read each general conference multiple times through for many years.
- Accepted all callings joyfully. Besides ward finance clerk and EQP, was in scouting (generally scoutmaster) for about 16 years. Recognized for service to underprivileged minority youth.
- No funny business before marriage.
- Showed up at virtually every move.
- Was nearly always close to 100% home teaching for my entire adult life—was always good friends with my families.
- Didn't pick my friends as counselors in the EQ Presidency.
- Consistently went out of my way to introduce myself to and sit by new people at Church.
- Personal mission statement: Learn of Christ. Serve as Christ. Love as Christ.
- My extended family probably got sick of me sincerely asking at every opportunity: “did you learn anything interesting at Church?” or “any new Gospel insights?”.
- Always fasted on fast Sunday; fasted many other times for other purposes.
- Planned to work in industry (was applying to Pharma and biotech companies), but ended up teaching at BYU—I applied because I was strongly encouraged to apply. BYU needed me, so I answered the call.
- My wife had 4 children before I finished grad school. The 5th while living in an 800 square foot apartment completing my postdoctoral work. The 6th as a beginning professor. She had abysmal pregnancies.
- Had entire family fast on a road trip rather than defile the Sabbath day.
- Avoided travelling on Sunday when possible, but generally fasted on Sunday during my trips so I wouldn't need to buy anything.
- Never drank caffeine (or any other prohibited substance)
- Never watched TV on Sunday. Never watched a Super Bowl.

Some of these seem pretty pharisaical to me now. But I did these from a sincere desire to strengthen my testimony and do the right thing in order to access the powers of heaven to bless others and to generally live in the best way I knew how.