

## THINGS YOU AND I NEED TO EXAMINE

Paul challenged the Corinthian brethren, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ be in you, except ye be reprobates.” Self-examination may not be the most pleasant thing in the world to do, and sometimes we may not be real happy with what we find, but it is a process we need in which we must engage for the welfare of our souls. But what things do we need to examine? Following are seven of them.

**Our knowledge:** It is the truth that makes us free, thus it is imperative that we have a good knowledge of it. Paul counted all things but loss for the knowledge of Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:8), and knowledge is important that we might know for sure that what we believe and practice, and the way we conduct ourselves are all right in the sight of God. Knowledge by itself is not enough. There must be wisdom and understanding (Col. 1:9). Wisdom is defined as the application of knowledge, thus wisdom is in direct proportion to our knowledge. How do we measure up?

**Our light:** Sometimes when people are warned about guarding their influence, they respond that they don't want to be an influence. It doesn't make any difference whether one wants to be an influence or not, he is without any choice. The choice he has is to be a good influence instead of a bad one. That is why Jesus said we are the light of the world, and we are salt, and the salt can lose its saltiness (Matt. 5:13-16), and the light can grow dim, so it is the responsibility of everyone to examine his or her light, and make sure it is shining brightly for God and for good. Ye are children of light, walk as children of light, Paul told the Ephesians (Eph. 5:8). We need to examine ourselves and see that we are walking as those in the light.

**Our Attitude:** How is your attitude? Attitude is basically how we react to things, or how situations affect us. Are we grumbling and grouching and murmuring? If so, we are in need of an attitude adjustment. Brotherly kindness is one of the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:7), and a bad attitude toward our brother hinders that trait. We also need the attitude toward truth that Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians 13:8, “For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.” Are we willing to do what God says to do regardless of the cost, or what we want? Are we willing to not be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2)? It takes the right attitude to build the right life.

**Our desires:** What is important to us? Where is our focus in life? Are we seeking God's kingdom and righteousness first (Matt. 6:33), or are we concerned about pleasing the desires of the flesh? Do we desire the sincere milk of the word, or is worldly wisdom what is important? Fulfilling the desires of the flesh is part of the old life (Eph. 2:3), but

we are supposed to be walking in the newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Are we really desirous of heaven, or are we just walking haphazardly. Let us examine our desires.

**Our sincerity:** When Paul wrote the Corinthians about the example of giving in the churches of Macedonia, he reminded them of the command he had given them about the same matter, and says that he gave the command to prove the sincerity of their love. If we love Christ, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). Paul's prayer for the beloved Philippians was that they would approve things that are excellent, and that they be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ (Phil. 1:10). Since sincerity is one of the things in which we are to show ourselves a pattern (Tit. 2:7), we need to examine ourselves in this grace also.

**Our Actions:** If our actions do not live up to our words, we are nothing more than hypocrites. We must examine our actions, lest after we teach others we find ourselves castaways (1 Cor. 9:27). It is not the man who hears but does not do, but the one who continues in the perfect law of liberty that is blessed in his deed (Jam. 1:22-25). If our words are right, but our deeds are amiss, then nothing is promised us but woes. Let us examine our actions of every kind to make sure they are right.

**Our purity:** We are to abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). That includes from fleshly lusts which war against the soul (1 Pet. 2:11). Christ came to deliver us from this present evil world, but if we fail to maintain purity and go back into sin the only thing we shall be delivered from is eternal life.

The process of examining one's self is involved, but it is something in which we must engage ourselves, lest we come up wanting, and are found to be not in the faith, but reprobates. Examination is not for the purpose of condemning ourselves, but to determine where we are lacking, and making the necessary changes.